

Request-Response Strategies Used by Algerian and Jordanian PhD Students**Benbouya Amel¹**¹ University of Bejaia (Algeria), amel.benbouya@univ-bejaia.dz**Summary:**

The present study aims at investigating the request-response strategies in both Algerian Spoken Arabic (ASA) and Jordanian Spoken Arabic (JSA). The participants of the study are 48 PhD students. To collect data, a Discourse Completion Task (DCT), consisting of eight scenarios, is used in the present study. The collected data are analyzed based on a modified version of the request-response strategies adopted by Schunk (1983). The results reveal several similarities and differences between Algerians and Jordanians in their use of the request-response strategies in both formal and informal situations. Moreover, the findings indicate that there are no significant cultural differences between the two groups. The study reveals a cultural similarity regarding the two groups who are influenced by the religious factor "swearing" when responding to requests. In this cultural respect, the only difference observed between Algerians and Jordanians is in their pronunciation which is due to dialectal differences.

Keywords: Algerian students; Jordanian students; pragmatics; request-response strategies; speech acts

INTRODUCTION

In the field of second language acquisition (SLA) and foreign language learning (FLL), communicative competence is of considerable importance. It entails the individual's knowledge of not only grammatical rules but also pragmatic considerations of the target language. Brown (2000) stated that communication is not simply an event, it is functional and purposive, and refers to a series of communicative acts (speech acts) which are used to accomplish a particular purpose in conversation.

Research in SLA has shown that learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) might fail to communicate effectively in the target (TL) due to

the lack of pragmatic competence in the target language. Even if these speakers have a good background of grammatical and lexical knowledge of the language, the lack of pragmatic competence may lead speakers to communication breakdowns. Hence, the acquisition of pragmatic competence plays an important role in communicating successfully and effectively in the TL.

Slotta (2021) asserted that pragmatics investigates how language is related to the contexts in which it is used. It includes a wide range of issues such as deixis, presupposition, speech acts, implicatures, politeness, and information structure. In other words, pragmatics is about how more gets communicated than said (the unsaid). It refers to the ability to infer the speaker's intended meaning with the relation to the context in which language is used.

Importantly, pragmatic competence is further seen through the way of realization of the different speech acts. This is further confirmed by Deda (2013) who reported that the choices that individuals make to ask for requests from their interlocutors are part of their pragmatic competence and can influence their communication with others. Therefore, one needs to be aware when communicating as Searle (1969) maintained that, all linguistic communication involves the production of speech acts.

According to Yule (1996, p.47), speech acts are defined as "actions performed via utterances" such as refusals, complaints, apologies, congratulations, requests, and so on. Each speech act is associated with a specific illocutionary meaning (the conventional force of the act performed).

Importantly, Brown and Levinson (1987) reported that requests are face-threatening acts (FTAs) since both the speaker's and hearer's faces are at risk when the request is performed. Responses to speech acts, nevertheless, are important in their own since in our daily conversation, different speech acts, whether direct or indirect, come in the form of adjacency pairs. That is, each speech act is followed by a response.

Accordingly, the present study examines the responses to the speech act of request. Particularly, the study aims at investigating how request-response strategies are realized in the two Arabic varieties, the Algerian Spoken Arabic and the Jordanian Spoken Arabic. Thus it aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the request-response strategies used by the Algerian and Jordanian PhD students?
2. Are there any cultural differences between Algerians and Jordanians in responding to requests?
3. Does the degree of formality affect the participants' choice of the request-response strategy?

2. Literature Review

This section reviews the previous literature on the speech act of request, and

responding to requests among Arab speakers (Algerians, Jordanians, Saudis) and speakers of other languages (Americans, Iranians, etc). Within this section, studies are classified under two headings: request studies of Arab speakers (local dialect and English as EFL) which focus on investigating the speech act of request as realized by Arabs in their dialect and in English as EFL; request studies involving non-Arab speakers (Americans, Iranians, etc) which examine the speech act of request as realized in languages other than Arabic (American English), and by EFL learners as well (Iranian EFL learners).

