Hebron University
Faculty of Graduate Studies

"**A comparative study of compliments between American Native Speakers and EFL Palestinian Teachers in Hebron.**"

Prepared by

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This thesis was successfully defended on January 5th, 2012, and approved by:

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Abstract

This study examines the differences in performing compliments between the Palestinian EFL teachers and educated Americans. 30 Americans and 50 Palestinians participated in the study. They were asked to fill a questionnaire that consists of three questions. The questions were designed to elicit ways of giving compliments in both cultures. The three questions focus on the most remembered compliments received from others, the most remembered compliment given to others and the most remembered compliment heard among people. The analysis of the answers showed that there were some differences in using compliments in relation to syntactic patterns, topics of complimenting and function of compliment. Moreover, these compliments were adjectival in both data, and the most important adjectives that were used were (*good , nice , great , excellent, beautiful and kind*).

Both groups preferred the direct method of complimenting rather than the indirect with higher percentage to the Palestinian participants(83%) vs. (79%), while the Americans used the indirect method more than the Palestinians(21%) vs. (17%). In choosing the topic of the compliments, Americans and Palestinians chose complimenting the same topics, but with different percentages; personality, ability and appearance

In addition, there were differences in the effects of gender, age, status and social distance on performing compliments. For example, American females gave compliments more than males. They gave 51.3%, whereas American males used 48.6%. On the contrary, Palestinian females used less compliments than men as women gave and received 44.5 % while males gave more compliments than females. They gave 55.4 % of their compliments. Another factor that affected the choice of the compliment was social status.

For example it affected the choice of the topic of the compliment. High to low compliments in both groups focused on the skills and performance of the hearers, Americans low to high compliments focused on appearance while the Palestinian low-high compliments focused on personality, and American equals focused on personality while the Palestinian equals focused on appearance. More factors that affected the choice of compliments appear in the study.

Because the main aim of teaching and learning English is to be used in daily communications, learners should be able to learn language appropriately and to use it correctly in the suitable situations. The differences that appeared between cultures were results of ignorance of sociolinguistic and cultural rules of English. Lack of this knowledge causes misunderstanding or misinterpretation which cause pragmatic failure and consequently communication break down.

ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة الاختلافات في أداء المجاملات بين المعلمين الفلسطينيين كمعلمي لغة ثانية

والأميركيين المتعلمين. وقد شارك في هذه الدراسة ثلاثون من الأمريكيين و خمسون من الفلسطينيين حيث. طلب

منهم ملء استبيان يتكون من ثلاثة أسئلة صممت لإعطاء جمل الثناء وكيفية التعبير عنها في كلا الثقافتين. وهذه

الأسئلة تركز على أكثر إطراء يتذكره الشخص وممن يلقاه وأكثر إطراء يتذكره الشخص ولمن أعطاه و أكثر

إطراء سمعه الشخص بين الناس. وأظهر تحليل الأجوبة أن هناك بعض الاختلافات في استخدام الثناء فيما يتصل

بالأنماط النحوية و اختيار كلمات الثناء و مواضيعه ووظيفته.

وعلاوة على ذلك ، كانت هذه المجاملات وصفية في كل من العينتين الفلسطينية والأمريكية ، وأهم الصفات التي

استخدمت كانت (جيد ، لطيف ، رائع ، ممتاز ,جميل) وقد فضل كل من المجموعتين الأسلوب المباشر للإطراء

على الأسلوب غير المباشر مع ارتفاع النسبة المئوية للمشاركين الفلسطينيين (83 %) مقابل (79 %) للأمريكيين ،

في حين أن الأميركيين استخدموا الطريقة غير المباشرة أكثر من الفلسطينيين (21 %) مقابل (17 %). وبالنسبة

لاختيار موضوع المجاملات ، فقد اختار الأميركيون والفلسطينيون نفس الموضوعات ، ولكن بنسب مختلفة و هي

تتعلق بالشخصية والقدرات والمظهر.

بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، كان هناك تأثير لبعض المتغيرات مثل الجنس ,والعمر والوضع الاجتماعي على إعطاء الثناء.

على سبيل المثال : أعطت الإناث الأمريكيات جملاً ثناء أكثر من الذكور حيث أعطين 51.3 % بينما أعطى الذكور

الأمريكيون 48.6%. أما الفلسطينيون الذكور فقد أعطوا جمل ثناء أكثر من الإناث بواقع 55.4 % بينما أعطت الإناث 44.5%.

وثم عامل آخر يؤثر على اختيار جمل الثناء وهو الوضع الاجتماعي. على سبيل المثال أثر الوضع الاجتماعي على اختيار موضوع الثناء فذوو الوضع الاجتماعي العالي في كلا العينتين ركزوا في جمل مدحهم على المهارات والقدرات للمستمعين أو الممدوحين. أما ذوو الوضع الاجتماعي الهابط في العينة الأمريكية فقد ركزوا على المظهر للممدوحين بينما ركز ذوو الوضع الاجتماعي الهابط من الفلسطينيين على شخصية الممدوحين.

ولأن الهدف الرئيس من تعليم وتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية هو استخدام هذه اللغة في التواصل اليومي بين الناس، فيجب على المتعلمين أن يكونوا قادرين على تعلم اللغة بشكل مناسب واستخدامها بشكل صحيح في الأوضاع اليومية المناسبة. إن الاختلافات التي ظهرت بين الثقافات هي نتيجة عدم الإلمام بالقواعد الاجتماعية اللغوية والثقافية للغة الإنجليزية، و نقص هذه المعرفة هو أحد أسباب سوء الفهم أو سوء التفسير الذي يسبب فشل عملية التواصل بين المتحدثين.

Dedication

To the soul of my dear mother,

To my dear wife and children,

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Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge in particular, the hard work of Dr. Ahmad Atawneh whose persistent efforts helped me make this thesis possible. Moreover, I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to all those who contributed to the accomplishment of this study, particularly:

* My dear professors whose efforts helped me to get this research out to sight.

* My wife and children whose patience, support and love, encouraged me to succeed

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Chapter one

1.1. Introduction

During their daily communication, people from time to time say some sentences to others to compliment them for having something good, and they may receive sentences or words as compliments from others. It is human's nature that they like others to respect them, to compliment their abilities, possessions or personalities in order to build good relationships. These compliments are polite acts and they can help building these relations, moreover, giving people positive expressions and deeds can establish confidence and self esteem for the hearers. People who have better relationships are those who appreciate, encourage, compliment and who are more able to use the suitable language in the suitable situation, and who can develop a strong self esteem during their communication.

When people give compliments to others, they have to be specific in choosing the compliments, and should decide what positive qualities they like and perform compliments depending on these qualities. It is known that most people feel interested and happy to receive compliments , but they have to avoid using general expressions to compliment others; they have to limit their compliments to the qualities that the persons have and not to compliment those qualities that the persons don't have.

Speakers think that giving a compliment seems very easy, but in reality it may be difficult because it could lead to some problems with the addressees.According to Al Falasi (2007) when speakers are from different countries and speak different languages, they may feel it difficult to communicate using certain speech acts like complimenting because of the differences in the cultural norms and beliefs. This lack in pragmatic and linguistic

knowledge is a main source of problems that affect the use of speech acts especially complimenting . Therefore, it is important to know that cultural differences are "not only about the words, grammar, and pronunciations people use, but also the history and the cultural background, the native's view of life, way of life and thinking style." (Feilin& Gaofeng 2005, p.69).

Olshtain and Cohen (1989, pp.53-54) say it is very essential for foreign learners to learn how to use the rules of language in an acceptable manner. Therefore, to become effective communicators in a foreign language, people need to acquire these rules of appropriateness in addition to linguistic competence. That means providing them with knowledge about and experience in using the sociocultural rules of the new language.

 When complimenting with others, each person has a certain intention on which the purpose of his/her compliment depends. The purpose of using complimenting may differ from one culture to another because what may be suitable for one culture may be unsuitable for another. As a result, interlocutors may fall in problems of miscommunication when they use inappropriate ways of complimenting. In addition, differences in social and cultural norms may appear in the form of transfer which may be negative or positive. When the rules of the two languages L1 and L2 are different, it is called negative transfer because interlocutors apply the rules of their L1 into the situations of L2, but when the rules of the two languages are the same, it is called positive transfer.

Speakers should be aware and work hard to improve their knowledge in the cultural norms of the target language as well as the sociolinguistic rules. Yu (2005) talked about people who may only understand the literal meaning of the spoken words, and fail to understand what the speaker intends to say. Sometimes, people understand the linguistic

forms of the language, but they misunderstand or misuse the sociolinguistic rules of it. In this case, the speakers are considered improper or incompetent and that may cause communication problems. He also claimed that compliments for the first look seem easy to be performed, but in reality they are difficult and sometimes complex, and so they cause great problems to users (Yu 2005, p.92). This difficulty is due to the idea that complimenting could be a positive politeness strategy that affects the positive face or negative face of the hearer which in turn may cause face threatening (Brown and Levinson 1987 as cited in Yu 2005, p.95).

In this study, the researcher is going to investigate the compliment strategies that are used by Palestinian in – service English teachers/North Hebron and Native American English speakers. The researcher will help practitioners (teachers) who can not pass knowledge to their students to get more knowledge about speech acts in general and compliments in particular and to use them in their teaching. If users have the appropriate knowledge of complimenting strategies, they will be able to reduce differences and misunderstanding between their culture and the American's . The researcher will examine whether the strategies used by Palestinian teachers are native-like or different, and how they are similar or different.

1.2. Problem statement:

The absence of L2 norms in teaching English creates a problem in communicating with native speakers. That's why this study will identify the norms of complimenting in native speakers` performance compared with EFL norms of complimenting to find the gap between the two sides. Consequently, this identification and comparison will pave the way

for curriculum writers and teachers of English to help them in designing materials and teaching methodologies to help EFL learners in coming closer to the native speakers` norms.

1.3. Significance of the study:

This study would be the first of its kind to be conducted in Palestine on this topic. The results of the study could contribute towards helping to reduce potential communication problems interculturally, in this case, among Arab speakers and native speakers of English. In addition, teachers at schools do not pay much attention to teaching the sociolinguistic rules of the speech acts in general and complimenting in particular, as a result, they face the interference problems when they themselves or their students perform such speech acts. Teachers can use the results of this study to train their students and other EFL users of English to practise using complimenting in their daily lives. Wolfson (1981) said " very little attention was paid to describing the sorts of communicative interference which may occur as people learn second language. `` (Wolfson 1981, p.117). This study also contributes to the field of linguistics that has shown the extension of research of pragmatic competence and its relationship to foreign language learning and teaching. It shows evidence that ignorance of cross-cultural differences causes communication problems that ends in a complete breakdown in communication. The researcher hopes that this research can contribute to avoiding cross-cultural misunderstanding between the Arab speakers of English and the Native Americans.

Another reason why complimenting was chosen is that complimenting is useful for learners to know about. It serves as an important social strategy in creating social relations

because it can function as greetings, gratitude, farewell, to soften the effects of criticism or face threatening acts. It can also serve as an opener for conversations and creating solidarity. Learning how to compliment and reply to it appropriately helps learners to create their own ways of engaging in social interactions with natives.

On the contrary , if speakers do not know the rules for complimenting, they may face uncomfortable situations, or if they fail to give a compliment or ignore to give a compliment when needed, this causes embarrassment and offense to the speaker as well as to the hearer.

1.4. Objectives of the study:

The main aims and objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the norms of native speakers and EFL Palestinians in complimenting.

2. To know the strategies and syntactic patterns typically used by native speakers and Arab teachers of English.

3. To minimize communication failure between EFL speakers and English native speakers by learning the pragmatic rules.

4. To identify transfer potential from Arabic into English.

5. To check if gender, status, age and social distance affect the choice of the strategies and the patterns used by the participants.

1.5. Research questions:

To conduct this research the following questions are proposed:

1. What are the complimenting strategies and syntactic patterns used by Native American Speakers and Palestinian teachers of English?

2. Are there differences in the strategies and syntactic patterns used by the Palestinian teachers of English and the Americans?

3. Do gender, age, status and social distance affect choosing the compliments?

4. Is there any transfer from Arabic into English?

1.6. Hypothesis of the study:

1. It is hypothesized that the norms of complimenting used by native speakers are different from those used by non-native speakers.

2. There are differences in compliment strategies, types, topics, and functions.

3. Gender, age, status and distance affect the choice of the compliment.

4. The EFL learners are expected to use Arabic norms in complimenting when they are faced with the lack of knowledge about native norms.

1.7. Limitations of the study:

The limitation for this study could be:

1. The sample is limited to the sector of Palestinian English teachers in North Hebron compared to General Americans.

1.8. Definitions of terms:

1. A compliment is an expression of esteem, respect, affection, or admiration; especially an admiring remark(Merriam- Webster's Online Dictionary).

Or a compliment is a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some good (possession, characteristic, skill, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer (Holmes 1986, p.446).

2. Speech act is a functional unit of communication(Cohen 1996).

3. Direct Compliments refer to remarks including linguistic forms that directly and unambiguously frame these comments as compliments (Yu 2005, p. 98).

4. Indirect compliments refer the remarks that might carry a compliment to the addressee, although the positive semantics that are associated with complimenting is missing (Yu 2005, p.98).

5. Sociolinguistic ability: The ability to select appropriate linguistic forms to be able to express the strategy used to know the speech act(Cohen 1996).

6. Pragmatic competence: The ability to use language effectively in order to understand language in context (El- Samaty 2005,p.341 as cited in Al Falasi 2007)

7. Transfer: The learner's strategy of incorporating native language-based elements in target language production and behavior (Olshtain and Cohen 1989, p.60)

8. Locutionary act (propositional) is the actual words said by the speaker (Brown &Eisterhold 2007), or the literal meaning of the sentence (Cohen 1996).

9. Illocutionary act is the intention of the speaker from his spoken words.(Brown &Eisterhold 2007), or the social function that the utterance has(Cohen 1996).

10. Perlocutionary act is the effect that the sentence has on the listener (Brown &Eisterhold 2007, Cohen1996).

1.9. Conclusion :

    This chapter presents the theoretical framework and a background about the speech act in general and complimenting in particular. It also presents the research problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, the limitations, definition of terms, research questions, and the hypotheses of the study

Chapter two

Literature review

2.1. Introduction

This section discusses the theoretical background underlying concepts and views that are related to giving and performing the speech act of complimenting. It highlights research findings related to the strategies, syntactic patterns, functions and types of speech acts. Moreover, it discusses the politeness theory, the speech act theory, some information about Arab compliments, in addition to the influence of cultural transfer from L1 to L2. Finally, it discusses the influence of age, sex and status on the choice of compliment strategies and patterns and the frequencies of compliment utterances.

The literature review chapter covers some studies that were conducted in foreign and second language contexts and what results these studies had, and it ends with a summary that presents the main points of the various studies and synthesize the main trends in all relevant research.

2.2. The Speech Act Theory:

2.2. 1. Austin and Searle:

Austin was one of the first linguists who talked about the use of words and their functions in sentences. To him words have three action levels; locutionary that shows what one says, illocutionary that shows the social effect of the sentence and perlocutionary acts which show the result of the action. To Austin's student, Searle (1971) speech acts must have felicity conditions to become valid.

Since this study is concerned with the speech act of complimenting, it is important to highlight major works related to Speech Act Theory. Bach (2004) points out that Austin (1962) says that the function of the utterance could describe some state of affairs which may be true or false. After Austin, John Searle took his ideas and works and expanded them in the form of a Speech Act Theory.

Searle (2002) also says that in Austin's initial work "How to do things with words", he divided utterances into two types, Performatives and Constatives.

1. Performatives are actions such as making a promise or giving an order

2. Constatives are sayings such as making a statement or giving a description.

To situate performatives, the utterances could have an expression that can show or name the kind of the speech acts, for example,

1. *I order you to leave the room.*

2. *I promise to come on Wednesday.* (Searle 2002,p86-87)

Performative sentences contain performative verbs. The performative verb is a verb that gives a name to the action while performing it, for instance, I pronounce, I sentence… etc. These verbs are essential for the action to occur. A priest in a wedding would not for example say,

3. *You are man and wife.* In place of *I pronounce you husband and wife.*

In addition, not all sentences need a performative verb to be used. If we leave out the performative verb

 " promise'' in the sentence "I promise to drive you to Berlin", the sentence still performs the intended action and meaning "I'll drive you to Berlin". Performative verbs are usually

essential when they are used in the context of ritual behaviors supported by cultural institutions, for example,

4. The court hereby forbids you to enter your former wife's house (Rasimus and Faulhaber 2010, p. 1).

Brown & Eisterhold (2007) say that sometimes the sentences that people produce are unclear or listeners may not understand them appropriately because they may not understand what the speaker intends to say. Therefore, listeners have to be aware of how speakers use words in terms of three different levels in various utterances:

1. Locutionary act (propositional): the actual words said by the speaker (Brown &Eisterhold 2007), or the literal meaning of the sentence (Cohen 1996).

2. Illocutionary act: the intention of the speaker from his spoken words.(Brown &Eisterhold 2007) or the social function that the utterance has (Cohen 1996). According to Austin (1962) illocutionary acts have three characteristics. First, they are acts we perform in uttering sentences in appropriate circumstances, for example, when someone says (I promise to be here) in appropriate circumstances is thereby to promise to be there. Second, they can't be done unless we utter a sentence, so we can't make a promise or give an order without saying something, but we can admire someone without saying anything. Third, illocutionary acts are usually connected with performative verbs, that is, "promise" is connected with promising, "congratulate" with congratulating, for example, I congratulate you on your fine performance (Cited in Davis 1974, p.17). Austin also explains that the function of these performative verbs is to make explicit illocutionary act that the speaker intends to perform in saying the sentence as in the example above.

