

A Pragmatic Study Of Gratitude And Thanking Expressions Used By Iraqi People

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Abstract

The present study deals with gratitude and thanking expressions used by Iraqi people from a pragmatic perspective. It aims at investigating these expressions that are used by Iraqi people in particular and showing the gender difference in the ways men and women linguistically communicate gratitude in Iraqi cultural. Accordingly, two hypotheses are proposed, first, different thanking strategies are used by Iraqi people, second, males and females differ in expressing their gratitude to others. To verify the proposed hypotheses, a discourse completion task consisting of 16 different daily situations adapted from Eisenstein and Bodman (1993) is used to collect data. The designed completion task is given to 50 Iraqi participants (25 males, 25 female) whom age ranges from 20-40 years old. The responses are coded and analyzed according to coding scheme suggested by Cheng (2005) which consists of 8 strategies for expressions of gratitude and then Leech politeness principle (1983) is applied to the collected responses. The results show that different strategies of thanking and gratitude expressions are used by Iraqi people and thanking and prayer strategies are the most frequent strategies followed by Iraqi people when expressing gratitude. Prayer strategy hasn't been ever used by other cultures, it has been found exclusively in Iraqi culture and this is the gap that this study fills. Basically, prayer strategy hasn't been stated in cheng model (2005), thus; it can be added to modify the model to be consist of 9 strategies for expressions of gratitude. Moreover, the study concludes that there is slight gender differences through expressing thanking and gratitude by Iraqi males and females and what affect these differences are social roles, familiarity, and the degree of imposition, that's to say, the overall context can shape and determine one's use of thanking and gratitude expressions.

Keywords: Thanking; Gratitude; Expressions; Gender Differences; Politeness

INTRODUCTION

In their daily life, people involve themselves through different situations by which they communicate and contact each other. In order to be communicatively cooperative and pragmatically competence, people need to follow certain strategies, these strategies are followed according to the general atmosphere around them (Farnia & Suleiman, 2009,p,112). In addition, people differ in the way they communicate with each other , this difference depends on many aspects that affect their way of communication (Searle 1979). People implement many different speech acts daily like asserting, expressing, requesting, thanking , offering etc, (Dawson and Phelan, 2016, p. 488) which can be considered as a basic unit of linguistic interaction (Griffiths, 2006, p. 148, as cited in AL-Neama & Ali,2024,p.6).They may differ in the way they express their thanking and gratitude , the

way they choose the appropriate terms. The study suggests two hypotheses, first, different thanking strategies are used by Iraqi people, second, males and females differ in expressing their gratitude to others. The study has a contribution in investigating gender differences in a Iraqi culture. Consequently, the study aims to find the impact of cultural and linguistic factors on the use gratitude expressions in Iraqi context. Showing gratitude to others is considered as a polite strategy many people commit themselves to follow it. In terms of Searle (1976), thanking is an action happened between two or more than two participants. According to Austin, thanking is a behabitative action. Leech (1983) present six maxims people need to follow as far as they can to apply this principle. The suggested maxims are(tact maxim, Generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim (Leech, 1983, pp. 132-138)). Rezvania and Özdemir (2010) investigate the production of gratitude expressions in Turkish and Iranian EFL context. The study shows that both Turkish and Iranian speakers of English use similar strategies to express gratitude. El-Zeini (2001) make a pragmalinguistic study about gratitude expressions in Cairene Arabic , he concludes that these expressions in Cairene society vary according to the influence of the variables of education, socioeconomic status, sex, and degree of familiarity between the participants. Rasekh and Ahar (2011) make a comparison between Persian EFL learners strategies and English strategies. They conclude that Persian and English speakers differ in their gratitude strategies. Cheng (2005) make an exploratory study of gratitude expressions used by Chinese learners of English. The results of the study emphasize the role of social status, familiarity and imposition on the use of certain thanking and gratitude expressions. Žegarac and Al-Khawaldeh (2013) examine the gender influences on Jordanians' perceptions of gratitude in everyday situations. The findings state that the role of gender in conversation has a significant impact on the communicative act of gratitude. Another study was conducted to show mitigating devices in Mosuli Iraq Arabic to show how people utter words to show or mitigate the force of speech (Hazem and Mohammed, 2021). Estaifo et al (2023) also conducted a study to show the connective markers in discourse in Mosuli Iraqi Arabic. As the studies mentioned above, researchers focused on exploring thanking and gratitude expressions in particular culture and environment, There are no studies concerned on studying thanking expressions in Iraqi culture. Therefore, this research intends to find out the different thanking strategies used by Iraqi people.