2.1 Requests Studies of Arab Speakers (Local dialect and English as EFL)

Al-Natour et al. (2015) studied the pragmatics of politeness with reference to the core request strategies adopted by the Jordanian students in an academic setting. The study involved 50 participants, including 45 males and 45 females.

To this end, data was collected by means of a DCT, which consisted of 14 situations to which students were asked to react to. Moreover, the study used a self-assessment method, which was in the form of a rating scale that the participants were asked to use in order to rate the imposition of their requests on a 5-point scale. The data was analyzed according to a CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project) developed by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) and the theory of politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987).

The results of the study showed that the Jordanian students used different strategies which were in the following order: inquiry strategy, mind strategy, permission strategy, appreciation strategy and finally preparatory strategy. The preparatory strategy accounted for 335/700, that is, 47.86% of the total core request strategies used by Jordanian students. Such strategy is considered a polite and indirect strategy. Thus, it can be argued that the Jordanian students preferred to be polite and indirect in their choice of request strategies, which reflects their culture and religious values. However, the use of direct strategies could be attributed to intimacy and solidarity between Jordanian students.

In the Algerian context, Atamna (2016) examined the English notion of (in)directness strategies and politeness in the requests of the Algerian advanced learners of English. The study involved Master two students.

The data of the study consisted of learners' emails sent to four of their faculty members. The total number collected from the teachers was 100 emails. Only 80 emails which involved the speech act of request were selected for the study. The emails were classified based on the learners' aims into requests for information (request for feedback, request for advice) and requests for action (request for reference books, request for fixing an appointment). The data was analyzed based on the classification proposed by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989).

The findings of the study revealed that there is a correlation between the learners' type of request strategies and their level of language proficiency. Moreover, the study indicated that the learners' pragmatic performance in English

is influenced by their pragmatic knowledge. In other words, the learners tend to transfer their culture-specific patterns when realizing requests in English. Furthermore, directness in the realization of the learners' requests does not necessarily imply impoliteness. However, it rather expresses closeness and affiliation.

Similarly, examining Algerian requests, El Hadj Said (2016) examined the ways in which Algerians realize requests according to Brown's and Levinson's politeness strategies and the classification of requests proposed by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). The participants of the study were 60 Algerians (28 males and 32 females).

Data was collected by means of a DCT proposed by Blum-Kulka (1982). The DCT contained five situations which vary with regards to the social factors; the social power, the social distance, the request ranking, age, and gender. Data was analyzed according to the politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson, and the request strategies proposed by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989).

The results showed that the participants preferred to use direct request strategies which are rather considered as solidarity politeness strategies because of the little social distance between the speaker and the addressee. The participants also referred to use positive politeness strategies when performing their requests. Moreover, the study concluded that polite request strategies and politeness strategies vary from a culture to another.

2.2 Request Studies involving Non-Arab Speakers and EFL learners

In a comparative study, Tawalbeh and Al-Oqaily (2012) compared the (in) directness and politeness in the request speech act of Saudi native speakers and American English native speakers. The participants of the study involved a randomly chosen group of 30 Saudi and American undergraduate students. The participants included both males and females.

To collect data, a DCT adopted by Reiter (2000) was used in the study. The DCT contained 12 written context-enriched situations. The situations were in reference to the requestive goal, social distance, social dominance, the role-relationship, the length of acquaintance, a description of the setting, and the frequency of the interaction. The data was analyzed based on the coding scheme proposed by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989).

The findings of the study revealed that conventional indirectness was the most frequently used strategy by the American sample. However, the request strategies used by the Saudi sample varied according to the social variables of power and social distance. Moreover, the findings revealed that directness differed cross cultures. In other words, American students used direct requests with their friends with the intention that the request is not weighty. Whereas, Saudi students preferred direct strategies in intimate situations where such strategies are

considered as an expression of closeness, affiliation and group-connectedness rather than impoliteness.