3) Perlocutionary act : the effect that the sentence has on the listener (Brown &Eisterhold 2007, Cohen 1996). It is an act by which the illocution produces a certain effect in or exerts a certain influence on the addressee. The perlocutionary act represents a consequence of the speaker's utterance. The speaker does not have full control over the perlocutionary effect. The actual influence that is realized is not always predictable. A speaker may have control over illocutionary force in the utterance *open the safe now or else*! but the speaker can not control what the Perlocutionary effect will be. The addressee could open the safe or the addressee could have a heart attack (Rasimus and Faulhaber, 2010).

Austin (1962, p.153) classified   the speech acts according to their illocutionary force as follows:

1. Verdictives : (for judgment)   e.g. estimating, assessing, describing.

2. Exercitives: (asserting of influence)   e.g. ordering, appointing, advising.

3. Commisives: (assuming of an obligation or declaring an intention) e.g. promising, intending, betting.

4. Behabitives: (the adopting of an attitude) e.g. apologizing congratulating, thanking, blaming, complaining.

5. Expositives: (clarifying of reasons) e.g. arguing, insisting, affirming.

Brown &Eisterhold (2007) , Cohen (1996) & Jaszezolt (2002) point out that Searle followed Austin's theory and divided the illocutionary acts into five categories:

1. Representatives: (telling people how things are) for example, claims, reports, and assertion.

2. Directives: (trying to get people to do thing) for example, requests ,commands, suggestions.

3. Commisives: (committing ourselves to doing things) for example, refusals, promises, threat.

4. Declaratives: (bringing about changes through utterances) for instance, performatives, decree, declaration.

5. Expressives : (expressing our feeling and attitudes) for instance, thanks, apologies, complaints…(Cited in Brown &Eisterhold 2007, p.56 ,Cohen 1996, pp.384-385, Jaszezolt 2002, p.302)

To sum up, we can say that speech acts are words connected to actions. These actions have certain intentions that the speakers want their listeners to understand through some performative verbs that convey the message of the utterance, and which show the politeness degree between speakers and listeners whether this politeness is positive or negative.

2.3. Politeness theory

Speech acts are related to the politeness theory which Brown and Levinson 1987 defined as the way we show awareness of someone else's public self-image or face. The theory accounts to keep on the face of the hearer or to repair the insults given to the hearer and causing face-threatening act. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) complimenting is a positive politeness strategy which aims to praise the addressees for good and positive actions. In other words, compliments are examples of speech acts that deal with and attend to encourage some good deeds, interests, wants and needs. Wang & Tsai (2003) cited Holmes's (1988) definition of complimenting as: "A compliment is a polite speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually

the person addressed, for some 'good' (possession, characteristics, skill, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and hearer" (Wang & Tsai 2003, p.13). She defines a compliment as a speech act that is achieved either explicitly or implicitly to express admiration or approval for something good of the addressee. In such a situation, explicit compliments are those whose meanings are understood literally, as in a direct speech act, for example, "you look nice in blue" (Wang & Tsai 2003, p. 13).

Brown and Levinson (1987, p.61) also define face as " the public self image that every member wants to claim for himself," and it has two aspects:

1. Positive face: the image or personality claimed by the interactants (p. 61) where the person needs to be liked and respected, and to be a member of a group, or the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others (p. 62). Holmes (1998) points out that positive politeness can be expressed in many ways, and paying compliments is one of the most obvious speech acts connected with politeness. Complimenting is a speech act that notices and attends to the hearer's interests , wants, needs and goods.

2. Negative face: the claim to freedom of action and freedom from imposition where the person desires to be left alone, and not to be imposed by others, or the want of every competent adult member that his actions be unimpeded by others (Brown and Levinson, 1987, pp. 61-62) .

Face is something that is emotionally invested and that can be lost, maintained or enhanced. People help each other to maintain face during interaction as participants can make their best interest to maintain each others` face and to act in ways that assure the other participants that the agent is heedful (p.61). Brown and Levinson say that people treat face as basic wants, which every member knows every other member desires, and which is

in the interest of every member to satisfy. Jaszezolt (2002) explains that face-threatening act can threaten the positive and the negative face, for instance, in threatening the negative face such as: orders, requests, suggestions, advice, reminders, threats, warnings, offers, promises, expressions of envy, admiration, hatred, anger and lust. In these acts the speaker tries to impose an act on the hearer, and that may embarrass him/her because the hearer wants to be left alone and away from imposition. While in positive face such as: expressions of   disapproval, criticism, contempt, complaint, accusation, insult, disagreement, violent emotions, mention of taboo topics, bad news about the hearer or good news about the speaker. These acts happen when the speaker does not care about the hearer's feelings (p. 319).

Complimenting is a speech act that needs to follow the politeness theory because it is used to deal with some human feelings in daily life. Complimenting is largely a positive politeness strategy because it signals the speaker's noticing and attending to the hearer's interests and needs, so when someone compliments a female that he likes her hair, he makes her feel good because appearance is important for women (Brown and Levinson 1987, as cited in Chen 1993). But people of different cultures may understand the compliment differently regarding the language systems in each culture. These differences lead to cross-cultural differences which in turn lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication. What may create such problems is the negative transfer which occurs when the rules of the two languages are different, while no transfer occurs when the rules are similar. Brown and Levinson (1978) as cited in Olshtain and Cohen (1989) also suggested a criterion for politeness that might be useful while dealing with cross-cultural studies of speech acts.

2.4. Types of speech acts:

2.4.1. Direct speech acts and indirect speech acts

Yu (2005, p. 98) says that indirect speech acts refer to the remarks that might carry a compliment to the addressee, although the positive semantics that are associated with complimenting is missing. Such sentences are indirect in order to allow the addressee to make other possible interpretations of the intended meaning. This type of comment can be interpreted as having complimentary force. The indirect compliments need the addressee to make some inferences to be able to understand the meaning that is conveyed in the message of the speaker. For example:

5. Wow, I hope I'll have a coat like this.

6. Your boyfriend is a very lucky man (p. 98).

After Yu (2005) analyzed his data, he found that Chinese use the indirect strategies of complimenting (81.5%) more than Americans do (8.9%).

On the other hand, the direct speech act refers to remarks including linguistic forms that directly and unambiguously frame these comments as compliments, such as:

7. Isn't that food great?

8. I really like your hair that way (P.98).

He found that Americans used more direct speech acts (91.1%) while the Chinese used (81.5%)

According to Rasimus and Faulhaber (2010), in most languages there are three basic sentence types: declarative, interrogative and imperative. If there is no direct relationship

between a sentence type and an illocutionary force, the speech act is indirect while it is direct if there is a direct match.

Examples:

9. *Pass the salt*! Imperative is used to make a request > direct speech act

10. *Can you pass the salt?* Interrogative is used to make a request > indirect speech act (P. 4).

Ardissono (2006) argues that the speakers often prefer indirect speech acts so that they do not threaten the hearer's face. Ardissono also claims that sometimes direct speech acts may even appear impolite as in:

11. *Would you lend me some money? and Lend me some money!*

Interrogative forms are performed by means of asking a question. The question can have both direct and indirect request. We can make a request by asking the hearer whether he has the ability or willingness to do the action or not, for example, *Could you open the door?*. Through these interrogative questions, we get more polite speech acts, because we give the hearer two choices to open it or not and since the question is polite, we may get a positive response because the hearer feels that the question is polite. On the other hand, a direct-request here is generated by a surface speech act in imperative mood and is appropriate if the speaker does not bother about the hearer's face *Lend me some money*, *Give me a pen* (Ardissono 2006, p.3).

The use of these direct and indirect speech acts is sometimes related to some cultural norms. The participants may be affected by such norms, so the researcher will move to talk about transfer to see if it had effects on choosing one of these types in previous studies.

2.5. Pragmatic transfer

Kasper (1992) defines transfer as: "The influence exerted by the learner's pragmatic transfer knowledge of languages and cultures other than L2 on their comprehension, production and learning of L2 pragmatic information" (Kasper 1992, p.207). She also talked about the importance of the pragmatic knowledge which refers to the learner's communicative knowledge as well as the knowledge of how to understand a verbal act and perform it with a speaker's intention. This intention is one of the main reasons of transfer and at the same time it may cause misunderstanding and communication breakdown. However, the length of stay in L2 community is a constraint that attempts to account for L1 influence on developmental ground, the extended stay in the target community does not prevent negative pragmatic transfer (p. 6).

Thomas(1983) says that teaching a language requires the knowledge of language and culture. She talks about types of pragmatic transfer like paralinguistic failure which deals with language and means of conveying illocutionary force, and sociopragmatic failure which deals with choosing a social appropriate linguistic behavior. Teachers may be able to correct the paralinguistic failure, but they can not do that in sociolinguistic transfer because it is related to the values and beliefs about the world. Thomas also says that teachers often let pragmatic failure pass without being checked as it may be attributed to some other causes like rudeness.

Franch(1998) says that if the non-native speakers are aware of pragmalinguistic or sociolinguistic similarities and differences between the native and the target language, negative outcomes of this transfer will be reduced or inhibited. Therefore, teachers are

responsible for giving students the most important knowledge in order to make appropriate paralinguistic and sociopragmatic decisions in the target language. (Franch 1998, p.14).

Wannaruk (2008) says pragmatic transfer is one of the main causes of inappropriate performance in foreign language. It happens when speakers use rules from their mother tongue or their culture norms in using a foreign language. This transfer may cause sociopragmatic failure which is considered more serious than linguistic failure because linguistic failure deals with the language itself while sociolinguistics deals with culture. So if a person makes a linguistic error, he is described as less proficient in the language, but If he makes a pragmatic mistake, he may be described as rude, disrespectful or impolite (p. 319). On the same point, Billmyer (2011) says that when people know how to compliment effectively and appropriately, that may help speakers to establish some opportunities to be engaged in the social activities of the native speaker. On the contrary, when speakers do not know the rules for making compliments they may cause embarrassment for themselves and for the hearers.

Thomas (1983) talks about sociolinguistic failure and how it occurs. It is caused by the speakers when they have inadequate knowledge of cultural and social values. So when a speaker chooses an inappropriate linguistic strategy to express a speech act in a certain situation, he may use it incorrectly and that may cause misunderstanding and miscommunication. The example about the Malaysian student who complimented his female teacher is a good example;

12. A: *You are wearing a very lovely dress. It fits you.*

   B: *Please, take it.* (The example is from Holmes and Brown 1987, p.526).

Although it used an acceptable linguistic strategy for showing a compliment, it failed sociolinguistically because the hearer took it as too intimate. She also talks about pragmalinguistic failure which occurs when the pragmatic force mapped by the speaker onto a given utterance is systematically different from the force most frequently assigned to it by native speakers of the target language, or when speech act strategies are inappropriately transferred from L1 to L2 (Thomas 1983, p.99). She points out that Pragmalinguistic failure may happen according to two different sources. First, "teaching-induced errors" (p.101) or things that are attributed to teaching materials like the inappropriate use of modals.

A second source of pragmalinguistic failure is "pragmalinguistic transfer" (p.101), the inappropriate use of speech act strategies from one language to another, or the use of the mother tongue and transferring its rules to the target sentences which are equivalent to them, and which, because of different interpretations convey a different pragmatic messages in the target language (p. 101).

On the other hand, Bu (2010) explains that learner's knowledge of second language pragmatics does not increase when the learner's knowledge of grammatical competence increases, therefore, it is necessary to study how learners transfer their pragmatic knowledge and how to provide the learners with knowledge about this problem in order to prevent negative results of transfer. For example, while using speech acts, the Chinese transfer their pragmatic norms into English and that may result in communication failure between Chinese and native English speakers. In fact, such pragmatic failure can result in misinterpretation and misunderstanding of linguistic behavior of Chinese speakers of

English, and also culture shock of Chinese speakers of English in the English culture and society (Bu 2010, p.121).

Wolfson (1981) describes some of the problems that ESL learners face in the United States. Some learners found it difficult to understand why Americans use compliments so frequently. Wolfson thought that in the Indonesian culture, for example, compliments were rare and were used only among members of the educated class who had been exposed to western customs. Another example is the Malaysian students in New Zealand who expressed their surprise and astonishment by the frequency of compliments between people in New Zealand. Even in English-speaking cultures, there are differences in the frequency with which it is acceptable to give compliments, New Zealanders notice that Americans give many compliments. In some cases, Wolfson points out that those different cultural groups may not agree on what is considered as a compliment. For example, when Americans compliment someone's appearance, these compliments are interpreted by people from other cultures as criticisms, implying the addressee did not normally look good. Wolfson (1981, p.119) added that misunderstandings between people from two or more different cultures may work in both directions. If we discuss the American compliments, we can notice that what is a compliment for the Americans, may not be so for others. That may happen if the interlocutors understand the words but not the rules for interpreting them. She cites the following example:

13. *Hey, what's the occasion? You look really nice today.*

14. *Wow! Linda! What did you do to your hair? I almost didn't recognize you. It looks great.* (p.119)

Although Americans take this as a compliment, non-native speakers are often unsure of their meaning. Therefore, when a foreign speaker, living in America while doing her graduate work and fully bilingual in English, received this sentence as a compliment from a classmate, she assumed that an insult had been intended and was quite hurt.(p. 119).

According to Holmes and Brown (1987) in other cases failing to give a compliment may happen because of linguistic or pragmatic reasons; this can cause a lot of embarrassment. This happened in the case of the Malaysian student who gave the compliment to his female teacher where the compliment may have some linguistic or grammatical errors that may affect the meaning of the utterance. That's because the speaker may not know the norms of the target language or unable to choose the appropriate language. Holmes and Brown (1987, pp.525-526) gave the following examples:

15. A: *You are wearing a very lovely dress. It fits you. (The Malaysian student to his female tutor)*

   B: *Oh, thank you.*

16. A) *What an unusual necklace. It's beautiful.*

   B) *Please, take it.*

Holmes and Brown (1987) explain that in (15) the complimenter almost intends to express the meaning of *suits* rather than of *fits*. The recipient also comments that it seems too familiar from a young male student but that she feels it might have been acceptable from a female student (p. 225). In (16) the hearer offers the object to the complimenter as a polite response, but the complimenter is embarrassed to be offered the object because he is not familiar with the norms of the speaker's target norms. If the speaker is familiar with the

hearer's language and cultural norms, he will not be embarrassed; he will know that this is one of the responses used in that language (p. 226).

Wolfson (1981, pp.119-120) adds another contrast between American English compliments and those collected and translated by speakers of other languages in the use of proverbs. For example, Compliments collected by Iranian and Arabic speakers show this point well. In a conversation between two Jordanian women, for instance, one says about a third woman:

17. *X is a nice girl and beautiful (p.119)* .

In another setting where an Arab woman was complimenting her friend's child, she said:

18. *She is like the moon and she has beautiful eyes (p. 120).*

Her friend, in order to express the view that the speaker is even more beautiful, responds with a proverb:

19. *Where is the soil compared with the star?(p. 119)*

Two Iranian friends were exchanging compliments and one of them said:

20. *Your shoes are very nice (p. 120).*

The other responded:

21. *It is your eyes which can see them which are nice*. (The examples are from Wolfson 1981, p.119-120)

From this discussion, the researcher notices that transfer often occurs between different cultures and languages because each has its own cultural and linguistic norms. In some cultures, the sentence may be considered as a compliment, while in others it may be considered as a sign of impoliteness or embarrassment. Transfer occurs when speakers and recipients use their norms and apply them to the norms of the target language.

2.6. Studies on complimenting

Holmes (1998) points out that when people deal with compliments, it is necessary to have a clear definition for compliments in order to help them decide what is considered to be as a compliment and what is not a compliment. Holmes defines compliments in her study in (1986) as: " A compliment is a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some good possession, characteristics, skills…etc which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer" (Holmes 1986 cited in Holmes 1998, p.101).

She says that giving a compliment requires people to have knowledge of the cultural values where the target language is spoken. Compliments also focus on valuable things that people admire and which are related to the person addressed, for example, clothes, appearance, jobs, character…etc. There are many functions for using compliments. The most common are affective and social rather than referential or informative. In general, they are described as positively affective speech acts used to increase solidarity between the speaker and the hearer, for example:

22. A: *Sal: Hi, how are you? You are looking terrific.*

B: *Meg: Thanks. I'm pretty good. How are things with you? That's a snazzy scarf you're wearing.* (p.101)

Another definition for complimenting given by Ibrahim and Riyanto (2000, p21) states that a compliment is " a language function often used to encourage or reinforce desired behavior." They say that a compliment is given to someone who has positive characteristics like having good appearance or good skills, valuable possessions or good characters that may lead the complimenter to feel happy or pleased about them. For instance, we may compliment a person who is wearing a beautiful shirt or a person who has achieved good results in a project or a student who has done his homework perfectly. It is our human nature that let most people like being complimented, but those people may not be able to give a suitable compliment or respond to the compliment in an appropriate way.

