



ISSN: 1817-6798 (Print)

Journal of Tikrit University for Humanities

available online at: www.jtuh.org/

Assist. Prof. Samir Mohammed
Ahmed Mohammed

College of Arts / Tikrit University

* Corresponding author: E-mail :
Samir.Mohammed@tu.edu.iq

07702821175

Keywords:

behavior
Formality
intimate
politeness
Pragmatics

ARTICLE INFO**Article history:**

Received 4 Jan. 2021
Accepted 17 Feb 2022
Available online 20 Oct 2022

E-mail t-jtuh@tu.edu.iq

©2022 College of Education for Humanities,
TIKRIT UNIVERSITY. THIS IS AN OPEN ACCESS
ARTICLE UNDER THE CC BY LICENSE

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



A pragmatic Study of Some Polite Expressions in Arabic with their Realizations in English

ABSTRACT

The current study aims to select some polite expressions in Arabic and English and see how the two languages are different based on a pragmatic analysis of these expressions. The hypothesis of the study has been put forward that polite expressions are present in both languages but they are conceived differently according to the pragmatics point of view. The study also chooses only two polite expressions, Greeting sand and offering to analyses the data. The findings of the study are as follows: (1) English polite expressions adhere firmly to Brown and Levinson's model (1987); yet there are many models of politeness, (2) Arabic polite expressions do not correspond to this model since there is a big difference in polite expressions between Arabic and English and (3) in this regard, formal and informal situations as well as some kinds of connections have a big impact on politeness strategies in English, polite expressions in Arabic are more important than English as they have a psychological effect on the listener as well as a big impact on morality and behavior .

© 2022 JTUH, College of Education for Human Sciences, Tikrit University

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.25130/jtuh.29.10.1.2022.20>

دراسة تداولية لبعض التعبيرات المهذبة في اللغتين العربية والإنكليزية

أ.م.د. سمير محمد أحمد محمد / جامعة تكريت / كلية الآداب

الخلاصة:

تهدف الدراسة الحالية الى التعامل مع بعض التعبيرات المهذبة ودراستها بطريقة تداولية . من اهم فرضيات الدراسة هو ان هذه التعبيرات ممكن ان تكون موجودة في العربية والانكليزية لكن طريقة فهمها وادراكها تكون مختلفة تماما , واختارت الدراسة موديل براون وليفنسن , كما واختارت الدراسة تعبيرين من

التعابير المهذبة هما التحية والعرض كعاملين مساعدين لتحليل البيانات , اختتمت الدراسة التداولية بنتائج اهمها : اكثر التعابير المهذبة في الانكليزية تتبع موديل براون وليفنسن على الرغم من وجود موديلات اخرى لهذه التعابير , المواقف الرسمية وغير الرسمية تلعب دوراً في استراتيجيات هذه التعابير في الإنكليزية , اما في العربية فان التعابير المهذبة تكون اكثر أهمية من التعابير المهذبة في اللغة الإنكليزية بسبب تأثيرها النفسي على المستمع إضافة الى تأثيرها في السلوك ومراعاة الاخلاق .