Schunk (2013) examined the strategies that elementary teachers and students used in responding to requests. To collect data, teachers were given 20 student requests and were asked to respond spontaneously to each request as they would in a classroom setting. Likewise, students were presented with 20 teachers requests. The teachers responded to the students' requests and rated each one according to imposition. Similarly, the students followed the same procedure with regards to the teachers' requests.

The results of the study revealed that both teachers and students considered their requests to be different with regards to imposition. The teachers considered students' requests to be more of an imposition. However, the students did not have the same perception towards the teachers' requests. Thus, the teachers had the tendency to respond with simple compliance, and were more likely to comply conditionally or not comply. Nevertheless, the students preferred to respond with simple compliance.

In the Iranian context, Ebadi and Seidi (2015) investigated the request preferences of Iranian EFL learners. They also tried to find out whether gender and proficiency level have an influence on the pragmatic competence of the learners. The participants of the study were 34 EFL learners, including 18 males and 16 females.

The testing instruments used to collect data were a DCT and a proficiency test as well. The DCT contained 15 request situations that were translated into Persian. The proficiency test constituted of 60 item multiple-choice test which includes close passages, pronunciation and vocabulary structure as well. Data was analyzed to show the role of gender on the learners' realization of requests and the relationship between the learners' L2 proficiency level and the use of request strategies.

The findings of the study indicated that gender and the level of proficiency of the learners had an effect on the choice of the request strategy type. Moreover, the findings revealed that females preferred indirect request strategies. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that directness decreased as long as linguistic proficiency increased, and thus indirectness increases with linguistic proficiency level.

Accordingly, the present study is an attempt to fill the gap in literature about the speech act of responding to requests in the Algerian context. To the researchers' best knowledge, no study has addressed the speech act of responding to requests in the Algerian context as most studies investigated and examined the realization of the speech act of request in itself, not responding to requests (Atamna; 2016;. El Hadj Said, 2016; Benkacher & Bouteraa, 2021)

Therefore, this study is significant as it seeks to contribute to theoretical pragmatics and to the growing body of research in speech acts and in cross-cultural comparisons. Moreover, the present study expands our knowledge and understanding of cross-cultural pragmatics through exposing how language varieties differ from one to another.

2.3 Synthesis of the Findings of Previous Studies

By reviewing the above studies, we clearly notice that for Arab speakers, the studies are mostly consistent in their findings. It is shown that Arabs (Algerians, Jordanians) prefer indirect strategies and polite strategies to reduce threatening the face of the addressee. Nevertheless, the results indicate that politeness varies from one culture to another. Likewise, for non-Arab speakers studying English as an EFL, the findings are rather consistent with each other. EFL learners tend to prefer an indirect style such as Tawalbeh and Al-Oqaily' (2012) study that reported that American students prefer to use mitigated refusals. However, the reviewed studies also indicate that the learners' level of proficiency has an effect on their performance (Ebadi and Seidi, 2015).

3. Methodology

The present part provides a description of the research method used in the study. It consists of three main headings. The first provides information about the participants. The second describes the data collection instrument. The third illustrates the process of data analysis and coding.

3.1 Participants

As for the population of this study, it is composed of Algerian and Jordanian PhD students majoring in English linguistics at the University of Jordan. The sample of the study consists of 48 PhD students, including males and females (24 Jordanians and 24 Algerians). The Algerian group includes one male and 23 females, whereas, the Jordanian group includes 12 males and 12 females.

3.2 Data Collection Instrument

The study took place at the University of Jordan during the academic year 2022 (April). In order to investigate the patterns and linguistic forms that the Algerian and Jordanian PhD students use in responding to requests in ASA and JSA respectively, a written DCT prepared by the researcher was adopted in the present study.

The DCT was written in English and consists of eight situations, including four formal situations and four informal situations. The participants were requested to react to the situations as they would do in a real life situation and answer in their spoken Arabic.