Holmes(1998) presents another definition by Tannen (1990) as " Giving praise …is…inherently asymmetrical. It…frames the speaker as one-up, in a position to judge someone else's performance."(cited in Holmes 1998, p.102). In this case some compliments may not be welcomed because they show ways in which the speaker is showing superiority. If compliments are directed upwards or from low-status to superordinate or high-status, they often indicate flattery (p.102). On the other hand, giving compliments has a "darker side" (p.103) when they cause face-threatening. Face Threatening Act implies that the complimenter envies the hearer in a certain way or would like to have something belonging to the hearer. For example:

23. A: *Sue: What an unusual necklace .It's beautiful.*

    B: *Eti: Please take it.(Holmes 1998, p.103)*

In this example, Sue felt embarrassed to be offered something belonging to someone else, while it is natural for someone who is accustomed to the cultural norms of the community Eti lived in.

Studies gave many functions for compliments like expressing solidarity, positive evaluation, admiration, appreciation or praise, express envy or a desire to have the hearer's possessions or verbal harassment (Holmes 1998, p.104).

Billmyer (2011) conducted her study about the effects of instructions in the rules of complimenting in American English. She found that giving formal instructions of social rules of language use can help speakers and learners of English to communicate more appropriately with native speakers.(Billmyer 2011, p. 31). She also found that there are many reasons for studying the speech act of complimenting, Its social importance for learners and speakers makes it necessary for them to know about its functions, topics and appropriate strategies (p. 32).

2.6.1. Some studies on complimenting

Differences in giving a compliment can be expressed in different aspects. Many studies investigated this area, for example:

1) Wolfson and Manes (1980) cited in Hyun Jin Kim (2004), Wolfson (1981), Wolfson (1983) studied compliments in different situations. Their studies show that 80%-85% of American compliments came into three patterns or structures:

a. (NP is / look adj)

24. *Your sweater is really nice.*

25. *You look good.*

b. (I (really) like/love NP)

    26. *I really like your car.*

c. (PRO+ be + adj)

    27. *That's a really good question*.

    28. *That's a very nice briefcase*. (Examples from Wolfson & Manes 1980 & Wolfson 1981, p.122)

      Those researchers carried out many researches on the United States English. Their studies identified many features of compliments, as well as the functions they served. They found that the structure of most complimenting utterances was adjectival, and the speakers used a limited number of adjectives. Wolfson (1981 p.120) found that 80% of the compliments in her study used adjectival patterns that showed positive values and the most common were (nice, good, beautiful, pretty and great). The only verbs that occurred in her study were (like/ love) with 86%. 85% of the data fall into the same syntactic patterns mentioned in Wolfson and Manes(1980) and Wolfson (1983). The most common adjectives found in the compliments were (nice 22.9%/ good 19.6% of the data). In her study of (1983) Wolfson found that the great majority of the compliments in her study were adjectives or verbs. Two thirds of all compliments that used adjectives contain five adjectives: nice, good, beautiful, great and pretty. In the 25% of the compliments that make use of verbs rather than adjectives to carry the positive meaning, 90% make use of the verbs (like / love). 50% of these compliments take the three formula mentioned before.

      The high frequency of these five adjectives in American compliments is very useful to language teachers and learners, as learners can make use of this set to speak of any topic in a complimentary statement and teachers can focus on them and give students

complimentary sentences containing these adjectives ,and ask students to focus on them in their sentences, they can make learners aware of them (Wolfson1981, p.121). That also means that only three patterns are needed to present approximately 80% of compliments given and received by speakers of American English (Wolfson 1983, pp. 220-21). When we look at the non-native data concerning compliments, we find that the great majority of learners of English are not aware of the strong tendency of status –equal, therefore, they do not know how to interpret or respond to native speaker compliments in away that leads to the formation of closer relationship. Part of the problem is that learners tend to transfer their own sociolinguistic rules into the target language interaction (pp. 226-27).

Wolfson (1983) ,Wolfson and Manes (1980) also point out that people may use compliments in certain circumstances to ask people to give approval or admiration towards the listener. They point out that people frequently give praises to reinforce or encourage a certain behavior in specific situations, such as teaching and learning. Another possible function compliments may serve is to strengthen or replace other speech acts like apologizing, greeting or thanking, or to soften acts such as criticism, or even to serve as acts like sarcasm or a conversation opener. They also find that the subject of compliments are focused on two main topics: appearance and ability. Furthermore, they note that the functions served by this speech act in addition to maintaining solidarity, expressing approval, they serve as thanking, starting a conversation and greetings and as a social strategy for women in creating social relationships (Wolfson & Manes 1980, p. 128).

 2) Daikuhara (1986) also made a comparison between Japanese and American compliments and found that 80% of the compliments were adjectives and used to show positive evaluation, and the most frequent adjectives are "good or nice" with 25% of all the

adjectives for Japanese and 23% for Americans, "great'' as the second with 23% for Japanese/and "good'' with 20% for Americans, "beautiful'' with 12 % for Japanese and 9.7% for Americans, "pretty'' with 8.6% for Japanese and 9.2 for Americans. He also noticed that the NP is the most common structure used by Americans, while the patterns (I like/love NP) and their equivalents never appeared in his Japanese data. He noticed that the patterns used in his data concentrated on appearance like clothes, hair-do, homes, furniture…etc with about 29% of the data, and on ability with 72%. Daikuhara also talked about the function of the compliments as a sign of solidarity , approval, or as an opening for conversation, greetings , respect and thanking (Daikuhara 1986, pp.127-128).

Former researches not only studied the structure, function and topics of compliments, but they also studied other aspects that can affect complimenting such as the status of the speakers and how this status has a role in choosing the way of complimenting.

3) Holmes and Brown (1987) collected their data in New Zealand and analyzed compliments according to two aspects in communication: the pragmalinguistic failure that includes topics for compliments, vocabulary and syntax. For example,

29. A. Complimenter: *You've lost a lot of weight. What have you been doing*?

   B. Recipient: *Thank you. I've started jogging regularly and it seems to work.*

   A. Complimenter: *You shouldn't over do it. You are looking quite thin.* (Holmes and Brown 1987, pp.526-27)

This example shows a pragmalinguistic failure relating to the topic in which a lady expressed her concern about her friend who was losing weight, but her friend understood that the speaker gave her a compliment although she didn't mean that. That happens because losing weight in a country can be considered as a subject of concern while in other

countries can be considered as a cause for congratulating. Another communicative failure is called sociopragmatic failure. It is caused by an inadequate knowledge of culture and social values. Let us look at an example:

30. A. Complimenter: *What a big family you have!*

    B. Recipient*: Yes, but it has its advantages, too.* (Holmes and Brown, p.527)

In this example, the complimenter comes from a culture in which big families are valued, but the recipient does not take the remark as a compliment and reacts as if he were being criticized for having a big family.

Their study collected 200 compliments from 10 participants from New Zealand. These compliments showed that (100 compliments) 50% of the compliments occurred between females, and a quarter (46 compliments) were given by females to males. They noticed that the number of compliments given by males were fewer than those by women. Males gave only 37=18.5% to women and 17=8.5% to other men (p. 524). Compliments are often used in English-speaking communities to express encouragement, for example, *You're doing well, good work, well done*. These compliments are expressed in classrooms, but they can also be used to show gratitude for having something good or delicious food, for example:

31. A complimenter to a host; I loved the tacos. I'll be back tomorrow for some more. (p.531)

4) In their study, Nelson, Al-Batal & Echols (1996) noticed that American and Egyptian compliments are also adjectival like but they differ in that the Egyptian ones are longer. This length of Egyptian compliments is partly due to the use of repetition of the same idea

in different words and the use of several adjectives in a series. They also differ in the use of comparatives like similes and metaphors particularly, for example,

32. You look like a bridegroom today (Example p.415).

while they are not used at all in the American compliments. The researchers find that personal appearance is complimented frequently in both the American and Egyptian cultures, and the largest category of American compliments is about skills/work. The type of compliment given in both Egyptian and American compliments seem to depend on the gender of the giver and recipient of the compliment as well. The study also find that Americans give compliments more frequently than Egyptians.

5) Ishihara (2003, p.124) made a study between Korean and Japanese EFL learners and he found that compliments fall into four categories

(A) NP is (intensifier) ADJ   (B) NP looks/seems (intensifier) ADJ

 (C) I (intensifier) like/love NP   (D) How ADJ

Ishihara also found that the participants focused on four categories of topics including appearance(K=39.3%, J=40%), ability (K=32%, J=23.3%), personal traits (K=18%, J=26.7%) and country (k=10.7%, J=10%).

6) Feiling & Gaofeng (2005) explained that a compliment is a kind of communicative action. It creates and keeps the harmony of human relationships, and is used as greetings, encouragement and so on. In the American society, people use praise and compliments because they play an important role in communication and it is away for expressing feelings. When people use praise and compliments, they become a custom just like thanks and apology. American people encourage some admirable actions by using praise and compliments. For example, in school, teachers always use praise to encourage students in

teaching, with the sentences " You know something, Tom. You did a good job." People also build and keep social relation with compliments, and usually use them instead of apologies, regards and thanks, such as " *That's a delicious dinner." "Thanks for having us" (* Feiling & Gaofeng 2005, p.70).

2.7. Status:

Compliments occur between people of equal status as well as between those of non equal status. Holmes and Brown (1987) claim that compliments take place between people of unequal status because they are more likely to use more compliments to flatter or manipulate or to praise others of higher status (Holmes and Brown, p. 532). It means that people who belong to lower status will use compliments to keep their faces with their high status bosses or employers. However, they found that the great majority of compliments occur between unequal status and they are given by the person in the high position, for example, in a classroom, the compliments are usually given from teachers to students as a way of encouraging and enhancing students to work more. Wolfson (1981) also says that compliments from high status to low status are often related to work and focused on *ability* or *performance* rather than on *appearance* or *possessions*, on the contrary, when the compliment is between equal status, it concentrates on *appearance* or *possessions* rather than *ability* or *performance*. Moreover, Holmes (1988) provides a distribution of compliments to the relative status of the responder. She indicates that compliments between equals are the most frequent in the New Zealand data (79%). She claims that the majority of all compliments are given to people of the same age and status as the speaker.

2.8. Gender:

Regarding gender, the sex of participants is an important social factor in complimenting behavior. It is very obvious that gender plays a major role in choosing the suitable compliment or response, and that depends on whether the compliment is given to a male or a female or received by a male or a female. For example, males compliment each other on things related to ability, character or achievements while they compliment women on appearance or possessions. Many different studies were carried out to discuss the role of gender in giving or receiving compliments, for instance, Holmes and Brown (1987), Davis (2008), Herbert (1990), Wagon (2010) and Holmes (1986).

1) According to Holmes(1986) as cited in Holmes (1989) women in the New Zealand data gave and received more compliments than men did. The findings were

1. Women gave (68%)of the compliments and received (74%).

2. Compliments between men were rare (9%).

3. Men received fewer compliments than women (26%).

4. Complimenting seemed to be a speech act which occurred in interaction between women rather than men.

5. Compliments between female-female occurred more than between male-male.

6. Compliments between male-female occurred more than between female-male interaction.

Two famous researchers reported similar results and confirmed that women used compliments more than men and they were also complimented more than men, these studies were conducted by Wolfson (1983) and Herbert (1990) cited in (Holmes 1989, p.105)

(2) In Holmes's and Brown's (1987, p.524) study about New Zealand compliments shows that exactly 50% of the New Zealand compliments occurred between female participants, and almost

a quarter more (i.e., 46) were given by females to males. The number of compliments given by males was considerably fewer. Males gave 37 (18.5%) compliments to women and 17 (8.5%) to other men. With regard to topic, they found American and New Zealand compliments fall into two major categories—those having to do with appearance and those which are related to ability. Compliments may also occur at transition points within a speech event, they can serve to reinforce desired behavior. Finally, they are often used in English-speaking communities to express encouragement especially in classrooms.

(3) Herbert (1990) shows that some compliments were used as expressions of praise and admiration rather than giving solidarity, and that depended on the relationship between the speaker and the hearer, so it is given from superior to inferior, so the teacher's compliment to his students` work is considered as praise, for example:

33. Teacher: *This is excellent Jeannie. You've really done a nice job* (cited in Holmes 1998, p.102).

Herbert(1990) also found that compliments from men are more accepted, especially if they are given to female participants, whereas compliments from women are met with responses other than acceptance

 (p.201). Herbert also reports that women in Holmes (1988) study prefer the pattern (I (really) like / love NP) over the pattern (Pro is   (really) (a) adj   NP), while men use the two forms.   She says that the major difference in formula use is the frequency of (What (a)   adj   NP) in the speech of women, whereas men use minimal pattern (Great NP) like

Great shoes (Herbert 1990, p. 203). Many studies examine complimentary language in relation to gender because of the noticeable differences in compliment topic depending on gender of the speaker as well as the gender of the addressee. Herbert (1990) found that women use the form, ``I love…`` rather than, ``I like…``when they are complimenting other women. They also use intensifiers such as ``really`` and ``very`` in their compliments more than men.

(4) Davis (2008) cited Holmes (1988) who examined the frequency of compliments between genders found that 23.1% of compliments were given from males to females while 16.5 % from females to males. Her study also showed that the main common compliment topic is related to appearance, from female – female it occurred on appearance 61% , male- female 47%,female- male 40% , male- male 36% (cited in Davis 2008, p.77).

(5) Wagon (2010) studied 235 compliments and found significant gender differences in relation to compliment topics. Males gave females almost twice as many compliments on appearance as females gave males: 52% vs. 26%, respectively. That can be due to:

1) Females were more wary of giving compliments, especially those showing physical appearance because they feel afraid of being misunderstood as romantic signs.

2) Males usually initiate romantic relations and this may be more socially acceptable, so a misinterpreted compliment would not be viewed as unnatural.

3) Males are less accustomed to respond to or expect admiration related to physical appearance.

4) There is an expectation among both genders that females place greater significance on physical appearance than do males.

These differences in compliment distribution may cause differences in expressing the function of the compliment. In some cases, women may consider compliments as positively affective speech acts, while men may regard them as referential or judgments or as negative face-threatening. All studies showed that women use compliments more frequently than men, and men compliment women more than men. Holmes explained why this happened and she said that it may be due to the fact that women's positive attitude to compliments was known by both men and women in the community, or because people knew that women value and like being complimented (p.107).

2.9. Arab compliments

Users and learners of a foreign language should not limit their knowledge to the sounds and forms of the target language, but they have to pay attention to the pragmatic rules of this language and they should know how these rules are used in real communication. Therefore, if an LI speaker understands the purpose of an L2 utterance in another way than the L2 speaker intends, pragmatic failure will occur, and the utterance will fail to achieve the speaker's goal.

Thomas (1983) says that there are some studies on native Arabic speakers showing that Arabs face difficulties when speaking in English. These difficulties are the result of ignorance of the appropriate use of linguistic forms in different situations. The inappropriate use of linguistic forms may evoke impressions of rudeness and awkwardness with whom they are communicating. She also says that Arabs find it extremely difficult to produce or sometimes understand a speech act because of their inability to use English

language effectively and to understand it in context which in turn may lead to pragmatic failure.

2.9.1. Studies on Arab compliments

This section will be presented chronologically.

(1) Nelson et al (1993) investigated Egyptian and American compliments. The findings show that both Egyptian and American compliments are adjectival and are used to compliment personal appearance. In addition. Egyptian compliments are longer than American compliments and use comparatives, references to marriage and metaphors. Egyptians tend to compliment personality traits, while Americans compliment more frequently than Egyptians; they compliment skills and work; and both Egyptians and Americans prefer direct rather than indirect means of complimenting.

(2) Al Falasi (2007) conducted a study which aims at finding out whether Arabic Emarati Female learners of English produce target like compliment responses in English and whether pragmatic transfer can occur. Findings suggest that Arabic (L1) expressions and strategies are sometimes transferred to English (L2). This study also indicates that Emarati female learners of English transfer some of their L1 pragmatic norms to L2 because they think these norms are universal among languages rather than being language specific. It also indicates that Arabic non-native speakers of English have some misconceptions about native speakers that affect the way they respond to their compliments.

(3) Abdul Sattar and Che Lah (2009) say Arab learners face so many problems in teaching English, but the most important one appears in the field of pragmatics. They may use inappropriate language in certain situations or they may misunderstand what a foreigner

says; this is called intercultural miscommunication. This intercultural miscommunication is usually caused when learners depend on their L1 norms in realizing speech acts in a foreign language. Rizk (2003) cited in Abdul Sattar and Che Lah (2009, p.170) defines pragmatic transfer as "the influence of learners pragmatic knowledge of language and culture other than the target language on their comprehension, production, and acquisition of L2 pragmatic information" (p.170). Pragmatic transfer can be either positive, which is an evidence of sociocultural and pragmatic universality among languages, or negative, which gives inappropriate transfer of L1 sociolinguistic norms into L2. This case can cause communication breakdown, or being unable to understand the meaning of an utterance in the target language. Rizk (2003) explains that negative transfer takes the form of translating some expressions to express different speech acts in (L1) to express the equivalent speech act in L2.

Conclusion:

It is clear that compliment giving and receiving differ from one culture to another. In this section, the studies discussed explained that the cultural norms and linguistic background have important role to do with performing compliments. These studies showed many differences occurred in choosing the syntactic patterns, the transfer occurred from L1 to L2 , the functions of the chosen compliments and the effect of gender, age and status. In addition, Arab compliments were discussed in different studies and how they were different from the foreign compliments.