الكلمات المفتاحية: سلوك، شكلي، حميم، ادب، التداولية

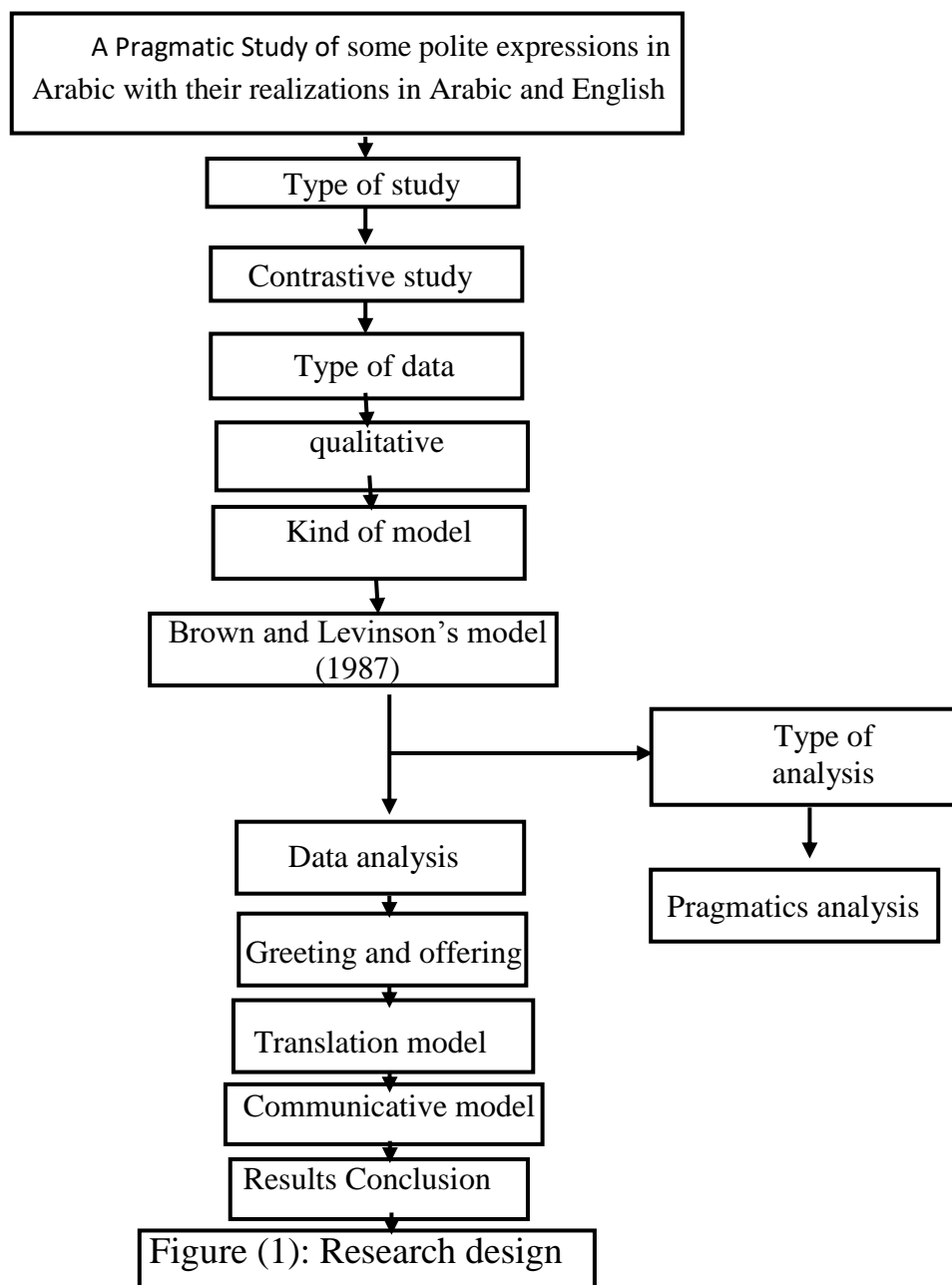
1. Introduction

Nasif (1989:136) says that some of the earliest contributions to the development of politeness in Arabic in the light of pragmatics have been presented but are insufficient. So, the study comes to compare and contrast some polite expressions in both Arabic and English and choose pragmatic analysis to show the difference between Arabic and English.

Lewis (2005:364) states that not all global languages are characterized by the concept of politeness in spite of some differences. Politeness is pertinent quality in Arabic and it refers to linguistic style, polite, and pleasant behavior. Politeness in Arabic is also related to acts and sayings. It has two traits: The first one is to show respect for others and the second is to avoid rudeness or abruptness. In English, Linguistic politeness focuses on the use of language in social context which enables people to choose certain forms of expressions. It does not mean the way that is followed by people to be kind to each other or to obey social conventions but it can put language carefully in its social contexts (chapman, 2011:133). Many English scholars make contributions to politeness like Lakoff (1973); Leech (1983); Brown and Levinson (1987); Fraster (1990). All these linguists suggest that there is little agreement about the nature of politeness and how to explain it linguistically. Since there are some universal traits stated in Brown and Levinson's (1987) model. This model can receive a lot of attention in this study.