The formal situations refer to contexts with certain social distance, power, or professional perspective (academic setting, workplace, etc). They include

situation: 1, 3, 6, and 8. Whereas, the informal situations consist of casual or personal contexts (family, friends, or peers). They include situation: 2, 4, 5 and 7.

To check the reliability and validity of the DCT, the questionnaire was shown to two Jordanian teachers who suggested some modifications regarding the choice of some items. The teachers' feedback was taken into consideration and those items were modified accordingly.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data collected via the DCT were analyzed based on a modified version of the request-response strategies adopted by Schunk (1983). These strategies are the following (consider the underlined strategies):

1. *Compliance only*: Responses in this category indicate acceptance and included no additional response. In other words, the speaker simply accepts the request without providing explanations or conditions, for example:

A: Can you help me with this exercise?

B: Sure.

2. *Compliance+ conditional*: These responses showed compliance, but it was qualified. The speaker shows willingness to comply, but only if certain conditions are met. An example of this is the following:

A: Would you mind proofreading my thesis today?

B: No problem, as long as you send it before 10 pm.

3. *Clarification*: These responses neither accepted nor refused the request, but sought information from the requester. That is to say, the speaker asks for more information or details when he/she does not understand the request, for instance:

A: Can you send me the file?

B: The monthly file or the excel one?

A: I meant the Excel one.

B: I will check if it is prepared and let you know.

4. *Noncompliance only*: Such responses showed noncompliance and included no additional information. In other words, the speaker refuses a request with no explanation, no apology to soften the refusal, for example:

A: Can I borrow your laptop?

B: No.

5. *Noncompliance + explanation*. These responses indicated noncompliance, but included explanation. That is to say, the speaker rejects the request but provides a reason or justification to soften the refusal and reduce the face-threatening effect of saying "no". An example of this is:

A: Can I borrow your car tomorrow?

B: No, I need it early tomorrow for work.

6. Noncompliance + apology: These responses showed noncompliance, but included asking for apology. That is, the speaker refuses a request but provides an apology to show empathy or regret, for example:

A: Could you check my presentation today?

B: I am really sorry, but I cannot.

4. Results

The findings concerning both groups of participants are presented in the following four tables. Since the DCT used in the present study contains formal and informal situations, we analyzed the results in terms of these situations (formal and informal) to present the findings of both groups. Thus, table 01 and 02 present the strategies employed by Algerian participants in formal and informal situations, respectively. Whereas, table 03 and table 04 present the strategies used by Jordanian participants in formal and informal situations, respectively.

Table 01: Request-response strategies used by Algerian students in formal situations:

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Compliance only	28	29.17%
Noncompliance + apology	28	29.17%
Compliance + conditional	27	28.12%
Noncompliance + explanation	13	13.54%
Total	96	100%

Table 01 above shows the types of strategies used by Algerian PhD students to respond to requests in formal situations (situations 1, 3, 6, and 8). It also shows the frequency and percentage of each strategy type adopted.

The results show that the most frequently used strategies by Algerian participants in formal situations are the compliance only strategy and the noncompliance + apology strategy. Both strategies occurred 28 times, accounting for 29.17% of all strategies used. This indicates that the Algerians are sensitive to the degree of formality. That is, they most frequently either comply with their interlocutors or apologize if they do not comply. This may be attributed to the fact that they want to show respect and politeness towards their interlocutors and avoid being direct.

Regarding the compliance only strategy, the results show that the Algerian students' responses typically involve compliance only responses such as: (situation 8) ايه، أكيد ما كان حتى مشکل "yes, sure, there is no problem". On the other hand, the noncompliance + apology strategy involve responses such as: situation 3 "forgive me, I cannot". The compliance + conditional strategy is the second mostly used

strategy which registered 27 occurrences accounting for 28.12% of the whole strategies.