Chapter three

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used by the researcher to investigate the use of speech act of complimenting used by the American native speakers and Palestinian in-service English teachers in North Hebron Directorate of Education. It also describes the population of the study and the instrument used by the researcher in collecting his data.

3.1. Population:

The population of the study consists of English teachers from North Hebron Directorate of Education and American native speakers met by the researcher during an exchange programme between Hebron University and the US consulate in 2010.

3.2. Subjects:

Subjects of this study consist of two parts:

1. 50 Palestinian in-service EFL teachers in government schools in North Hebron Directorate.

2. 30 American native speakers.

The participants are 80, half of them are males and the other half is females. 30 participants are educated Americans who are working in different jobs, for example, flight attendants, front desk workers, teachers, managers…etc. The other participants are 50 English teachers working in the Palestinian government schools in Hebron/North Hebron

Directorate. All of them are in-service English teachers who have spent many years teaching English either in secondary schools or elementary schools. They are like most EFL teachers who face pragmatic problems in teaching or using the speech acts. I think those Palestinian teachers will face such cross-cultural differences because of the differences between their native culture and the target culture, in addition to the lack of information about speech acts in their curricula. I think most of them, if not all, have never been totally exposed to English in a country that has English as a mother tongue, but they got their education and certificates from local universities like Hebron University, Bethlehem University, Al-Najah University and Beir Zeit University …etc.

3.4. Data collection and Instrument:

The data of this study were collected by the researcher in the USA and in Palestine. He used the discourse completion test (DCT) to collect the data from both the Palestinian teachers and educated Americans. This method of collecting data was used by many researchers like Blum-kulka and Olshtain (1986) to investigate requesting strategies, Takahashi and Beebe (1987) to investigate refusal and face threatening acts.

The questionnaire consists of three questions. Participants were expected to give or form compliments, at least one compliment. These questions were designed to meet the purpose of this study and to elicit data on complimenting strategies and patterns from both native speakers and non-native speakers of English. The participants were asked to answer them by giving as many compliments as they can remember. The participants were asked the following questions:

a. What is the most remembered compliment you gave and to whom?

b. What is the most remembered compliment you received and from whom?

c. What is the most remembered compliment you heard among others?

Participants could give at least one compliment for each question, and if they give more than one answer that will be great. In the study the dependent variables are gender, age, status , the strategies used by participants, and the independent variables are unchanged, the questions in the questionnaire.

3.5. Reliability and validity of the study

Three drafts of the questionnaire were prepared for this purpose and modified to fit the needs of the study, but the final one was used as it appeared in the appendix. The questions that were used to elicit data from the participants were reviewed by experienced teachers and approved by the supervisor.

3.6. Statistical analysis

In order to answer the study questions, data were analyzed statistically using the SPSS statistical program using the statistics of frequencies and percentages. Tables and graphs were made to display the numbers and the percentages of the variables used in the study.

Chapter Four

Findings and discussion

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the results of the questionnaire used as the instrument of collecting data. The questionnaire was distributed among 30 Educated Americans and to 50 Palestinian English teachers. The questions are to be discussed one by one including (1) the strategies and syntactic patterns used by participants. (2) the differences between Americans and Palestinians in choosing complimenting strategies and patterns. (3) the effect of gender, age and status in choosing compliments.(4) transfer from L1 into L2.

4.2. Question one:

What are the complimenting strategies and syntactic patterns used by Native American Speakers and Palestinian teachers of English ?

The two key elements of the question are complimenting strategies and syntactic patterns. The section discusses how Americans and Palestinians use the direct and the indirect strategy of complimenting, and which syntactic patterns were used more in both cultures.

4.2.1. Complimenting Strategies:

Data analysis shows that both Americans and Palestinians used the direct and indirect complimenting strategies as shown in the following table and graph:

Table(1) the distribution of direct/indirect compliments according to nationality

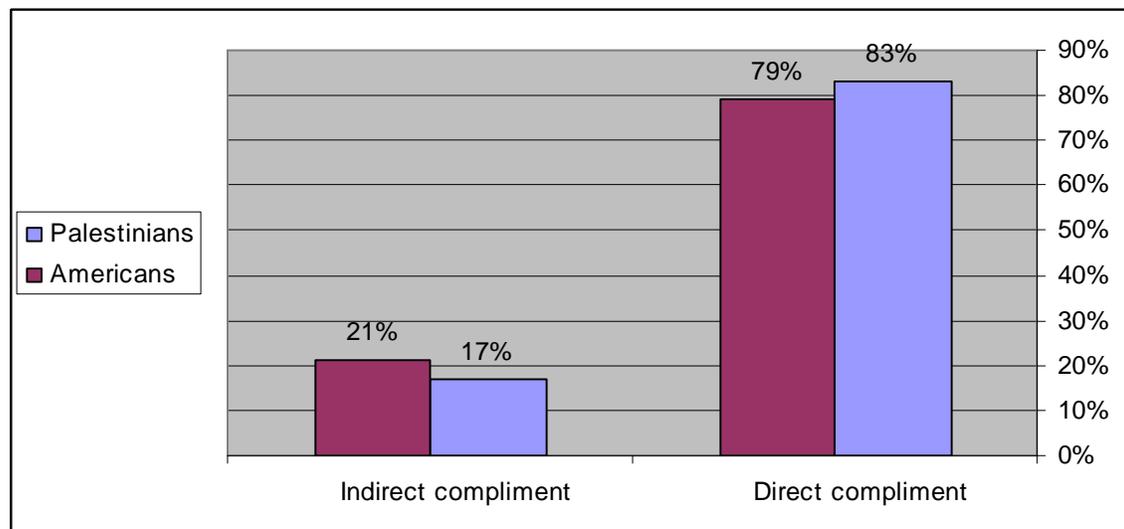|	Palestinians		Americans	
Compliment strategy	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Direct compliment	224	83%	114	79%
Indirect compliment	46	17 %	30	21%
Total	270	100 %	144	100 %

Table (1) includes the compliment strategies adopted by Palestinian and American English speakers in their 270 and 144 exchanges in the data respectively. An examination of the distribution of Palestinian and American English compliment strategies in the two broad categories indicates that complimenting frequency is higher for Palestinian teachers than for English speakers, and that direct complimenting strategy was the most often adopted strategy for both groups.

Table (1) indicates that directness in complimenting based on the obvious/ unobvious use of the complimented traits, the orientation goes towards more use of the direct over the indirect use of complimenting strategies. According to Leech (1983), if the benefit goes high to the addressee, directness is more polite and since complimenting is by nature an expression of politeness, therefore, it is expected to be more common than indirectness. Yu (2005) also found that Americans prefer the use of the direct strategies more than the indirect strategies, and so did Nelson et al (1993) who found that both Egyptians and Americans prefer direct strategy of complimenting rather than indirect means of complimenting. For example:

34. *I really like your hair that way.* (Yu 2005, p.98)

35. *Isn't the food great!* (Yu 2005, p. 98)

36. *You look like a bridegroom today.* (Nelson et al 1993, p.415)

However, former studies like that of Yu (2005) found that orientation was towards indirectness in the Chinese culture. Chinese have been studied in politeness domains and always found it to be extremely polite compared to other cultures. Ardissono (2006) also goes toward this indirectness because speakers often prefer indirect speech acts in case they threaten the hearer's face. Ardissono also claims that sometimes direct speech acts may appear impolite as in interrogative questions, for instance,

37. *Would you lend me some money?*

After all, though Palestinians belong to a different culture from Americans, both have the same orientation that supports the use of direct complimenting with a little difference in the American sample that shows the percentage of indirectness higher than the Palestinian as seen in table (1). The Palestinian teachers used the indirectness strategy

in 17% of their compliments while the Americans used it 20.8%. Moreover, the Palestinian culture uses complimenting as a polite strategy to express their feelings and admiration to others, so it should be direct without going around the bush or using ambiguous words or lexis, and this is supported by Leech's and Nelson's et al ideas about directness.

4.2.2. Syntactic Patterns:

After analyzing the data, twelve syntactic patterns have been found as shown in table 2.

Table(2) the distribution of syntactic patterns according to nationality

Syntactic pattern	Palestinians		Americans		
	No.	%		No.	-%
1) You + be+ ADJ +(NP)	102	7.7	1) You + be+ ADJ +(NP)	57	39.5
2) ADJ	48	17.7	2) I+ be+ ADJ+NP	14	9.7
3) Religious expressions	24	8.8	3) You +V+ADJ/ADV	11	7.6
4) What/how+ a +ADJ+NP	16	5.9	4) You/NP + look +ADJ	10	6.9
5) ADJ+NP	12	4.4	5) ADJ+NP	7	4.8
6) ADV+V (pp) + (NP)	12	4.4	6) I + like/love +NP	6	4.1
7) You +have +a+ ADJ+NP	9	3.3	7)What/how+ a +ADJ+NP	6	4.1
8) NP+ V +ADJ+NP	9	3.3	8) ADJ	4	2.7
9) You+ look +ADJ	5	1.8	9) You +have+ a+ ADJ +NP	3	2
10) I +be +ADJ + NP	3	1.1	10) ADV+V(pp)+ (NP)	3	2
11) You +V+ Adj + (NP)	1	0.003	11) You +V +ADJ+(NP)	2	1.3
12) I + like/love+ NP	0	000	12) Religious expressions	1	0.006
Others	28	10.3	Others	18	13.8
Total	270	100	Total	144	100
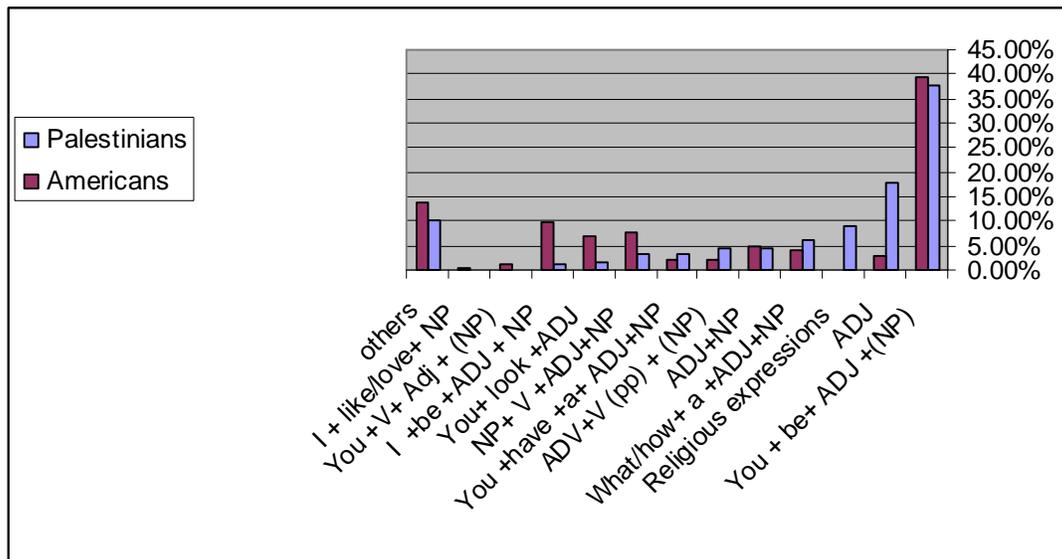
The above table reveals that the Palestinians and the Americans in the present study shared the use of the pattern (You/NP+ be+ ADJ+NP). This pattern was also used by the Americans as the most frequent pattern in the former studies which were conducted before. The other patterns were found in these former studies but in different order from those found in this study. The former studies used three common patterns as was the case with Wolfson (1981),Wolfson (1983) and Wolfson and Manes (1980) who noted that compliments have a limited range of syntactic patterns, and that the majority of these compliments are produced within one of the following three formulaic patterns with a totaling of 80% :

(NP + is / look + adj)   =   50%

(I + (really) +like/love +NP)   =   16%

(PRO+ be + adj)   =   14 %

According to Wolfson and Mane, the most frequently used adjectives are *nice, good, beautiful, pretty and great.*

In this current study, the American participants used twelve patterns, but the most frequent ones were analyzed and calculated to show how many times they occurred and their percentages. The most frequent patterns made up 63.7 % of the sample:

1. You + be + ADJ +(NP)   =   39.5%

   37. *You are so charming.*

   38. *You are my best friend*

2. I + be + ADJ + NP   =   9.7 %

   39. *I was good at my job.*

   40. *I am very proud of you.*

3. You + V+ ADJ/ ADV +(NP)   =   7.6 %

   41. *You do a great job.*

   42. *You have a generous spirit.*

4. You /NP + look + ADJ   =   6.9 %

   43. *You look great.*

   44. *You look very nice.*

The first pattern in both data was the same as it was in the previous studies, while the others were also found but in different order and different frequencies. For example , the use of the verbs (like/love) were found in the second place in Wolfson`s study, but it appeared in the sixth place in the American data with 4.1% in this study, and the use of the pronoun followed by (be) and the (Adj) was the third pattern, but in this study it didn't

appear. Whereas, in the Palestinian data the most frequent pattern used was the same as in the American data. The more used patterns totaling 70.1 % were:

1. You/NP +be +ADJ + (NP)   =   37.7 %

    45. *You are the greatest mother.*

    46. *You are so great last night.*

 2. Adjective   =   17.7 %

    47. *Wonderful. Excellent, Bravo.*

3. Religious expressions   =   8.8 %

    48. *God bless you.*

    49. *May God bless you darling*

4. What/how +(a)+ Adj + NP?   = 5.9 %

    50. *What a wonderful party?*

    51.   *How nice of you to say that.*

It is obvious that choosing a syntactic compliment pattern is affected by the setting and the sociolinguistic knowledge of the speakers in addition to the cultural norms of the interlocutors. In the patterns adopted by Palestinian teachers and Americans, the patterns were nearly found in both data, but the differences were found in their frequencies and their order. The Palestinians used the patterns depending on their linguistic knowledge and their cultural norms because of that, differences appeared in the syntactic structure or in terms of transfer. Palestinians used these patterns because they express the same ideas even in their Arabic compliments when they use (You+ be+ adj + NP) as in the Arabic sentences(أنت جميلة اليوم /أنت أعظم أم في الدنيا)or in using the short form (adj) like the praising of the teachers in classrooms or in the ordinary life (حلوة /رائع/ممتاز/جيد/) good, excellent, great,

beautiful) or in using religious words and expressions because they are Muslims and believe that the best thing to compliment someone with is praying for Allah protection الله (يحميك/الله يعطيك العافية/الله يخليك/ Allah may bless you, God protect you, May God give you good health).

4.3. **Findings of question Two** :

This part will discuss the differences between the strategies and the syntactic patterns which were used in the study by the Americans and the Palestinian teachers. The question is: Are there differences between the strategies and syntactic patterns used by Palestinian EFL Teachers and American speakers because of their cultural background?

Table (3) the distribution of compliment strategies according to nationality

	Palestinians		Americans	
Complimenting strategy	*Number*	*Percent*	*Number*	*Percent*
Direct compliments	224	82.9 %	114	79.1 %
Indirect compliments	46	17 %	30	20.8 %
Total	270	100 %	144	100 %
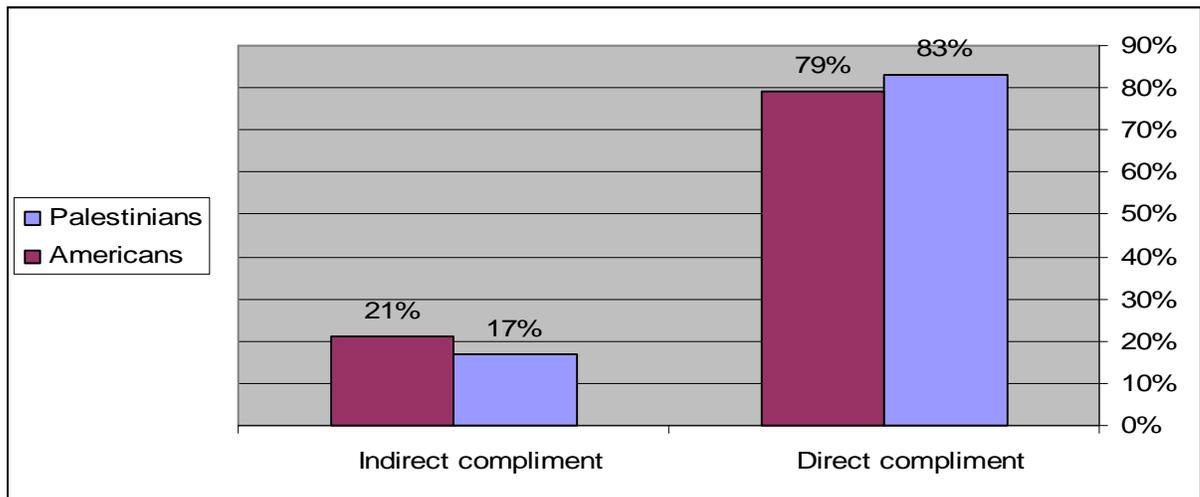
It is clear from the statistical analysis that there is a little statistical difference in compliment strategies used by the participants in both samples. The participants used the direct way of complimenting more than the indirect way to express their compliments. They might have done so because they wanted to keep themselves and their listeners away from face threatening. They believe that they compliment others for doing or having something good, for having good personality or encouraging listeners for doing well. In this study there were 414 complimenting sentences. 338 sentences used the direct complimenting strategy, whereas, the indirect strategy was used 76 times. Looking at the statistics shown in table (3), we can find that both the Americans and the Palestinians prefer the direct way of giving compliments more than the indirect way. The Palestinians used the direct way (83%) of their data while the Americans used it (79%) of their data. Both participant groups think that direct complimenting is more polite and doesn't threaten the hearer's face because the benefit of the compliment goes high to the listener (Leech 1983) and complimenting is a way of expressing positive politeness and softening face threatening, for example:

52. *You are an angel sent to help me.*

53. *What a nice dress?*

54. *You look smart today.*

However, the indirect strategy of complimenting was not absent, both groups of participants used the indirect way of complimenting. Americans used it 21 % while the Palestinians used it 17%. This low percentage of using the indirect strategy of complimenting shows that the speakers prefer the direct way in order to be more polite and more sincere while talking to others because the aim of complimenting is to enhance others` feelings and good deeds and not to hurt them. The function of complimenting is to create solidarity and social relations not to damage them. Examples of indirect compliments are:

55. *Why are you friendly among others.?*

56. *You have changed my life for the better.*

Compliments were given using a range of lexical items. Wolfson (1984) notes that 80% of the compliments in her data used adjectives to carry the positive semantic load and behavior. Even though, the number of positive adjectives which may be used is unlimited, two thirds of all adjectival compliments in the her study made use of only five adjectives: *nice, good, beautiful, pretty* and *great*.