METHOD

For the purpose of data collection, a discourse completion task consisting of 16 different situations that are people pass through in their daily life has been conducted, part of these situations are adopted from Eisenstein and Bodman (1993), and the other part are described by the researcher. The situations include people with different positions and different social relationships and the targeted participants are asked to express their thanking and gratitude towards those people by exposing them to these situations.

Respondents

The discourse completion task is given to 50 participants of Iraqi Mosuli people, half of them are males and the rest are females, particularly those whom age ranges from 20 to 40 years old, in other words, only young people have been selected to participate in the adopted questionnaire. Their scientific background is Bechler, master and doctorate.

Procedures

Participants' responses will pass through two stages of analysis. First, the responses will be coded according to the eight gratitude strategies proposed by Cheng (2005) as presented below:

1. Thanking participants by either saying the word "thank you" only or stating the favor and mentioning the imposition caused by this favor.
2. Appreciation by saying "I appreciate it" or appreciate with telling the favor.
3. Positive feelings by giving positive reaction to the favor or to the one who presents the favor.
4. Apology which is represented by using apologizing words or blaming and criticizing oneself.
4. Recognition of imposition by acknowledging the imposition, stating the need for the favor and diminishing the need for the favor.
5. Repayment like offering service, money, food or promising of self-improvement in future.
6. Others strategies like here statement, small talk, leave-taking and joking.
7. Alerters including the title or the name of the receiver.

Second, Leech politeness principle (1983) will be applied to the collected responses in order to investigate the politeness maxims followed by the participants

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present section deals with analyzing 16 situations from the discourse completion task that have been distributed for the purpose of collecting data as follows:

إذا كان عيد ميلادك ولديك دعوه غداء مع بعض الأصدقاء واحضر لك صديقك المقرب هدية ماذا تقول له؟

Male:

لماذا هذه التكلفة، وسوف اجازيك على هذه الهدية

Female:

شكرا كثير حلوي وحببتوها

Starting with male response. As it is observed, the speaker here maximizes the cost to himself by saying "سوف اجازيك على هذه الهدية" that's to say, he promises the hearer to reward him for this gift. According to the speaker follows the tact maxim with regard to leech politeness principle. As for the thanking strategies, apparently the speaker use the repayment strategy through which he feels indebted that's why he he chooses to follow this strategy and express his gratitude to his friend in this way. Completing with female's response, the speaker here follow the approbation maxim by expressing her admire with the gift being received from her friend, by doing so, she maximizing praise of others' action. In addition, by saying "كثير حلوي وحببتوها", the speaker is expressing positive feeling to action in that she follows positive feeling strategy.

في السوبر ماركت، يضع أمين الصندوق مشترياتك في أكياس، ثم يبدأ بفحص مشتريات الزبون التالي. أنت تحمل أكياسك للمغادرة. ماذا تقول؟

Male: مع السلامة عزيزي

Female: شكرا

The speaker here is being polite by saying only "مع السلامة عزيزي" without revealing any word refers to gratitude, so it can be said that on the surface, the speaker doesn't express his gratitude but implied meaning of the use of "مع السلامة عزيزي" is to express thanking

and gratitude by just being gentle and nice with this strange man. By saying so, the speaker follows the seven strategy of the Cheng strategies through which he take the attitude of leave taking and saying this phrase "مع السلامة". As far as female response is concerned, here the speaker is only uttering the word "شكراً" to express her thanking to the man being described in the situation above by doing so , she follows the first strategy which is called thanking strategy by simply saying "شكراً". According to Leech politeness principle, the female speaker is being polite by following the tact maxim through which she maximize the benefit to the hearer by telling him this word.

لديك مشكلة في المنزل. أنت قلق جداً لأنك لا تستطيع حلها. يعرض عليك جارك عرضاً لمساعدتك في حلها والخروج من هذه المشكلة. ماذا ستقول له؟

Male: انت جار مثالي ونعم الجار اخ عزيز

Female: لا بسيطة تسلم

Male's response reflects positive feeling to his neighbor so he is being polite by following the approbation maxim which is concerned with maximizing praise to others. In addition here the strategy of gratitude that is followed by the speaker is the positive feeling strategy in that the speaker expresses his gratitude by showing positive feeling to others, this positive feeling portrait in this utterance "ونعم الجار اخ عزيز". While female response is simply "لا بسيطة تسلم" through which she avoid to share her personal problem with her neighbor so she politely said this phrase, by doing so she follows the tact maxim by which she minimizes the cost to the hearer, she doesn't have the desire to cost him with her problems. It can be said that she adopt the strategy of small talk in that she reject the help of her neighbor without revealing too much details with respect to her problem.