This implies that the Algerians also comply conditionally in formal contexts. However, such strategy is mainly realized when refusing either a lower status or an equal status person which shows sensitivity towards the social status variable (as it is not used with higher status persons). Examples of such strategy include: situation 1: أوك أو، نأجلو بَصَح الدروس يدخلو كامل في الإمتحانات حتى الدرس المسؤولية تتحملو أنتوما، اللخر: "Ok, I will delay it, but all the lectures will be included in the exam, even the last lecture, you assume your responsibility". This example involves students asking their teacher to delay the exam date so as to have time and prepare better for it. In responding to this request, the teacher accepts the request, but conditionally.

The following third strategy is the noncompliance + explanation strategy which is less frequently used by the participants. It occurred 13 times, accounting for 13.54% of all response strategies. The use of this strategy reveals that the participants value their interlocutor, and this is shown in the ways they tend to refuse the request of their interlocutor. Therefore, whenever the participants do not comply with the request, they tend to justify and explain the reason behind their refusals so as to avoid appearing offensive. Moreover, they even tend to swear to indicate that they really cannot perform the request, indicating their desire to show respect and worth towards their interlocutor.

The noncompliance + explanation strategy involve responses such as the following: situation 3: والله، مانجم عندي صوالح و "I swear I cannot, I have something to do". Finally, the clarification strategy and the noncompliance only strategy do not occur in the responses of the participants (0%). This can be considered as positive about the Algerian participants since the use of such strategies, particularly the noncompliance only strategy threatens the face of the hearer, and makes the requestee seems too direct or even rude.

Accordingly, the results demonstrate that in formal situations, the Algerian participants are more likely to simply comply. Otherwise, when they do not comply simply, they tend to either ask their interlocutors for apology, comply with a condition or provide an explanation. Importantly, in formal situations, the participants avoid asking for clarification and noncomplying at all as well. This implies that the participants tend to avoid being offensive and harsh in a formal context.

Table 02: Request-response strategies used by Algerian students in informal situations

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Noncompliance+ explanation	28	29.17%
Compliance + conditional	26	27.08%

Compliance only	16	16.67%
Clarification	12	12.50%
Noncompliance+ apology	10	10.41%
Noncompliance only	4	4.17%
Total	96	100

Table 02 above demonstrates the types of strategies employed by Algerian students to respond to requests in informal situations (situations 2, 4, 5, and 7). The table also shows the frequency and percentage of each strategy type used.

A quick look at table 2 shows that the most frequently used strategy by Algerian students in informal situations is the noncompliance + explanation strategy which occurred 28 times, accounting for 29.17% of all strategies. This shows that even though the Algerian participants do not mostly comply in informal situations, they tend to explain the reason behind not accepting the request they were asked for.

This demonstrates that the participants wish to seem polite and avoid direct refusal, hence, they try to provide their interlocutor with explanations whenever they refuse. An example of this strategy include: situation 7: عندي عرس ولد عمتي "Tomorrow, I won't be a home, I have a marriage wedding of my cousin". In this example, the participant explains the reason behind his/her refusal.

The second most frequently used strategy is the compliance + conditional strategy which occurred 26 times, accounting for 27.8% of all strategies used. This implies that in informal situations, the participants mostly comply but conditionally as they are interacting with persons with whom they have intimate relationship, and a close social distance such as family members, friends, and neighbors. This strategy type involved responses such as: situation 5: استحفظ عليها ، راهي أمانة عندك "fine, you can take it, but pay attention to it, my trusts sheep about it". In this example, the requestee complies conditionally to a request coming from a friend. These two strategies are followed by the compliance only strategy which occurred 16 times, accounting for 16.67% of all strategies.

This indicates that Algerians are less likely to comply simply in informal situations. Such strategy includes responses such as: situation 4: واش حببيتي نشريك "That's a pleasure for me my lovely sister, I will buy you whatever you want".

The fourth strategy is the clarification strategy, it is not frequently used, and occurred 12 times accounting for 12.5% of all strategies. An example of this strategy is: situation 4: قالوك عليا بونكا ؟ "Have you been told that I am a bank for money?".