 57. *Your apartment is nice.*

58.   *That was a really great meal.*

59. *You sound good on tape.*

60.   *That suit is very pretty.*

61. *Gosh, you have a beautiful living room.*

In the New Zealand study, the five most frequent adjectives were *nice, good, beautiful, lovely,* and *wonderful*. She found that most of the nonadjectival compliments used positive verbs such as *(like, love, enjoy, admire,* and *b e impressed by*. The verbs *like* and *love* alone account for 86% of the American data and 80% of the New Zealand data.

In this study, the researcher noticed that the Palestinian and American utterances were also adjectival as in the most previous studies. Both data used 308 adjectival utterances (74.3 %) out of 414. In the Palestinian case, the sentences were also adjectival and the participants used (76.6 %) of their utterances containing adjectives to show the compliments, but the Americans used (70.1 %) of their utterances as adjectival. That indicates a similarity between the Palestinian and the American speakers because the two groups nearly used 2/3 of their sentences as adjectival with a higher percentage for the Palestinian teachers.

The participants tended to use a range of adjectives, but the most common adjectives used were *good (28 = 9 %), nice (27 = 8.7%), great (25 = 8.1 %), excellent (20=6.4%), beautiful (25 = 8.1 %) and kind (14 = 4.5%)*. Other frequently used adjectives in compliment-giving are *well-done (11), wonderful(9), clever, active, handsome, smart, friendly, lovely, honest,…*etc.

62. *A student to a teacher: You are good and kind.*

63. *A son to his mum: You are a good mum.*

64. *A husband to wife: You are great.*

65. *A teacher to a student: You are excellent.*

66. *A boyfriend to a girlfriend : You are a beautiful girl.*

67. *A daughter to her parents: You are very kind.*

Most of these adjectives are used to praise students and encourage them to do well in their class work or to praise the complimentees` personalities, but most of the time as individual adjectives like good, excellent, pretty, kind, nice, great…etc , and they were mentioned in Wolfson`s study as well as in the New Zealand study but in different frequencies.

As it was hypothesized that there are differences in the syntactic patterns used by the participants in the two samples. Although participants used many types of structures to express their compliments, the most frequent structure or syntactic pattern used by both participants –Palestinians and Americans-was (You/NP+ be+ ADJ+(NP) with 159 utterances (38.4%); (37.7 %) of the utterances were used by the Palestinians and (39.5%) were used by the Americans.

Examples:

68. *You are the greatest mother in the world*

69. *You are clever.*

70. *Your work is great.*

Differences appeared in the frequency of other patterns. First, in the Palestinian data, the second pattern that shows difference was the use of (Adjective) which appeared (48 utterances = 17.7%). In general, Arabs prefer the short form as Nelson said in his study about the Egyptian compliments, while this pattern came the eighth in the American data and it appeared in 4 utterances (2.7%), for example:

71. *kind*

72. *Cheerful*

The pattern of using religious expressions appeared in the third place in the Palestinian data ,but it is nearly not found in the American data. They were used to praise those who deserve to be complimented. This is because of cultural differences where Arabs` culture is rooted in the Islamic religion, while the American culture is deprived from this aspect. Palestinian participants gave 24 compliments (8.8%) using religious words whereas the Americans used 1 compliment using religious words (0.006%). The most expression used was (God bless you), for example:

73. *God bless you.(Yubarikuka Allah* يباركك الله *)*

74. *May God give you good health.(Allah yateek el-afyeh* الله يعطيك العافية*)*

75. *May God be with you.(Allah maaK* الله معاك*)*

This pattern indicates that there are cultural norms for each culture which makes it different from other cultures. That may show the cultural and religious transfer of norms into the situations of L2. The structure(What/ how +(a) +ADJ+NP?) comes next in the fourth place with (16= 5.95%) in the Palestinian data, for instance:

76. *What a wonderful party?*

77. *How nice of you to say that?*

While it comes in the seventh place in the American data and they used it (6 = 4.1 %), for example:

78. (American participant): *I told a child " how nice she looks."*

79. *What a great kid you are!*

Another pattern used by the Palestinian teachers in their classes to praise students` work, skills and to encourage them to do better. It is (Adverb+ V (pp) + (NP)) which was

used (12 times = 4.4%) in the Palestinian data while it was used (3 times = 2%) in the American data, for example:

80. *Well done.*

81. *Well done honey.*

   The pattern (Adj + NP) goes side by side with the previous pattern with (12 = 4.4%) in the Palestinian data, and it appeared in the same position in the American data but with higher percent of 4.8 % = 7 times, for example:

82. *Great job.*

83. *good boy. Nice work.*

  There are other forms used by Palestinians and Americans but with different frequencies and order, for instance; (You +have +(a)+ ADJ+NP) with (9 = 3.3 %) for Palestinians and (3 = 2%) for Americans, for instance:

84. *You have beautiful eyes. You have the softest heart. You have a sweet smile.*

 (You + look +Adj) in the Palestinian data appeared in the ninth position. It occurred 5 times = 1.8 %, for instance:

85. *You look wonderful. You look smart today.*

Whereas it appeared in the fourth place in the American data with 10 sentences =6.9%, for example:

86. *You look great. You look very nice*

    The Palestinian teachers didn't use like/ love in their compliments while they were used by the American participants in the form of (I +like/love+ NP). The Americans used it 6 times = 4.1%, for example:

87. *I like the sound of your voice. I like your hat.*

There are American syntactic patters that are specific for the American speakers. The first and the second frequent patterns used by the Americans in this study were the same that were used by participants in other American compliment studies. These were:

You/NP +be+ Adj +(NP) was used in 57 utterances = 39.5%), for example:

88. *You are so charming.*

89. *You are an angel.*

The second frequent pattern was (I+ be+ ADJ+ NP) with 14 times = 9.7 %, but it appeared in the tenth place in the Palestinian data with (3 utterances=1.1%), for example:

90. *I am good at my job.*

91. *I was a gracious lady.*

The third pattern was (You +V+ADJ/ADV+(NP)). It appeared 11 times (7.6%) in the American data, whereas, it appeared in the eleventh place in the Palestinian data with frequency of (1 sentence = 0,003) ,for example:

92. *You do a good job.*

The fourth pattern took the form of (You/NP + look +adj). It appeared 10 times (6.9 %) while this pattern appeared in the ninth place with frequency of (5 sentences = 1.8 %), for example:

93. *Your hair looks nice.*

94. *You look very nice.*

Other patterns that appeared in the American data are shown in table (2) mentioned above. We can conclude that there are differences between the American and Palestinian syntactic forms and lexis used to express the positive value of the compliment. Both use adjectives to show the compliments but there is a difference in the frequencies

and the most used adjectives, for example, in the American studies *nice* is the most
frequent, then *good , beautiful, pretty and great,* while in this study, *good is* the most
frequent adjective*, then nice , great, excellent, beautiful, and kind.* Besides , there are
differences in complimenting patterns, both data share the first pattern, but they differ in
the frequency of the others. Palestinians prefer the short adjective and the religious
expressions in saying their compliments, while the Americans prefer the use of (I + adj+
NP) and (You + V+ ADJ/ ADV +(NP) in their compliments.

4.4. Findings of question three:

This part discusses the effect of gender, status, social distance and age of
participants on choosing the compliment strategy and pattern of the compliment. The
question is: Do gender, age, status and social distance affect choosing the compliments?

4.4.1. Gender

Compliment patterns appear to be quite different when the complimenter and
complimentee are the same gender from when they are different genders. Wolfson (1983)
comments that in the American data women tended both to give and receive compliments
more frequently than men did, and this was certainly true for the New Zealand data as well.
Look at table (4)

Table (4) distribution of gender in Wolfson`s 1983 and Holmes's 1988 studies

	Women-women	Women –men	Men –women	Men –men
Wolfson 1983	(gave) 50% _____ (Received) 50%	23%	----------- 18.5%	18.5
Holmes 1988	16.5%	-----------------	23.1%	-------------

Women gave 73.0% of all the compliments (50.0% to other women and 23.0% to men) and received 68.5% of them (50.0% from other women and 18.5% from men). Compliments between males were relatively rare (only 18.5%). On the other hand, Holmes (1988) examined the frequency of compliments between genders, and found that 23.1% of compliments happened from males to females while 16.5 % from females to males.

In this study, Wolfson`s results were also true with the American participants, as American females complimented other females more than they complimented males, they gave and received 51.3 % of the compliments (39.1% from females to females & 12.2 from females to males). American males gave and received 48.6% of the compliments (22.9 % from males to males & 25.6% from males to females). On the contrary, the Palestinian males agreed with Holmes's results. Those males gave and received 55.4 % of their compliments (40.8 % from males to males & 14.6 % from males to females) while the Palestinian females gave and received less compliments than men did. Women gave and received 44.5 % (32.9% from females to females & 11.6% from females to males). Table (5) and (6) show the statistics.

Table(5) The distribution of compliments according to gender and nationality

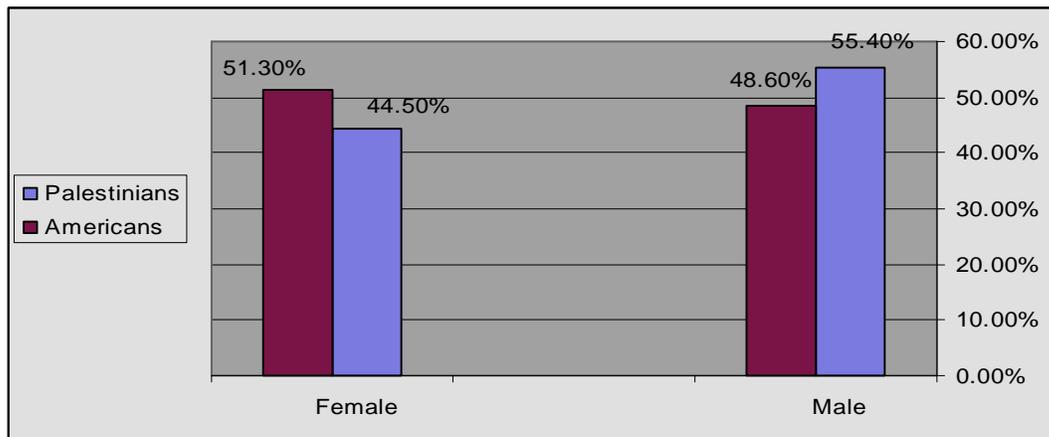| Gender	Palestinians		Americans	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male	106	55.4%	36	48.6%
Female	85	44.5%	38	51.3 %
Total	191	99.9 %	74	99.9 %

Table (6) distribution of compliments according to the gender of the speaker and the recipient

Gender	Palestinians		Americans	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male- male	78	40.8 %	17	23%
Male-female	28	14.6 %	19	25.6 %
Female- female	63	32.9 %	29	39.1 %
Female-male	22	11.6 %	9	12.2 %
Total	191	99.9 %	74	99.9 %
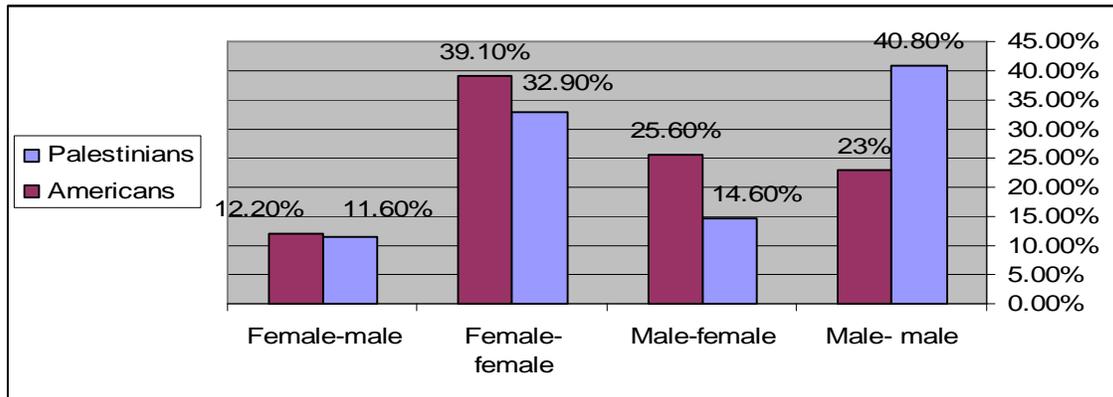
The above statistics show that there are gender differences in the frequency of compliments between genders. In general, when the participants are from the same gender, they gave more compliments than when they are from different genders. In the American data, males to males compliments were 22.9 % and females to females compliments were 39.1 %, but when the participants were from different genders, they usually gave less compliments, for example, males complimented females 25.6 % while females complimented males 12.2 % and that was natural depending on the previous studies as researchers found that males compliment females and for different reasons more than males complimenting males. Holmes (1988) for instance, examined the frequency of compliments between genders, finding 23.1% of compliments occur from males to females in comparison to 16.5% from females to males.

In the case of Palestinian compliments, the researcher found that Palestinian males gave more compliments than the Palestinian females,. Therefore, there is a difference between the two groups- the Palestinian and the American. The distribution of compliments among different genders, the researcher found that in the Palestinian data, males gave their same gender more than they gave the opposite gender- females. Those males expressed

their compliments to other males in 40.8% of the compliments while 14.6 % were given from males to females although most studies notice that compliments are given by males to females more than to males. In this study, this may be due to culture orientation or to religious beliefs that it is forbidden to flatter women or say sweet words to those who are not close family members. In addition, males used these compliments in their work with their students , employees, supervisors, or headmasters to praise their work, achievements or characters. With regard of the Palestinian females, females gave other females 39.1 % of the compliments on their personalities, skills and appearance, and females gave males 12.2 % and most of those males were close relatives like son, husband and brother.

95. *Brother to sister: You are elegant.*

96. *Mother to daughter: God bless you my sweet girl.*

However, in the American data, the case was reversed because American compliments follow the previous American studies about compliments. That's because American females performed more complimenting sentences than males did. American females gave 51.3 %; nearly three quarters of these compliments (39.1%) took place between females and about a quarter (12.6 %) took place between females and males. However, out of the 48.6% performed by American males, 22.9 % are between males and 25.6 % between males and females which is similar to what is shown in other American studies. Therefore, we can see that there are differences in the area of male- female compliments.

To sum up, we can conclude that Americans way of complimenting is supported by former studies, like Wolfson`s, Herbert's, Wagon…etc, while the Palestinian teachers

follow their own way of complimenting depending on the setting they are in with some awareness about gender differences, religious beliefs and cultural norms.

Gender also affects the choice of the structural pattern and its frequency, for example, in the Palestinian data the patterns which got the highest frequencies are:

1.You + be+ ADJ +(NP) was used 102 times, 39.2 % by males and 60.7 % by females.

97. *Mother to son: You are kind.*

98. *Girlfriend to boy friend: You are handsome.*

2. ADJ was used 48 times, 35.4 % by males and 64.5 % by females.

99. *Male teacher to male student: Great!*

100. *Daughter to mother: kind*

3.Religious expressions were used 24 times, 66.6% by males and 33.3% by females.

In the American data, the highest patterns are:

1.   You + be+ ADJ +(NP) was used 57 times, 42.1% by males and 57.8% by females.

101. *A boyfriend to a girlfriend: You are beautiful.*

102. *A son to a mother: You are good mum.*

2.   I+ be+ ADJ+ NP was used 14 times, 35.7% by males and 64.2% by females.

103. *Two female colleagues: I was good at my job.*

3.   You +V+ADJ/ADV+ (NP) was used 11 times , 27.2% by males and 72.7% by females.

104. *You have done a great job.*

4.   You/NP + look +ADJ was used 10 times, 40% by males and 60% by females.

105. *. A wife to a husband: You look great.*

There were other forms which were preferred by females and were used more than men did, for instance,

1. I+ be+ Adj+ NP : It was used 64.7% by females while it was used 35.2% by males.

2. You + look+ Adj : It was used 66.6% by females and 33.3% by males.

To conclude, the most frequent patterns were used by females more than males except in the religious expressions which were used by Palestinian males more than Palestinian females. It was also noticed that the second person pronoun was used frequently in both data, in addition to the use of the short form of the compliment (adjective) especially in the Palestinian compliments. This form appeared 52 times, 48 times in the Palestinian data and 4 in the American data.