2. Design of the study

The research design explains the structure of the research and tries to relate all of the elements of the research together. It also includes all the important points from the beginning of the research until the last item of the research. (Creswell (2003:38)). The following diagram can express the design of study



3. The notion of politeness in Arabic

Politeness takes a wide range of different meanings in Arabic and English and what is known by a writer might not be known by other .3t is important to explain this point in some details>

Taha (1981:261) Points out that politeness in Arabic can refer to compliment and flattery. Sometimes politeness is concerned with ceremony and civilized behavior and this is the difference between politeness and almujamala. Berkoley (1990:71) argues that politeness and almujamala are different to each other since Arabic is quite different from English. Almujamala is strongly related to Arabic and it is impossible to separate from it and this is the nature of Arabic. Lewis (2005:362) affirms that politeness is not used remarkably in a large number of languages. Politeness is used clearly in Arabic and it is impossible for the Arabic speaker to overlook politeness in a lot of situations in language. Hassan (2006:343) ascertains that politeness in Arabic is connected directly with the cultural notion which is called “Almujamala”. It is expressed for different perception of both superiority and inferiority in processes of interaction. This concept is English equivalent to politeness, compliment, correctness, and pleasant conduct. Almujamala is of great importance to language. One bad word is uttered by someone without almujamala may arouse a big argument. On the contrary, only few words are uttered by a certain person with almujamala can overcome big problems and this is the influence of almujamala in the real use of language.

4. The Relationship between politeness and pragmatics

Annajar (1952:204) views that politeness in Arabic is used to describe behavior that shows respect and consideration for others. Each meaning which is used by a speaker and holds the attention of the listener is called a pragmatic meaning. Most of polite expressions which are used by speakers can draw attention of listeners whether these expressions include strong or simple words in their meaning. Hence, all polite expressions have distinguished meanings and psychological effects on listeners. Polite expressions show good manner that is used by a speaker so as to be helpful and thoughtful towards a listener that may upset others. Thus, almujamala includes attractive meanings which are used by a speaker in order to attract attention of the listener. Almujamala and influential meaning are treated alike and the truth of attractive and influential meaning is pragmatics itself. Moreover, no goals to be achieved without almujamala and this are the essence of the relationship between politeness and pragmatics in Arabic.

5. Real meaning of politeness in Arabic

Ayad (1988:159) views that politeness in Arabic 'almujamala' is not related to formal and informal situations nor does mean a type of ties or relations among people. In other words, either the situation is defined as formal or informal and regarded as the type of relationship among individuals within community; courteous behavior and showing respect to others are considered to be the main fundamentals of almujamala in social interactions.

6. Differences in politeness between Arabic and English

Lewis (2005:364) states that politeness originates in Arabic, especially in the first forms of polite styles, interaction and communication. Almujaamala is one of the most important traits of Arabic where all languages are not characterized with this property and even some of languages have this characteristic but it is different from that of English and this is the nature of languages since language is created by God and it is not created by man. Politeness also has a psychological effect on a listener because a speaker uses an influential meaning even though the words are simple or vigorous. Chapman (2011:133) illustrates that linguistic politeness is strongly related to the study that tries to explain why people say please, and thank, and avoid unpleasant expressions. Politeness does not refer to a way of explaining how people are not be kind and liked among others. Politeness is also concerned with a speaker that he is very clear in his interests to impart information. It is important to explain these facts in the following table:

Table (1): Differences in politeness between Arabic and English

Arabic	Courtesy	Wide use	Psychological effect	Morally and behavior	Very polite way
English	Non-courtesy	Limited use	No psychological effect	Tradition	Not very polite way

(source: Lewis (2005:364) and chapman (2011:133).

7. Politeness politeness and interaction in Arabic

Hassan (2006:348) asserts that there are three basic elements of interaction: (1) a particular way of looking at or understanding the habits and traditions, e.g., when a husband in the Arabic community tries to talk about his wife, he does not have to mention her name, and he tries to use other expression such as زوجتي (my wife), المعزبة (house keeper, house wife), ام الاولاد (the mother of children), and اهلي (my family); (2) it is significant to look at and think about individual ethic and (3) it is

preferable to understand specific area of activity, i.e. it is possible for someone to use expressions which are stated from lower to higher status. In regard to this case, there are honorific expressions concerned with the use of plural forms instead of singular ones.

8. Salient stylistic devices and almujamala

Almutawakl (1985:189) remarks that there are two basic stylistic devices that make or organize the essence of almujamala and they are summarized as follows, (1) The difference in use between singular and plural forms in relation to individuals. Linguistic knowledge of almujamala is involved with lexical substitution in both the pronominal and the verbal system. In Arabic, the verbal system includes a set of verbs which are neutral in relation to politeness. It is necessary to give a typical example (اشرب الشاي) to express this issue whereas one used the following expressions: (تفضلوا بشرب الشاي) او (تفضل اشرب الشاي).