Actually, the use of clarification in informal situations can be attributed to the fact that the interactants are familiar with each other, and thus feel the right to express whatever they think of towards the request they are faced with. The noncompliance+ apology strategy is the fifth used strategy. It occurred only ten times accounting for 10.41% of the whole strategies employed. This reveals that

the respondents are less likely to apologize in informal situations, and this may be due to the fact that they do not treat familiar people formally. An example of this strategy is: situation 5: العزيز ، اللوطو نحتاجها ، عندي مريض في الدار نقدرش ما و نمدهالك "Sorry my dear friend, I need the car, I have a relative who is ill, and I cannot give it to you".

The least strategy used by the Algerian participants in informal situations is the noncompliance only strategy which occurred only four times, accounting for 4.17% of all strategies.

Therefore, this indicates that in informal situations, the participants avoid using the noncompliance only strategy which makes them seem direct and rude. hence, they tend to avoid it. An example of this strategy is: situation 7: ما تصراسش ، لا "No, it will not happen". Interestingly, it can be argued that in informal situations, the Algerian participants are more likely to use the noncompliance + explanation strategy. In other words, although the Algerian participants rarely comply simply with their interlocutors, they avoid not complying at all as this may cause an offense with the interlocutor. They are either not complying but with explanation, complying conditionally, or not complying but with asking for clarification or for apology from the interlocutor in order to mitigate the refusal and avoid face threatening as well.

Table 03: request-response strategies used by Jordanian students in formal situations

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Compliance only	41	42.71%
Noncompliance + explanation	20	20.83%
Noncompliance + apology	13	13.54%
Compliance + conditional	10	10.41%
Noncompliance only	9	9.38%
Clarification	3	3.13%
Total	96	100%

Table 03 above shows the types of strategies used by Jordanian PhD students to respond to requests in formal situations (situations 1, 3, 6 and 8). The table also shows the frequency and percentage of each strategy type used.

The table 3 shows that the most frequently used strategy by the Jordanian participants is the compliance only strategy which occurred 41 times, accounting for 42.71% of all strategies used. This shows that in formal situations, the Jordanian participants are more likely to comply. This may be due to the fact that they want to show respect towards their interlocutor with whom there is a difference in the social status or social distance. An example of this strategy is: situation 8: أوك تفضلي، "Okay, you are welcome", "Of course, there is no problem".

The second mostly used strategy is the noncompliance + explanation strategy which occurred 20 times, accounting for 20.83% of all the strategies. That is, when the participants do not comply, they tend to provide explanations for their refusal to avoid being offensive with the interlocutor. An example of this strategy involves the following: situation 1: التاريخ انْخَطَ انتهو، لأنّو صعب أرضي الجميع: "The date is fixed and it is over now, because I cannot satisfy everyone".

The third most frequently used strategy is the noncompliance + apology strategy. This strategy occurred 13 times, accounting for 13.54% of all strategies. The use of such strategy indicates that the Jordanian participants ask for apology when they have to refuse and cannot comply. This prevents them from creating an offense with the addressee which in turn minimizes the effect of directness. The following example illustrates such strategy: situation 3: آسفة، ما بقدر اللهو "Sorry, I swear I cannot".

The compliance + conditional strategy is the fourth followed strategy, occurring 10 times; accounting for 10.41%. This strategy shows that the Jordanian students tend to comply with a condition, mainly in situation 1, in which the teacher qualifies her compliance with the student's request to delay the date of the exam. This is illustrated through the following example: situation 1: هالشي بناسب الجميع: "For me, I have no problem if this fits everybody".

The least used strategies are the noncompliance only and the clarification strategies. The former occurred nine times, accounting for 9.38% of all strategies. An example of this strategy is: situation 1: لا، في تأجيل "No, there is no delay". Whereas, the latter occurred only 3 times, accounting for 3.13% of the whole strategies. An example of this strategy is: situation 1: طيب ليش: "Okay, why?" This reveals that these strategies are avoided by the Jordanian students in formal situations.