4.4.1.1. Gender and complimenting topic.

Gender didn't affect the choice of the topic of the compliment so much because males and females preferred the topic of personality to be the first and the most frequent, then ability and performance and third the topic of appearance as shown in table & graph 7

Table (7) compliment topics for participant groups

| Topic	Palestinians		Americans	
Personality/character	90	33.3 %	55	38.1 %
Ability/achievements	84	31.1 %	40	27.7 %
Appearance /possessions	48	17.7 %	36	25 %
Others	48	17.7 %	13	9 %
Total	270	100%	144	100%
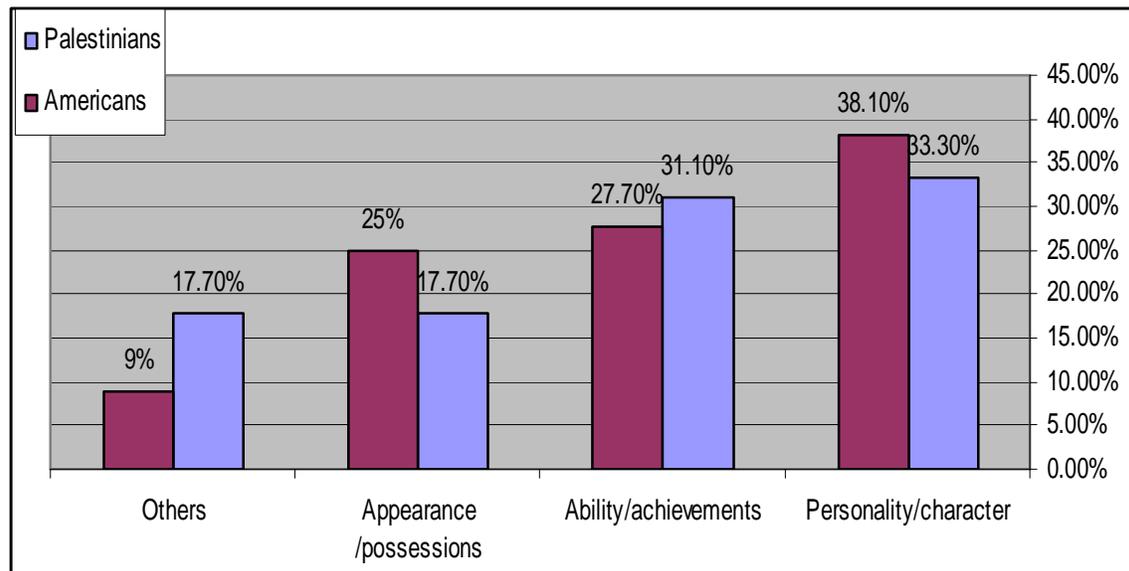
Both groups of speakers used their compliments for the same complimenting topics .
In general, the Americans used the topic of personality more frequently than other topics,
and more frequently than the Palestinians. In the case of ability and achievements, the
Americans complimented ability less than the Palestinians did, while in terms of
appearance, Americans complimented others more than the Palestinians. On the contrary,
the Palestinian teachers focused on the topic of personality and ability -with little difference
to personality- more than the other topics ,but less than the American participants. The
relation between the Palestinian participants as teachers and students mostly had a role on
choosing the topic of personality. In schools, the setting is formal and most of the
compliments go from high status to low status, and that causes the compliments to go
towards complimenting the personality of the students or their achievements, skills and
abilities, and at the same time some compliments go from low status (students) to high
status (teachers) and these could only be about the teachers` abilities or personalities. Then,

the Palestinians complimented others using lexis related to ability (31.1%) more than the Americans (27.7 %). This may be due to the setting where the compliments took place, since the classroom setting helped the Palestinian teachers to express their admiration towards the work of their students by using more sentences praising their students` abilities and skills. Regarding Appearance, the Palestinians did not concentrate on appearance so much because the setting had the effect of choosing the previous mentioned topics more, therefore, they complimented appearance less than the Americans. The same effect that the Palestinian setting had on the Palestinian compliments, the American setting also had an effect as the participants are educated and most of them are connected either to a school or college or to a work place, in this case the topic of appearance is the less concerned, while the skills and characters are more likely praised.

Topic distribution on the two genders shows the differences more clearly between the gender of the speaker and the gender of the recipient as shown in the following table and graph:

Table (8) the distribution of complimenting topics according to the gender of the speaker and the recipient

Topic	Americans							
	M—M		M—F		F—F		F—M	
Personality/ character	7	10.1%	6	8.6%	10	14.4%	5	7.2%
Ability/achievements	4	5.7%	4	5.7%	15	21.7%	1	0.014%
Appearance/possessio	5	7.2%	3	4.3%	5	7.2%	4	5.7%
Total	16	23%	13	18.6%	30	43.3%	10	12.9%
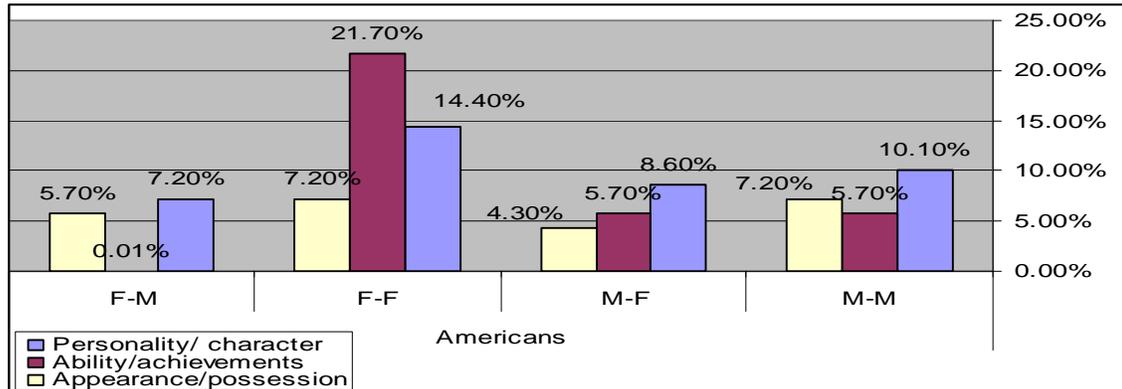
Looking at the distribution of genders and the complimenting topics in the American data, we can find that gender has an effect. Foe example, compliments occurred from males to males, from males to females, and from females to males focus on the topic of personality with (10.1%، 8.6%، 7.20%) respectively, but when compliments were between females, skills and achievements were the centre of the compliments with (21.70%) of the compliments. Regarding appearance, it was found that it took the second place in male-male compliments with 7.2 % and in female- male with 5.7% . We can conclude that females complimented other females on their skills and abilities while males complimented personality in the first place, and appearance and ability in the second place. Concerning the distribution of compliments on the Palestinian males and females, table and graph 9 shows the statistics.

Table(9) the distribution of Palestinian compliments according to the gender of the interlocutors.

Topic	Palestinians								
	M—M		M—F		F—F		F—M		Total
Personality	31	42.4%	12	16.4%	20	27.3%	10	13.6%	100%
Ability/achievement	31	45.5%	4	5.9%	29	42.8%	4	5.8%	100%
Appearance/possession	7	25.9%	6	22.2%	8	29.7%	6	22.2%	100%
Total	69		22		57		20		100%0 168
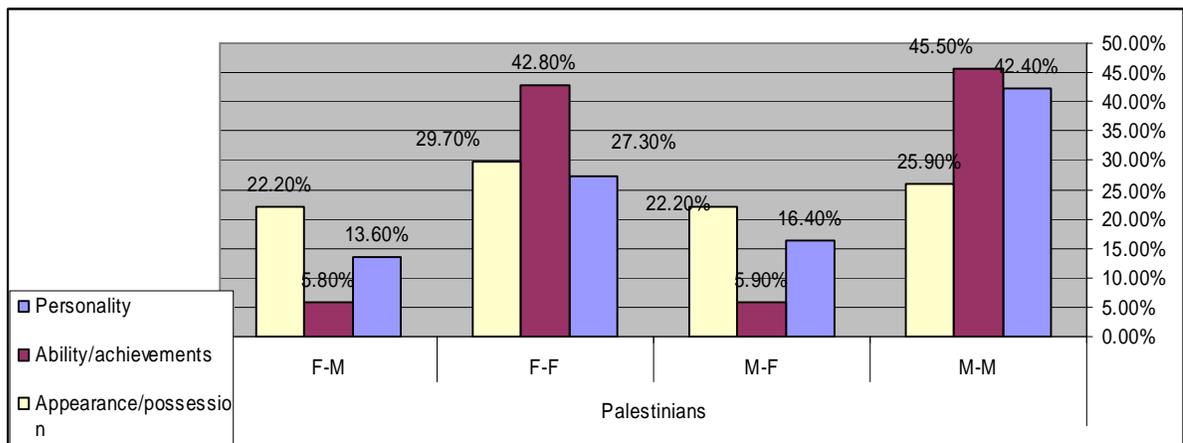
This table shows that there are differences in the distribution of topics on the Palestinian males and females compared to the American distribution. Palestinian participants did not concentrate so much on personality, on the contrary, their compliments focused on ability / achievements and appearance more than personality, for example, participants of the same gender focused on the topic of ability and achievements, as males

used 45.5% of their data to compliment other males` skills and achievements. In addition, females complimented other females on their skills and achievements using 42.6 %. This result is due to the fact that teachers, males and females, are dealing with students and their work in class and they have to praise them for their achievements and skills in doing homework or in doing in class activities. Without much difference from skill, Palestinians males used 42.4% of the compliments to praise other males on their personalities vices 10.1 % for the Americans. In the case of male –female and female-male interaction, Palestinian males complimented the opposite gender-females- using 22.2 % on their appearance, and so did the females who complimented males for their appearance with 22.2 %. Females also complimented females on their appearance by using 29.6% of their compliments.

4.4.2. Social Status

Compliments occur between equal status as well as between lower status. Holmes (1988) indicates that when the status of the participants is equal or the speaker is of low status than the addressee, the topic of the compliment in American English is concerned with appearance or possessions, and that was the case with the most frequent compliments in the New Zealand data (79%). Wolfson in her American data claims that the greatest amount of compliments are given to and received by people of the same status as the speaker (Wolfson 1983, p.91). She also says that most of the compliments which occur in communication between people of unequal status are given by the person in the higher position. In a classroom setting, the compliments usually flow from teachers to students to serve as a way of encouraging and supporting students' efforts. Compliments from higher to lower or from lower to higher status are twice as probably to relate to work performance

or skill (54%) as to appearance (27%) whereas the compliments between equals are as twice to relate to appearance as to performance or skill(Wolfson 1983, p. 91).

These results were true to a certain extent in this study. Most Palestinian compliments took place in a classroom setting, so the compliments were given from teachers of high status to students of low status to serve as a way of encouraging and supporting students' efforts or from a headmaster or a supervisor to teachers, for instance:

106. *You are excellent, good, active.*

107. *You are clever. Well done.*

Also in both the Americans and the Palestinian teachers follow the same line as the most frequent compliments happened between equals , then comes compliments from high to low status , and from low to high status came third as shown in table 10 :

Table (10): the distribution of status between Palestinians and Americans

	Palestinians		Americans	
Status	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
High status	100	37 %	11	7.6 %
Equal status	147	54.4%	112	77.7 %
Low status	23	8.5 %	14	9.7 %
			7 unknown status	4.8 %
Total	270	99.9 %	14 4	99.8 %
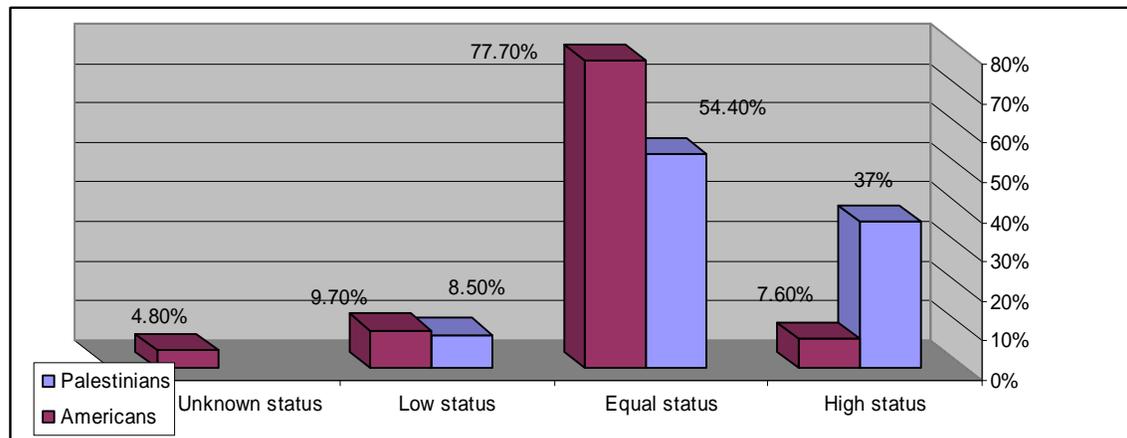
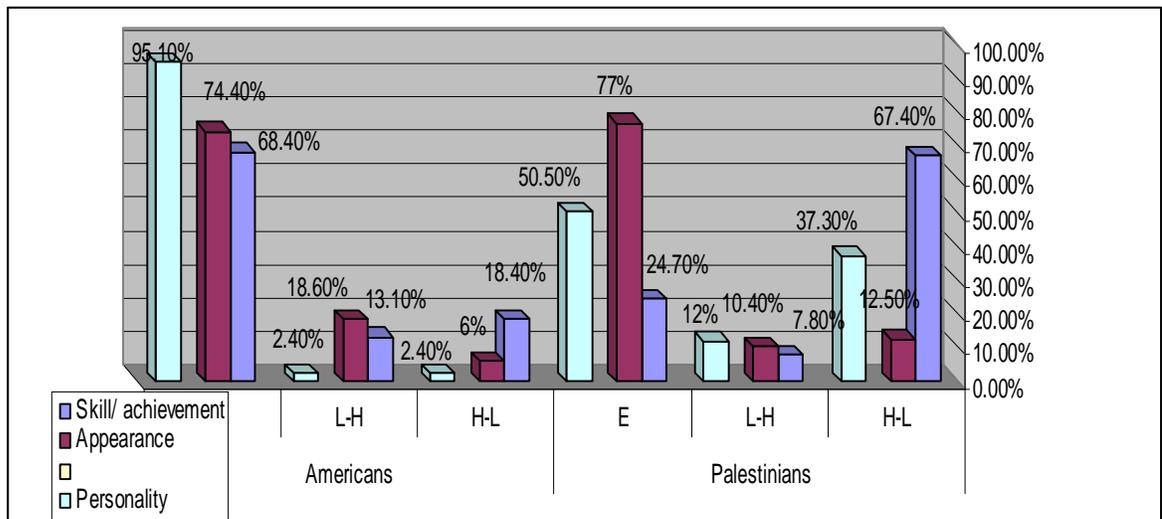**Table(11) distribution of complimenting topics on different status**

Topic	Palestinians						Americans						Total
	H – L		L—H		E		H-L		L-H		E		
Skills	60	67.4%	7	7.8%	22	24.7%	7	18.4%	5	13.1%	26	68.4%	127
Appearance	6	12.5%	5	10.4%	37	77%	3	6%	8	18.6%	32	74.4%	91
Personality	34	37.3%	11	12%	46	50.5%	1	2.4%	1	2.4%	39	95.1%	132
Total	100		23		10		11		14		97		350

Looking at the distribution of topics on different genders, we can find that in the American data, compliments from people of high status to people of low status were used to relate to skills and achievements (18.4 %) as to appearance (6 %) supporting Wolfson`s claims , and that happens because their compliments were mostly related to work. The American participants were all educated and mostly employed in many careers like teachers, coworkers, managers, flight attendants…etc. But compliments from low to high status didn't follow Wolfson`s distribution because their compliments focused on appearance(18.6 %) rather than kills and performance although the difference in frequency is not so high (13.1%) and participants of equal status concentrated on the topic of personality more than appearance as Wolfson reported it came (95.1 %) for personality vs. 74.4 % for appearance, so the difference in the American data was clear in the distribution and the order of the topics of complimenting on different genders compared to Wolfson`s results.

Palestinian compliments were also more frequent between people of equal status who praised the appearance of the addressee using (77%) of their compliments. They

followed the same line as Wolfson`s distribution because they complimented appearance rather than the skills or personality, but they reversed the American present data who praised personality. Next, compliments between high and low status took place in (67.4 %) of their compliments concentrating on praising the skills and achievements, and that's because the classroom interaction between the teachers of high status and the students who are of low status, and the same was with supervisors and headmasters complimenting their teachers. Those high status people used complimenting as a way of praising students` in classrooms  and workers` work and performance in the work place, for example:

108. *Employer to employee: Good job.*

109. *Headmistress to teacher. Thanks for your efforts.*

110. *Teacher to student: You are a hero.*

Whereas the compliments from low to high status were related to personality with 12% , most occurred between students and teachers or teachers and supervisors and headmasters, for example:

111. *Son to father: You have the softest heart.*

112. *Teacher to supervisor: The supervisor is a good man.*

113. *Student to teacher: You are good and kind.*

We can conclude that there were differences in topic distribution on genders and related status. The Americans high status praised skills and achievements and so did the Palestinians, while American low status complimented appearance and the Palestinian low status complimented   personality. Moreover, the American equals complimented personality, while the Palestinian equals complimented appearance.