These two expressions are used instead of (اشرب الشاي). As for the pronominal system, plural forms can be used instead of singular form as in (تفضلوا), the forms of first person plural can be used instead of second ones, e.g. (يجب ان توحدوا جهودكم) instead (يجب ان نوحدهم), the form of the third person pronouns are used instead of second ones, e.g. (ينفضل الاخ) (تفضل بألقاء القصيدة) instead of (بألقاء القصيدة) and there are other forms used as honored expressions like (جنابكم , سيادة , سيادتكم , حضرت , حضرتكم)

2. The other basic stylistic device refers to self-lowering and other subsidiary-raising forms which are present in colloquial Arabic.

9. English basic views on politeness

Grice chooses the maxim of “be polite” and this basic principle of politeness has seen a number of new developments in this respect. Lakoff (1973:299) refers to two principles of pragmatic competence as well as three subsidiary maxims and these three subsidiary maxims are derived from “Be clear and Be polite”. They are as follows: don’t impose, Give options, and make a feel good. The first is formal politeness, the second is informal but the third is intimate politeness.

Lakoff (1974:46) rewrites this principle or maxim in a different way to be as in the following words:

Formality: keep a loaf

reference: give options

Camaraderie: show sympathy

Grice cited in Lakoff (1973:299) and Lakoff (1974:38) suggest that the facts and principles in politeness come so as to carry out what the speaker wants to tell others. In real conversations, politeness does not take care of any other considerations of directness, brevity, and truthfulness because the purpose of conversation is to strengthen and reinforce relationships rather than conveying information. Besides, different cultures regard certain rules to be much more preferable than others.

9-1. Politeness models

Leech (1983: 32) tries to give more details to Grice's and lakoff's ideas concerning politeness where he suggests that politeness is placed within the field of interpersonal rhetoric which is concerned with cooperative principle (CP). Chapman (2011:185) asserts that cooperative principle is a helpful element to explain the general forms that account for the communicative use of language and styles of interactive behavior. Many models, concepts, and maxims appeared after Grice but all maxims are not important and this depends on kind of maxims. It is significant to look at the tact maxim which is much more powerful than the generosity maxim which says politeness is focused much on the other than the self. This opinion, according to leech, clarifies the truth of the English community whereas the generosity maxim plays a prominent role in the polite communication in the Arab communities. There is another Leech's (1983) model which is based on drawing a distinction between relative and absolute politeness.

Leech (1983:33) remarks that relative politeness is concerned with a specific situation. As for absolute politeness, it is deep rooted and inherent in specific actions. He adds that some illocutions, i.e. (orders) are regarded as impolite means but other orders such as offers, they are basically polite styles. Fraser (1990:229) seems to disagree with leech (1983:33) by stating that there are many examples and they are not similar to this case because understanding politeness can be parables varied throughout cultures. In both Arabic and English societies, there are different concepts and matters in politeness, e.g., asking peculiar questions about personal issues such as marital status, address, job, and income which are

conceived impolite in English. In Arabic, one who tries to ask somebody about personal issues, he is judged to be intrusive, i.e. one who puts his nose in other people's issues.

Beeman (1986:106) views that some societies have different opinions about asking strange questions that are related to personal

matters. Asking such questions is considered to be a polite way so as to reinforce a key of conversation among participants as in Persian society.

9.2 Brown and Levison Views on politeness

First of all, Brown, P. and Levison, S.C. express their theory clearly and exactly based on Goffman's (1967) notion concerning face model and this model is intended in order to describe politeness in a large number of languages. Brown and Levison (1987:62) say that a person who is competent to be a fluent speaker of natural language has two traits: rationality and face and this are the main idea of face model. They add something to the term "face" to be the public self-image that everybody intends to claim for himself. This term has two related notions: negative face and positive face. Negative face is concerned with a desire of every competent adult member that his desires are acceptable with some members. These two types of face can include two similar interactive manners: positive politeness which is counterpart to positive face-want and Negative politeness which has a similar position to negative face-wants. Nelson (1981:99) seems to agree with Fraser (1990:233) about adopting Grice's idea concerning the co-operative principle. Based on their views on politeness as a conversational contract (CC); conversation participants must be bound by a group of obligations and rights and consequently they are fixed to be principles of politeness.