Interestingly, in formal situations, the Jordanian participants are more likely to comply. However, if they do not comply, they tend to provide explanation, or ask for apology. The findings reveal that the Jordanians are less likely to use the compliance + conditional, noncompliance only; and the clarification strategies in formal situations.

Table 04: Request-response strategies used by Jordanian students in informal situations

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Noncompliance + explanation	42	43.75%
Compliance + conditional	17	17.70%
Compliance only	16	16.67%
Noncompliance only	9	9.38%
Clarification	8	8.33%
Noncompliance + apology	4	4.17%
Total	96	100%

Table 04 above demonstrates the types of strategies employed by the Jordanian PhD students to respond to requests in informal situations (situations 2, 4, 5 and 7). The table also shows the frequency and percentage of each strategy type used.

The findings in the table show that the most preferred strategy by the Jordanian participants in informal situations is the noncompliance + explanation strategy which occurred 42 times, accounting for 43.75% of all strategies. This indicates that in informal situations; Jordanians when they do not comply, they give explanations and justifications for doing so in order to soften their noncompliance. An example of this strategy is: situation 5: *صعب جدًا لأني، بحاجتها نهاية الأسبوع* "It is really difficult because I need it at the weekend".

The compliance + conditional strategy is the second mostly used strategy, it occurred 17 times, accounting for 17.70% of all response strategies, implying that the participants opt for complying but with a condition. This is may be because both the addresser and the addressee are familiar with each other, hence tend to impose conditionals. This strategy involve examples such as: situation 7: *ممكن بس، لازم نتفق* "Possible, but we have to agree" *يا جار ما تعزم يا جار* "That's fine my neighbor, but next time try to inform me before you invite someone".

The following third strategy is the compliance only strategy, which occurred 16 times, accounting for 16.67% of all strategies used. This shows that the Jordanian students are less likely to comply in informal situations. Examples of this strategy include: situation 2: *ف جيبك* "You can consider they are in your pocket", situation 4: *حاضر* "Okay".

The three following strategies are the less frequently used ones. The noncompliance only strategy which occurred nine times, accounting for 9.38% of all response strategies. This indicates that the participants avoided not complying at all in order not to seem rude or ill-mannered. An example of this strategy is; situation 7: *مش معقول ما بصير* "Unbelievable, this cannot happen". On the other hand, the clarification strategy occurred eight times, accounting for 8.33% of the whole strategies. An example of this strategy is: situation 2: *كم بذك* "How much do you want?", whereas, the noncompliance + apology strategy occurred only four times, accounting for 4.17% of all strategies used. An example of this strategy is: situation 5: *للأسف ما يسوق حدا بحب ما، بقدر سيارتي* "Sorry, I cannot, I do not want others to drive my car".

Accordingly, the results demonstrate that in informal situations, the Jordanian participants avoid the noncompliance only strategy, and are more likely to use the noncompliance+ explanation and compliance + conditional strategies when they reject the request which are considered as softened strategies when responding to requests

5. Discussion

This section summarizes the major results obtained throughout the study. The study shows that both the Jordanians and Algerians prefer the compliance only strategy. However, this strategy is higher with the Jordanian participants as compared to the Algerian participants. This strategy is with a percentage of 42.71% with the Jordanians, whereas, with Algerians, it is with a percentage of 29.17%. Nevertheless, in these formal situations, both groups avoid using the noncompliance only strategy (9.38% for Jordanians and 0% for Algerians), as it is a direct strategy, and hence a face threatening strategy.

This implies that in formal situations, both the Jordanians and Algerians are more likely to respond with simple compliance which is the desired strategy, particularly in formal interaction, and less likely to respond with the noncompliance only strategy which is considered as face threatening and offensive for the interlocutor. This is reinforced by Yule (1996) when he reported that politeness serves as a means of demonstrating awareness of others' feelings regarding FTAs. Yet, Jordanians seem to be more aware than Algerians with regards to the degree of formality involved in the process of interaction.