4.4.3. Social distance

Social relations between the addressed and the addressee is a factor in choosing the type and the way of giving the compliment. In this study many social relations appeared as shown in the following table:

Table (12) the numbers and percentages of social relations for Americans and Palestinians.

Relation	Number	Percent	Relation	Number	Percent
School relations	113	41.5 %	Friendship	**56**	**20.5 %**
teacher – student	61	54%	friend to friend	45	80.4
student-teacher	17	15%	boyfriend to girlfriend	9	16 .1%
teacher- teacher	8	7.1%	girlfriend to boyfriend	2	3.6%
headmaster/mistress-teacher	14	12.4%			
supervisor –teacher	13	11.5%			
Family relations	77	28.3 %	Work relations	26	9.5 %
father/mother- son/daughter	26	33.8%	employer-employee	4	15.4%
son/daughter-father/mother	13	16.9%	employee-employer	4	15.4%
husband-wife	16	20.8%	customer-	11	42.3%
wife- husband	14	18.2%	employee/worker	4	15.4%
sister-brother	1	1.3%	worker-worker	2	7.7%
brother-sister	5	6.5%	passenger-flight attendant	1	3.8%
brother-brother	1	2%	flight attendant –captain		
sister-sister	1	2%			

The social distance between the participants in these relations helped them choose certain ways of complimenting others. The most frequent relation that appeared in the study was related to school relations, family relations , then friendship and the last is work relations. The closest the relation was, the more frequent the compliments. In the Palestinian data, the school relations are the most frequent because the setting has an

effect, since the teacher is dealing with his students in the classroom and is using the compliments as a way of encouraging students to do better or to continue doing well. Teacher - student relation has got the highest percentage because according to linguists complimenting goes from high status to low status when it is related to work or skills.

In the Palestinian situation, most compliments were given by the teachers because they used them for a certain function, as mentioned above which is for encouraging and motivating students in the classroom. They gave students 57 sentences or 57 % of their compliments because of the classroom setting and the effect of these compliments in giving students more confidence and relaxation while working in classrooms. On the other hand, students complimented their teachers using 14 compliments (14 %), and they might have done that because as some researchers claimed that giving compliments from low status to higher status could be considered a flattery or because there was some distance between teachers and students in terms of high and low status. In the case of supervisors , they gave teachers 12 compliments (12 %) and headmasters and mistresses gave teachers 13 compliments (13 %) and both did that to help teachers do better or to praise their work, achievements and bless their efforts. Finally colleague teachers gave each other 4 compliments(4 %). While in the American data, the participants used 13 compliments, 4 of these compliments were given by teachers to students (6.5 %), 3 were given by students to teachers (17.6 %), 4 were given by teachers to other teachers (50%) and 1 by supervisors and headmasters respectively (7.6 % and 7.1 %).

After that, family relations took part (77 times) in the study. Because the relations between the family members in the Palestinian society is very important and sacred, they appeared more in the Palestinian case. Parents used different ways of complimenting their

sons and daughters as their compliments appeared 45.6%, and so do the sons and daughters who gave 12.2 % to their parents. Parents usually compliment their sons and daughters to give them confidence and encourage them to continue doing well in their works or to encourage them to build their personalities and create solidarity. Palestinian sons and daughters praised their parents on their personalities and their work at home in addition to their good behavior while dealing with sons and daughters. For example:

114. *Father to son : You are polite.*

115. *Mother to son : Well done honey.*

116. *Daughter to parents: You are very kind*

117. *Mother to daughter : God bless you my sweet girl.*

For the American case, parents` compliments did not appear at all, whereas, sons and daughters complimented parents only 6 times (3 %) which shows that the Palestinian family relations are stronger and more sincere than the American relations.

Then marriage relations are also important to keep the house warm, they appeared 30 times in the study. Palestinian husbands complimented their wives more than the Americans did. They gave wives 11 compliments (19.2 %) of their compliments while the American husbands used 5 compliments (25 %) of their compliments. In the female case, Palestinian wives complimented their husbands 6 times (10.5 %), whereas, American wives complimented their husbands 8 times (40 %), and because the number is small, generalization is limited.

Brotherhood and sisterhood relations have great importance in the Palestinian family. These relations appeared 8 times,7 for the Palestinians and one for the Americans. From the statistics, the Palestinian complimenters focused on the family relations more than the

Americans because these relations are the strong base for building the Palestinian family.(57 times vs. 20 times respectively)

Gender factor was present in these relations and affected the frequency of the compliments as shown in the following table and graph:

Table (13) distribution of family relations in terms of gender for Americans and Palestinians

Family relations	Males		Family relations	Females		Total
	Number	percent		Number	Percent	
Father-son/ daughter	12	30%	Mother-son/daughter	14	37.8%	26
Son-father/mother	6	15%	Daughter-father/mothe	7	18.9%	13
Husband-wife	16	40%	Wife-husband	14	37.8%	30
Brother –sister	5	12.5%	Sister – brother	1	2.7%	6
Brother-brother	1	2.5%	Sister-sister	1	2.7%	2
Total	40	100%		37	99.9%	77

Female relations
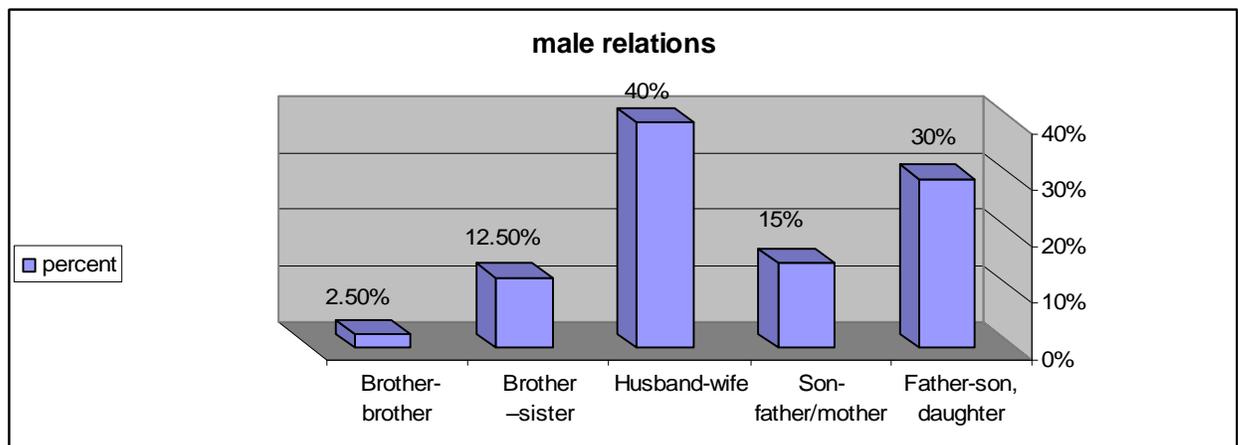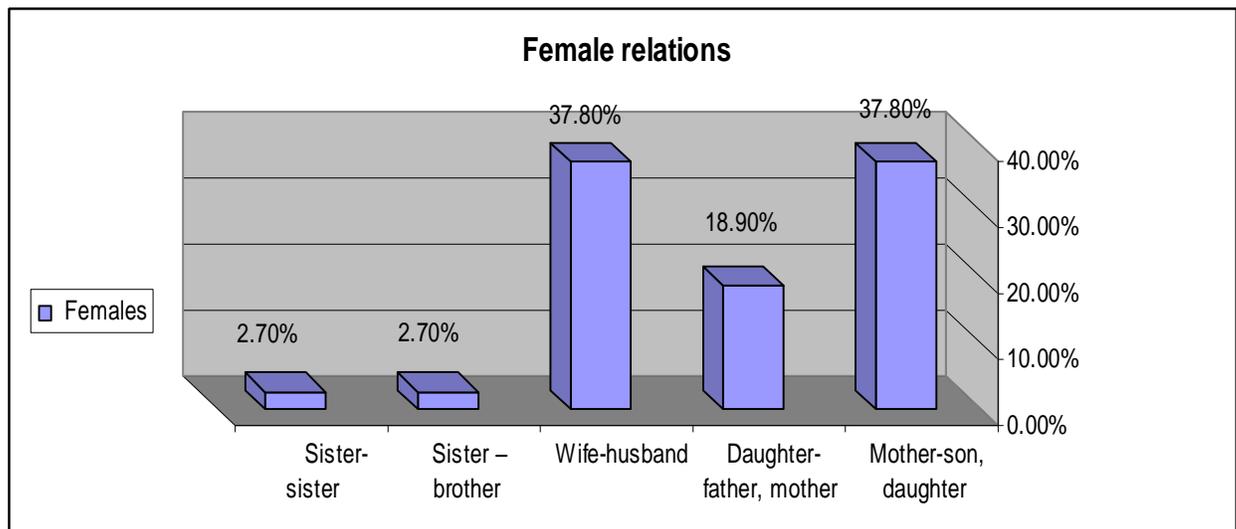
It is clear that female members are more active in giving compliments to their sons and daughters, and that may show the affectionate side of the females toward their family members. For example, mothers gave (14 compliments) to their sons and daughters while fathers gave (12 compliments). Daughters gave (7 compliments) to parents while sons gave (6 compliments). In couple relations wives gave their husbands (14 compliments) while husbands gave their wives (16 compliments).

Friendship relations came next with 56 utterances in the whole data. The Palestinian teachers complimented their friends using 28 utterances and so did the Americans. Palestinians complimented their friends of the same gender 23 times, boyfriends gave their girlfriends 3 compliments and girlfriends complimented their boyfriends twice. The lack of compliments between girlfriends and boyfriends may be due to the Palestinian and Arab norms that do not accept such relations and consider them unfavoured from a religious, social and a cultural point of view. Americans used 28 compliments. These compliments were distributed on friend to friend 22 compliments,

boyfriend to girlfriend 6 compliments, but girlfriend to boyfriend compliments did not appear although it is acceptable to give compliments from females to males in the American culture. From a gender aspect, the number of friendship relations was affected. That appeared in the statistics as male friends gave 21 compliments, while female friends gave 25 compliments, boyfriends gave girlfriend 9 compliments, and girlfriends gave boyfriends 2 compliments (Palestinian girlfriends only).

Work relations were also available in the data. Participants expressed their 26 compliments distributed on sub relations; these work relations were found more in the American data and they were in different settings other than schools. Palestinians may believe that doing one's own job is a duty and they are paid for it, so they use less compliments or depending on the setting. They used only 1 compliment in the field of work whereas the Americans used 25 compliments. In our case :

1. Employers gave their employees 4 compliments.

2. Employees gave their employers also 4 compliments.

3. Workers complimented other workers 4 times.

4. Customers praised the employee /worker 11 times.

5. Flight attendant gave the captain of the flight 1 compliment.

6. Passengers gave flight attendants 2 compliments.

As appeared in the numbers, customers expressed their praise to the workers or the employee more to show their respect to the efforts paid by the workers or the employees. Few compliments were given by employees or employers (4 each). Regarding gender,

male employers gave 2 compliments and the same were given by females, male employees gave 1 compliment while female employees gave 3 compliments.

Moreover, male customers complimented employees or workers 6 times, whereas, females used 5 compliments, female and male workers gave other workers 2 compliments each, female passengers gave 2 compliments while male passengers did not give any, and finally, female flight attendants gave 1 compliment while males gave none.

    To sum up , we can notice that the gender of the participants has an important effect in choosing the strategy, the pattern or the frequency of the compliments. In the social relations which include family relations that had the biggest difference, school relations and work relations gender differences appeared clearly in the following table and graph.

Table(14)   distribution of social relations between males and females for Americans and Palestinians

Relation	Male		Female		Total
	Number	Percent	number	Percent	
School relations	51	47.2%	57	52.7%	99.9%
Family relations	27	33.7%	53	66.20%	99.9%
Work relations	11	42.30	15	57.6%	99.9%
Friendship relations	30	50%	3	50%	100%
Total	119		155		274
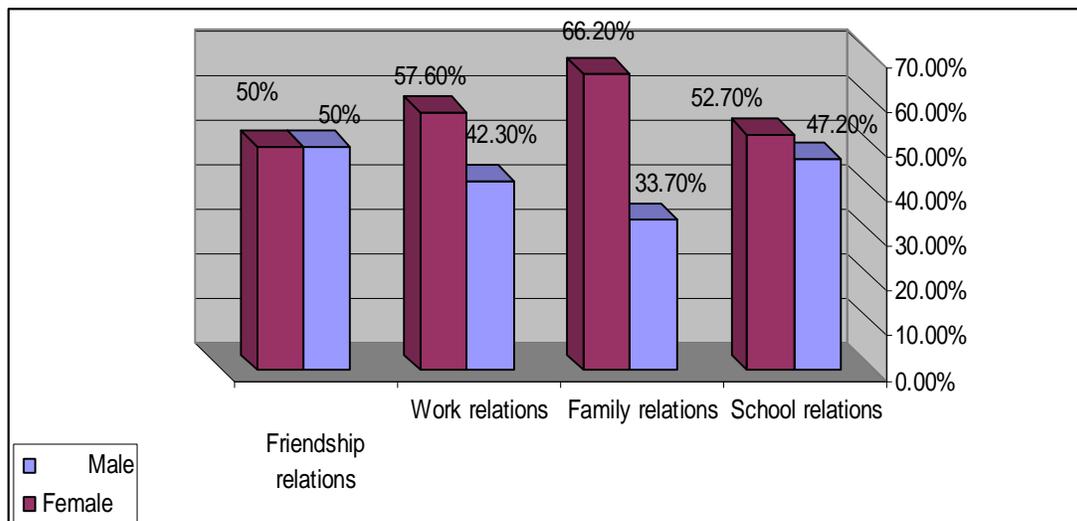
4.4.4. Age:

Age is another factor that plays role in the sociolinguistic situations because the norms of different stages of age may differ. In this study , we are going to check how this aspect affects the choice of the compliment strategy and pattern. The participants were divided into four groups (20-30, 30-40,40-50, over 50). After analyzing the data, the participants appeared under the following ages and frequencies as in the following table:

Table (15) : distribution of different age groups for Americans and Palestinians.

Age	Number	Percent
20-30	192	46%
30-40	110	27 %
40-50	8329	20 %
Over 50		7 %
Total	414	100 %
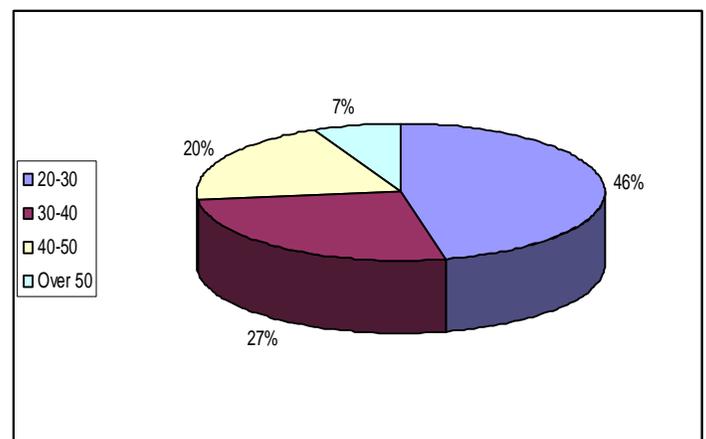
By looking at the figures, we notice that the number of frequencies differ in relation to age, for example, participants aged 20-30 used compliments 192 times, 103 were used by Palestinians and 89 by Americans. I think this age was more active in making relations with other people because participants are still young and need more relations with other people. They could use these compliments to make and strengthen their relationships with others and use them in creating new relations. They use complimenting as a social strategy to create solidarity, self esteem and new relations. Participants aged 30-40 used 110 compliments, 80 by Palestinian teachers and 30 by Americans. This age used their compliments also to create more relations or to make them stronger. Age 40-50 used less compliments than the young and middle- aged participants who used 83 compliments, 76 by Palestinians and 7 by Americans, and finally, those aged over 50 used compliments the least 29 times, 11 by Palestinian teachers and 18 by Americans.

We can also see that the first three age groups preferred and used the same syntactic patterns (you + be+ adj+ NP) which was more frequent than the others. Young participants aged 20-30 used the (you + be+ adj +NP) pattern 77 times, age 30-40 used the same pattern more than other forms 46 times, age 40-50 gave the same form 27 times, and the oldest participants used it 9 times. Therefore, we can conclude that there were no significant difference in using the most frequent pattern, and the difference was only in frequency. On the contrary, other differences appeared in other patterns, for example, age 20-30 and age 30-40 preferred the form (adjective) in the second place and they used it (23 and 19 respectively), while those aged 40-50 focused on religious expressions and used them (12

times)   more than adjective alone, and those aged over 50 used the pattern (I+ be+ adj+(NP)) more than the religious or the adjective alone and used it (4 times).