9.3 Paramount strategies in Brown and Levinson's model

Brown and Levinson (1987:66) stress that a model in language can impose something unconsciously on both a speaker and hearer. Face-Threatening Acts (FTA) is one of acts that are imposed on the hearer and the speaker. Therefore; they try to keep doing it out of several strategies. The speaker holds the responsibility to use strategies which achieve something out of communication. There are positive politeness and Negative politeness strategies (PPS, NPS). In regard to (PPS), it is a kind of politeness which is exercised among friends. (NPS) and (PPS) are the abbreviation for polite not by intimate. Off-Record strategies (ORS) are concerned with the excessive use of polite language, and they cannot execute all acts in communication. In all aspects and trends, the efficient communication is significant and other aspects are much more important than face. So, speakers use Bald-On-Record (BOR) which is the significant element to play a vital role in using most direct language in order to convey information and facts. Grice (1975:50) views that co-operative principles (cp) involves in defining the general forms that describe the communicative use of language. It also refers

to styles of interactive behavior including linguistic forms that are chosen by people to present themselves and make their own social relationships out of dialogue and conversation. Therefore, the little polite behavior happens when speakers use (BoR). The most important polite behavior occurs when speakers use (ORS) depending on ORS. The speaker executes a certain act indirectly but the illocutionary force is vague. The model in its final form can be seen as follows (BOR), (PPS), (NPS) and) ORS)

10. The Nature of Politeness Strategies

Sifianou (1992:108) remarks that the strategy does not do the FTA in the English society which is not the most polite reaction if the talk is expected. There is not a separate super strategy but an off-record politeness strategy may be positive or negative. Gu (1990:243) gives example to refer that offering, inviting, and promising in Chinese are not regarded as threat under usual conditions. Ide (1989:232) mentions that there are two ways to indicate polite usage: the use of honorifics and plain forms like verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs. The first one is much more polite than the use of plain forms. Japanese is regarded as an honorific language but it is difficult for the native speaker of Japanese to make a sentence that is suitable for different situations. Simple sentences can reflect the speaker and the hearer ranks and their ties to each other. O'Driscoll (1996:24) asserts that differences should be treated based on (PPS) and (NPS) provided that cultures are consistent with them. Brown and Levinson are not very concerned in the universality of negative face but they intend to follow a cultural bias which is derived from western liberalism.

11. Data analysis

The current study depends specifically on (ORS), (NPS), (PPS), and (BoR) as a method of analysis in the two languages Arabic and English. It is significant to concentrate on the analysis out of possessing features of (ORS), (NPS), (PPS), and (BoR) or not possessing these features in Arabic and English. The analysis only relies on two polite expressions: Greetings and offering.

Example No. (1): Greetings

Arabic (S): الله يساعدكم

(L): الحمد لله على السلامة

English (S): How are you?

(L): I am glad. You are o.k.

(×): no agreement

(√): agreement

(S): speaker, (L): listener

Greetings are examples of (BoR). The speaker does not have to commit himself to Grice's maxim. Co-operative principle (cp); the speaker follows (BoR) strategy, Greetings may also be regarded as acts with specific markers of positive face. This is acceptable in both Arabic and English. The Arabic speaker (A) tries to use second person plural forms which are attached to the former noun so as to express his respect to the listener or addressee. As for functional perspective, units of discourse in both Arabic and English are the same in this category. The following table explains the point:

Table (1): Analysis of example No. (1)

Language	Speaker	BoR	PPS	NPS	ORS
Arabic	A (S)	√	√	√	×
	B (L)	√	√	√	×
English	A (S)	√	√	×	×
	B (L)	√	√	×	×

Throughout scanning the table No. (1) above, the same expressions can be used in order to convey polite behavior whether they are formal or informal situations and show relationships among expressions.

Example No. (2): offering

Arabic (S): تفضلوا السمك عسى ان يعجبكم

(L): ممنون بالعافية

English (S): Have some roasted fish?

(L): Thanks, bon appetite.