On the other hand, in informal situations, both groups almost seem to behave similarly. In other words, the most frequently used strategy in both groups is the noncompliance + explanation strategy, which with Jordanians is higher and accounts for 43.75% and which with Algerians accounts for 29.17%. This finding conforms to Al-shboul's (2021) finding that indicated that social distance of the interlocutors influenced the Jordanian participants' responses in terms of the level of directness and their use of different politeness strategies. However, unlike formal situations, the compliance only strategy is less frequently used by both groups of participants, accounting for 16.67% for both groups.

This shows that in informal situations, both the Algerians and Jordanians are less likely to respond with simple compliance and more likely to show refusal, but with explanations in order to show empathy and concern for the addressee. This result goes in hand with Alroushdi 2020 who examined Qassimi Arabic speakers in Saudi Arabia and shed light on the importance of providing explanation to the addressee when apologizing as they are frequently seen as sufficient to restore social balance.

This is also perhaps because of the fact that both the Algerians and Jordanians consider interaction in informal context to be a casual aspect of their daily life where there is no social distance between the addresser and the addressee. This is consistent with El hadj Said (2016) finding who concluded that directness in such situations is rather considered as solidarity politeness strategies because of the little social distance between the speaker and the hearer.

6. CONCLUSION

The results of the study revealed several similarities and differences between Algerian and Jordanian PhD students. The study also demonstrates that both groups of participants want to show solidarity and avoid being offensive with the interlocutor.

To sum up, and in accordance with the study's results, the answer to the first research question is that in both formal and informal situations, the two groups used similar and different strategies depending on the situation type. The two groups seem to be more similar mainly in formal situations, with the compliance only strategy being the most preferred strategy for both groups, and seem to be more different in informal situations.

As for the second research question, the findings indicate that the Algerian and Jordanian participants do not show differences in culture. They rather show similarity in that both groups use "swearing" in their refusals to requests, indicating their influence by the religious factors. Yet, both groups differ only in the way they pronounce the response which is due to dialectal differences of the two groups.

With regards to the third question, the study reveals that the degree of formality does affect the participants' choice and use of the request-response strategy. This is observed in the performance of both the Algerian and Jordanian participants.

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8. Appendix

The students' DCT

Dear students,

We are conducting an academic research for our thesis purposes. We would appreciate if you could answer and react to the following situations using your own dialect. Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

Part one:

Age:.....

Gender:.....

Nationality:.....

Part two:

Situation 1:

You are a language university teacher, as the exams are approaching, you informed your students about the date of the exam, but the date does not fit your students, hence they asked you the following: "Please Dr, is it possible to delay the exam and give us a week to revise better for the exam?".

What would you say?

Situation 2:

One of your friends called you and said: "I want you to lend me some money, I really need it".

What would you say?

Situation 3:

You work in a company, as the end of the workday approaches, your boss said: "As we do not have enough time to deliver the order, I would like to ask you to work two extra hours if you have no problem about that".

What would you say?

Situation 4:

While you were having lunch with your sister, she said: "Look at this picture, it is a mobile with a good quality, I have seen it today in a boutique, I would like you to buy it for me"

What would you say?

Situation 5:

One of your relatives called you and said: "I am wondering if you could lend me your car to go on a trip for the weekend with my friends?"

What would you say?

Situation 6:

You finished your shopping in a boutique, you left the place and went towards your car, as you were opening your car's door, a stranger (man) came to you and said: "Hello, I would be grateful if you could drop me off at the nearest bus station on your way, as you see, it is late now, and there are no taxis in here"?

What would you say?

Situation 7:

Your neighbors' son came to you and said: "Our house's yard is small and yours is large, I invited my friends to your house for my birthday party tomorrow".

What would you say?

Situation 8:

While you were in your office, one of your colleagues that you respect came to you and said: "Sorry, my phone ran out of battery, may I make an urgent call from your phone, if you do not mind?"

What would you say?