One of the main differences between the Palestinian patterns and the American patterns was the use of religion by the Palestinian speakers. It appeared 12 times focusing on asking God's blesses to those who are addressed or complimented. Such forms appeared only once in the American answers. In addition to this, all the ages used the direct strategy of giving compliments in both the American and the Palestinian data, although using direct compliments may cause face threatening to the listener because the addressee may envy the listener for some positive qualities, possessions or appearance…etc. In some studies, participants preferred the indirect strategy to the direct one because they consider it more polite, but this strategy may cause communication breakdown because of misunderstanding or misinterpretation. This strategy needs the participants to make interpretations and guesses or inferences that may be wrongly understood . Palestinian teachers used this strategy to help students achieve solidarity and encourage them to continue on their good works, and so did the headmasters, mistresses and supervisors.

In addition , age played a role in the field of social relations or distance. Three age groups (20-30, 30-40,40-50) focused on the family relations. Participants expressed their compliments by giving 77 utterances to the members of the family like parents, sisters, brothers. For instance, parents-sons and daughter took the biggest chance to compliment their sons and daughters and vice versa, they used 43 utterances, most of them were given by Palestinian participants as (13)were given by 20-30 participant parents to their sons and daughters, and 7 were given by sons and daughters to their parents, 5 were given by Palestinians and 2 by Americans. Also 21compliments were given by 30-40 participants,

the most were given by parents to sons and daughters. 8 compliments were given by Palestinian parents to their sons and daughters and 2 compliments were given from sons and daughters to parents. There were no American compliments from parents to sons and daughters, but there were 2 compliments given from American sons and daughters to parents equally 2 for each. In the third stage of age 40-50 only Palestinian parents gave 4 compliments, and the American parents none, and the last stage over 50, 3 compliments were used, 1 by Palestinian fathers and mothers and 2 by American fathers and mothers.

As we can see that the compliments related to family were most given by the Palestinian participants, that's because the relations between the Palestinian family members are strong, for example:

118. *Mother to son : Allah bless you.* ليباركك الله

119. *Father to daughter: I am proud of you.* أنا فخور بك.

120. *Brother to sister: You are a very lovely sister.* أنت أخت محبوبة.

Regarding gender and age, we can see from the figures that female participants from all age groups used more compliments to praise their family members. They did that by using 52 utterances while males used 25 utterances.

Then the marriage relations, wife and husband came next in order with 30 compliments distributed on the four age groups as follows:

Age 20-30 = 15 utterances, 30-40= 9 utterances, 40-50 = 4 and over 50 gave 2 utterances. Out of these compliments 16 were given from husband to wife and 14 from wife to husband, therefore, we can conclude that in couple relations husbands were more generous and compliment their wives for many things like appearance, character or skill:

121. *You are an excellent wife.*

122. *You have a sweet smile.*

123. *I have never eaten such Mansaf that you cooked.*

In reference to friendship relations, we can find that friendship is important in certain stages of age, so participants gave 56 compliments (13.5%), 29 were given by males (51.7%) and 27 were given by females (48.2%).The ages that focused on more friendship were the male participants of the two age groups 20-30 and 40-50 as they complimented friends using 13 and 11 utterances respectively. Female participants gave 27 compliments, 21 by 20-30 ages (77.7%) and 6 by 30-40 ages, while the other males of 30-40 and the over 50 gave few compliments 3 and 2 respectively, and the female 40-50 and over 50 did not give any compliment on friendship at all.

Age also affected school relations because not all ages take this factor into account. 113 compliments were given by both genders in the different age groups. The ages that focused on the school relations were the male participants of 40-50 who expressed their praise by using 28 utterances (24.7 %), and the females aged 20-30 and 30-40 who used 24 and 25 compliments (21.2% & 22.1%) respectively. We can conclude that young males didn't care about school as much as the old males of 40-50. The young and middle age females care about it as they used 49/113, so there is a significant difference in the frequency of compliments between the age groups as shown in the table:

Table (16) distribution of school relations according to age and gender for Americans and Palestinians

	Ages			
Gender	20-30	30-40	40-50	Over 50
Males to others	4	16	28	5
Females to others	24	25	10	1
Total	28	41	38	6

Examples:

124. *Student to teacher: You are my lovely angel.*

125. *Teacher to student: You are the best student who has done a presentation.*

126. *Supervisor to teacher: You are a hard working teacher.*

The number of work relations was also affected by the age. In the study, there were 26 compliments distributed between the four ages in both sexes and most of them were from the American participants(25) and only 1 was from a Palestinian. Therefore, we can say that Arabs rarely give compliments in the field of work, while the Americans concentrate on these relations.

Table (17) distribution of work relations according to gender and age for Americans and Palestinians

	Ages			
Gender	20-30	30-40	40-50	Over 50
Males to others	9	2	0	0
Females to others	5	2	0	8
Total	14	4	0	8

Example:

127. *Employee to employer: You are the only one who knows that, great.*

128. *Customer to worker: Great customer service.*

129. *Boss to worker: You are a natural leader and brilliant.*

4.5. Findings of question number four:

This section discusses the idea of transferring the rules and the norms of the first language into the situations of the target language. It discuss how this transfer happens and in which form. The question of this section is: Is there any pragmatic transfer from Arabic into English?

The differences in sociolinguistic rules across cultures cause difficulty for second language learners. Even if the learner has developed the phonology, syntax and semantics of the target language, serious miscommunication may occur if the learner has not acquired the knowledge of when to say the compliment and to whom. When speakers or learners use their native language rules or their cultural norms, transfer occurs and it could be positive transfer or negative transfer. Transfer has two types, sociocultural transfer that occurs when one transfers elements of his first language, as well as cultural patterns of communication, to their second language. Therefore, people from different backgrounds evaluate speech depending on their native language and cultural norms. Past studies have shown this idea, but in this study there is no negative transfer between the participants. I think that happened because the Palestinian teachers transferred proverbs, metaphors, religious aspects and other aspects that did not affect the meaning, and so did not cause miscommunications because the things transferred had equivalents or similar meanings in English.

Those participants used their language expressions and norms especially the religious norms because they believe that whatever and whoever depends on Allah will be protected , so they use some religious expressions as compliments to show that they not only praise what others have done, but beg Allah to reward them for their good actions and deeds. For example, Palestinian participants used an equivalent expression to what they use in Arabic (Allah yehmeek, Allah ykhaleek, Masha`a Allah) which is (God bless you, May God protect you) used 11 times, while the Americans used it once. Sometimes participants used the Arabic expression (Allah) that refers to God in English to make sure that they mean (Allah).Other times, they used the English word (God).For instance:

130. *God bless you.*

131. *May God be with you.*

132. *May God give you good health.*

133. *Allah may bless you.*

134. *For the sake of God ,I love you.*

Moreover, these religious beliefs may be the cause for the lack of giving compliments to females. The Palestinians believe that their religion prevents them from dealing with women who are not close family members. Also Palestinian social rules may affect this area because of that males get away from complimenting females in case these compliments may be misinterpreted or misunderstood and as a result cause face threatening or problems to the interlocutors. Any how, Palestinian males complimented females on their appearance as was shown before.

Palestinian participants made use of some proverbs and sayings to express their admiration like the following :

135. *The pretty woman stays pretty even when she gets old.*

136. *Success needs a long journey of hard work and determination.*

These compliments are not American style and it is possible that it came pot as a result of Arabic transfer into English. The translation of these sentences into Arabic could be as follows:

المرأة الجميلة تبقى جميلة حتى لو قامت من النوم

طريق النجاح طويلة وتحتاج إلى جهد وتصميم

Americans use proverbs like the following to show success, for example:

- *Nothing succeeds like success*

- *Always bear in mind that your own resolutions to succeed is more important than any other thing*

- *Succeed or die trying*

- *Confidence of success is almost success*

Palestinian participants also used some sequence of adjectives as the case with Nelson et al in their Egyptian data. For example:

137. *You are polite and clever.*

138. *Wonderful, excellent, good.*

139. *great, wonderful, good.*

140. *You are good and perfect for Al-Tawjeehi.*

They also used two similies to show their great admiration to the listener like :

141. *The supervisor is as beautiful as the moon.*

One of the most noticeable uses of the adjectives in the Palestinian compliments was the use of the superlative forms to show that speakers feel very sincere towards the

addressees. They use compliments to show that they appreciate what the hearers accomplished , or to compliment what positive deeds others have and so on, for example:

142. *Son to mother: You are the greatest mother in the world.*

143. *Headmaster to teacher: You are the most active teacher among your friends.*

144. *Mother to son: You are the kindest among my sons.*

145. *Student to teacher: This is the most beautiful class, my teacher.*

146. *Student to teacher: You are the best English teacher.*

These sentences were presented by the participants and they were affected by their culture or religion or their literal translation or the use of Arabic proverbs and similies.

4.6. Conclusion:

This chapter discusses the findings and the results of the study. The findings show that there are differences in functions of compliments. The Palestinian participants are teachers and they use these compliments in the classroom setting for student encouragement, praising achievements , admiring personality. The American compliments are used to create solidarity, opening conversation, thanking, replacing other speech acts, softening criticism...etc. In the topic aspect, the topics are the same in both data, and they had the same importance by both the Americans and the Palestinians. There were no differences in this area because both groups used the personality more than skills/ability and appearance although the majority of the studies about American compliments focus on appearance more than skill and personality. The study gave a new order to new norms and patterns used by the Palestinians and which came at the first four patterns while they had been in a later order in the American compliments.

Transfer was also found in the study because the Palestinians transferred some of their norms into L2, so they used the sequence of adjectives to ensure the compliment, they used similies and proverbs to show beauty and confidence. Beside that, the effect of gender was present, as males gave more compliments than females and they use different syntactic patterns than females.

Chapter five

Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter consists of two sections. The first one concludes the first four chapters in the study. The second suggests a number of recommendations, which may hopefully be beneficial to EFL teachers, to EFL students and curriculum designers.

5.1. Conclusion

People know that languages differ from one another in many areas like phonology, syntax and lexicon, therefore, when people learn new languages, they expect to learn rules of pronunciation, grammar and new vocabulary. However, they do not take into account that they should be able to interact effectively with native speakers, and they ignore that they should learn the rules of speech that the native speakers use in their daily situations. In addition, people coming from different backgrounds have different norms and value systems that differ from the target language, and that appears in their social behavior and speech. These norms and values which inform the speaker's knowledge to what is appropriate to say and to whom vary from one community to another, and that happens not only between languages but also between the same language groups. These differences in the norms and values cause misunderstanding because they are not well understood between the speakers and the hearers.

The first chapter introduces the problem of the study. This problem talks about the absence o f L2 norms in teaching English language as FL, and that causes some problems

in communication between native and non-native speakers. It also presents the importance of the study in the field of linguistics as the results of the study could contribute towards helping to reduce potential communication problems interculturally among Arab speakers and native speakers of English. Ignorance of cross-cultural differences causes communication problems and as a result a complete breakdown in communication. In addition, this chapter highlights the objectives and the limitations of the study and study questions. The objectives concentrate on finding a shared system of cultural and linguistic norms between the native speakers of English and Palestinians, to know what strategies and patterns of complimenting natives use and how Palestinian teachers use them in their classrooms to minimize the gap between the two cultures. It also contains questions of the study which the participants had to answer through the questionnaire and it includes asking participants about the compliments they gave and to whom, the compliments they received and from whom, and the compliments they remember they heard among people.

The second chapter presents and discusses the related studies to the topic of complimenting in English and Arabic. These studies indicate that giving and receiving compliments depends on the sociolinguistic and sociocultural knowledge of the speaker and the hearer. It also discusses Austin's/ Searle's theory of speech acts, and how they explained speech acts in terms of three actions, locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, and that every word people produce forms an action. It presents other ideas like pragmatic transfer and how it happens in complimenting, types of speech acts under the title of direct and indirect speech acts. It also discusses some studies about Arab compliments like the study done by Nelson about Egyptian compliments, Al-Falasi, Abdul Sattar and Che Lah (2009) who say that Arab learners have many problems in teaching

English, but the most important one appears in the field of pragmatics. Arabs may use inappropriate language in certain situations or they may misunderstand what a foreigner says wrongly. Thomas (1983) says that studies made on native Arabic speakers show that Arabs face difficulties when they speak English. She says that these difficulties are the result of ignorance of the appropriate use of linguistic forms in different situations. Finally, the chapter presents some English studies about American compliments like Wolfson (1983) ,Wolfson and Manes (1980), Wolfson (1981) who make studies about functions, topics, and syntactic patterns of American compliments . They found that compliments are used for different functions like creating solidarity, open a conversation, creating social relations …etc. They also found that the most frequent syntactic patterns are concentrated on three forms that take 85% of the American complimenting sentences, they also found that American compliments use the topics that are related to skills and achievements, appearance and personality. This section also discusses the effect of status and gender on performing the compliments.

The third chapter presents the methodology that the researcher used in collecting his data from the participants. The researcher used the DCT which consists of three questions:

1. What is the most remembered compliment you gave and to whom?

2. What is the most remembered compliment you received and from whom?

3. What is the most remembered compliment you heard among others?

It also contains a description of the population and the subjects of the study. The population has two groups, 50 Palestinian EFL teachers and 30 Educated Americans. They were asked to answer the questionnaire by giving as many compliments as they can.

In the fourth chapter , the researcher analyzes the data and discusses the findings of the questions one by one. He found out the strategies and the syntactic patterns used by the participants, then he made a comparison between these strategies and patterns of compliments used by both groups. It is concluded that there are some differences in using the direct/indirect strategy although the two groups used the direct way of complimenting. There is also a difference in complimenting by the Palestinian teachers. The syntactic patterns also had differences in the most common patterns used by both groups, the Americans focused their use of the following patterns:

You + be + ADJ + (NP) / I + be + ADJ + NP / You + V +ADJ / You, NP+ look+ ADJ

While the Palestinian teachers used the following patterns more frequently :

You + be + ADJ + (NP) / ADJ / Religious expressions / What/how +a +ADJ + NP.

Variables on choosing the compliments like age, gender, social status and social distance have been discussed. These affected the choice of the compliments in a way or another, for example, the number of syntactic patterns used by young participants was different from those used by other ages, the young age participants preferred the use of the syntactic pattern (You + be+ ADJ + NP) and the short form (ADJ) while the middle age preferred the same pattern, but they used religious expressions more than the short form(adj), and the old age participants used (you +be+ ADJ +NP), but they used the pattern (I+ be+ ADJ+NP) more than the (ADJ) or the religious expressions. The role of status and distance on choosing the compliments have also been discussed.

Finally, the chapter discusses if there is a pragmatic transfer from Arabic into English. The researcher found that some transfer occurred in the study in the form of translation, the use of proverbs, the length of the compliment, the use of the superlatives

and comparatives and the use of the religious expressions as a way of praising hearers for doing good things or having expensive possessions.

The results of this study give the reader a clear view that cultures differ in many things, and one of these is the use of pragmatics. Cultures have special ways of speech and special means of communicating with others whether they are learners or language users. These norms of speech, in addition to the cultural norms cause problems in communicating between speakers of different languages. We can approve that the lack of pragmatic and cultural knowledge of the target language is an important factor of intercultural miscommunication. In the case of the Palestinian and American participants, we notice that there are differences within the same group of speakers, the Americans concentrated on certain syntactic patterns that were not used frequently in the earlier studies of American compliments, in addition to talking about different topics that were found in the earlier studies but not in the same frequency or order. We also notice that the Palestinians as second language teachers used the norms of their first language to express the compliments to others although they are specialized in the English language. Therefore, teachers should be trained more to use and teach pragmatics specially speech acts to help their students interact more perfectly than using their L1 rules and norms.

5.2. Recommendations

1. In cross-cultural communication, foreign language speakers have to pay close attention to sociolinguistic rules of the target language in addition to structure and discourse rules to meet the needs of linguistic accuracy and fluency.

2. Foreign language speakers, in addition to acquiring grammatical rules to achieve linguistic accuracy, need also to internalize sociolinguistic rules that can assist them in the choice of appropriate forms.

3. Textbooks should include pragmatic elements to serve better communication skills.

4. There should be training courses and workshops to teachers on how to handle the cultural and sociolinguistic norms of the target language.

5. Syllabus developers should pay attention to this area of foreign learning by concentrating more on the field of pragmatics specially speech acts.

6. Unless teachers know about pragmatics and how to use it appropriately, they will not be able to teach students, therefore, teachers have to take pragmatic courses or have visits to native countries schools.

7. Teachers should go through training in functional speech acts to enhance their ability in knowing what to teach to their students.

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Appendix 1

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Hebron University

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Academic Research

English Department

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Dear participants:

This questionnaire is for collecting data for research on complimenting, therefore, you are

kindly requested to give the needed information based on the instructions given below.

Please circle your age group: 20-30   30-40   40-50   over 50

Please circle your gender: male   female

Please write your profession : ………………………

1. What is the most remembered compliment you gave and to whom?

   ……………………………………………………………………………………………

   ……………………………………………………………………………………………

   ……………………………………………………………………………………………

2. What is the most remembered compliment you received and from whom?

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3. What is the most remembered compliment you heard among people?

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Appendix 2:

Distribution of American participants according to their profession and place of living.

Occupation	Number of participants
Business manager	3
English instructor	1
Front office agent	5
Student	4
Flight attendant	2
Marketing professional	2
Teacher-ESL	3
Education & outreach for NGO	1
Dental assistant	1
Customer service representative	2
Administrative coordinator	1
Program officer/international affairs	1
Academic advisor for ESL students	1
Supervisor at a school	1
Curriculum writer	1
Organization manager	1
City	Number of participants
Seattle city	7
During the flight	4
Washington DC	7
Missouri	6
Kansas	6