(PPS) seems to be used in offering situations in both Arabic and English; yet they are different in regard to (NPS) and (ORS). English speakers try to choose (PPS) rather than something else, i.e. they prefer using (PPS) to select other strategies. Arabic speakers can use different ways in these situations. The following table is expressive:

Table (2): Analysis of example No. (2)

Language	Speaker	BoR	PPS	NPS	ORS
Arabic	A (S)	×	√	√	√
	B (L)	×	√	√	√
English	A (S)	×	√	×	×
	B (L)	×	√	×	×

It is significant to say that (PPS) is used in offering situations; yet they seem to be in regard to both (NPS) and (ORS). There are differences in (PPS), (NPS) and (ORS) between Arabic and English when they used in offering situations.

English speakers prefer to use (PPS) rather than something else but Arabic speakers try to use different strategies in this kind of situations. English and Arabic are also different in using (BoR) with regard to other strategies like (NPS) and (ORS).

12. Conclusion

There is a difference in the concept of politeness between Arabic and English. Most situations in politeness in English can be related to Brown and Levinson's (1987) model; yet the Arabic polite expressions cannot be classified within the classes of (PPS) and (NPS). because there are a lot of differences between Arabic and English, there are some similarities too. In order to achieve an active communication, the two languages can follow the same strategies concerning (BoR) and (ORS). There is also an overlap between these strategies in Arabic and the Arab speakers try to use a set of these strategies to execute an illocutionary act. Throughout investigating, it is observed that English and Arabic are the same in using (BoR), (PPS), and (ORS) strategies; yet they differ with each other on their use in regard to (NPS). The English concentrate on formal, informal situations and relationships between interaction systems. But there is no such impact of these points on Arabic in this respect. The study recommends that politeness and pragmatics in both Arabic and English should include a considerable portion in academic curricula. The following topics are suggested for further studies: A pragmatic study of politeness in some texts in Nahjulbalagha with Reference to English, A study of some polite Arabic proverbs in pragmatics with reference to English.

References

- Almutawkl, A. (19985):** Arabic and pragmatic functions, Cairo: Cullure house.
- Annajar, A.M. (1952):** Abkhazia's, Lebanon, And Beirut: The Arab book Centre.
- Ayed, S. (1988):** language and innovation, Cairo: General Egyptian board for books.
- Beeman, W. (1986):** Language status and power in Iran, Bloomington:
Indiana University press.
- Berkeley, H. (1990):** Introduction to semantics, Baghdad: publications of ministry of
in for motion.
- Brown, P. and levinson, S. (1987):** politeness: some universals of
language usage, Cambridge:
Cambridge University press.
- Chapman, S. (2011):** pragmatics, U.S.A: Palgrave Machilian.
- Creswell, J.W. (2003):** Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods
approaches (2nded.), U.S.A, Inc.
- Fraster, B. (1990):** A dictionary of modern written Arabic, Wiesbaden:
Otto Harrassowitz.
- Goffman, E. (1967):** Interaction Ritual: Essays on face to face
Behaviour, New York: Doubleday.
- Grice, H.P. (1975):** "Logic and Conversation" in P. Cole and S.L.
Morgan (Eds). Syntax and semantics. PP. 41-58.
New york: Academic press.
- Gu, Y. (1990):** politeness in Modern Chinese, Journal of pragmatics, NO.
(14), PP. 239-257.
- Hassan, T. (2006):** Arabic language: its meaning and its structure, 5th
edition, Cairo: Books world.
- Ide, S (1989):** formal forms and discernment, Two Neglected Aspects of universals
of linguistic pohteness, Multilingua, NO. (8), PP. 223-248.
- Lakoff, R.T. (1973):** "The logic of politeness". Chicago linguistic society, PP. 293-
305.
- Leech, G. (1983):** politeness of pragmatics, London: Longman.
- Lewis, M. (2004):** language and society, Beirut, Thought Centre.

Nasif, M. (1989): language between rhetoric and stylistics, Arabia Sudia, Jada, Cultural Centre.

Nelon, W. (1981): “The Association of Deference with linguistic form”.

International of sociology of language, 27, PP. 93-109.

O’Drriscoll, J. (1996): About face: A Defense and Elaboration About Universal Dualism, Journal of pragmatics, 25, PP. 1-32.

Sifianou, M. (1992): politeness phenomena in Greece and English,

Oxford: Oxford University press.

Taha, A. (1981): Addalaiyat Watadaweliyat, Morocco, Rabat:

Publications of college of Arts and human sciences.