دُعيتَ لتناول الغداء في منزل صديقك. كان الطعام لذيذاً، وكان المضيفون لطفاء للغاية، وأردت شكرهم على دعوتهم. ماذا تقول؟

Male: بيتكم عامر وشكرا على حسن الضيافة

Female: بيت العامر وشكرا عالغدا الطيب

Male and female's response share the same phrase which is "بيتكم عامر" or "بيت العامر", this reflect the familiarity and the frequency of using such expressions as a way of expressing a gratitude towards other people and in such occasions in particular. After that both speakers thank their friends and praise their hospitality. In this concern, and with regard politeness principle both male and female participants observe the approbation maxim through which they maximize praising of others or others actions and attitudes. This maxim is followed by using the thanking strategy not only by saying "شكراً", they are thanking by stating the favor as the expressions mentioned above "شكرا عالغدا الطيب" and "شكرا على حسن الضيافة".

فاجأك زوجك/زوجتك هدية مميزة في حفل عيد ميلادك، كيف ستشكره/تشكرها؟

Male: أجمل هدية من اجمل شخص Female: شكرا حبيبي الله يحفظك الي وما يحرمني منك

The statement of اجمل هدية من اجمل شخص reflects praising the gifts being received by the wife, thus here male's response entails observing the approbation maxim by describing the gifts in this way and also he praises the person from whom he received the gift. In this concern, it can be said that the speaker here use the positive feeling strategy through expressing his gratitude towards his wife. As for female's response, the speaker here first use the thanking strategy by saying the word شكرا then she follows this word by another words which حبيبي as a way of expressing her love and happiness towards her

husband then she ends up her speech with a prayer represented by “الله يحفظك الي وما يحرمني” “منك”. Accordingly, the speaker here uses a strategy in addition to thanking strategy which is the strategy of prayers.

مرضت ذات ليلة وزارك أقاربك، كيف ستشكرهم؟

Male:

بارك الله ببيكم عيش تكلفتم صاغ زحمي عليكم

Female:

جدا ممنونة لزيارتكم الله لايشوفكم مكروه بأحد

Both male and female prefer to deliver prayers for the other person or for the person who make a favor for them as a way of expressing their thanking and gratitude. These prayers are represented by the statements "بارك الله ببيكم" و "الله لايشوفكم مكروه بأحد". In addition to these prayers, female's response starts with the expression "جدا ممنونة". By doing so, she adopt the first strategy which is the thanking strategy. Male's response also has another statements in addition to the statement of prayers which are represented by "عاش تكلفتم صاغ زحمي عليكم" as if the speaker here feels sorry for the his relative's visit. So he uses the strategy of apology through which he expresses his embarrassment towards his relatives. As for politeness principle, both responses reflect following the tact maxim by which they minimize the cost to the hearer.

رتبت للقاء صديق في مطعم بمدينة لم تزرها من قبل. وصلت إلى المدينة متأخرًا قليلًا، ولأنك لم تزرها من قبل، لم تجد المطعم. في محاولة يائسة للعثور عليه، سألت شخصًا مسنًا يمر بالمكان عن الاتجاهات. بعد أن ذلك على كيفية الوصول، ماذا قلت؟

Male: أشكرك حيي كثر الله من أمثالك

Female: شكرا عمو تعبتوك معاي

The both responses start with words such as "شكرا" و "أشكرك", then each word followed by another statement of expressing thanking. First, the words "أشكرك", "شكرا" are related the first strategy which is thanking strategy by which speakers involve the word "شكرا" only or other words near to it. Second, male's response ends with a prayer which is represented by the statement "كثر الله من أمثالك" in that the speaker like to express his gratitude by such words as a way of showing gratitude and respect towards the old man who guides him to the way of restaurant so here the speaker uses the strategy of prayers. Regarding female's response, it ends with a statement "تعبتوك معاي", here the speaker use the strategy of recognition of imposition in that she recognizes that she cost the old man when guiding her to the right way, at the same time as if she feels embarrassed and sorry for asking him about the directions of this city. Thus, it can be said that by such a statement of "تعبتوك معاي" she follows two strategies which are apology and recognition of imposition. Politely, male's response "كثر الله من أمثالك" follows the approbation maxim which is concerned by maximizing praise of others in that by saying "كثر الله من أمثالك", the speaker is happy with his help so he praises him by such away to express his gratitude politely. Also, the statement "تعبتوك معاي" which is said by the female is fully respectful and fully polite, through which the woman implicitly follows the tact maxim through which she minimizes the cost and maximizes the benefit to the hearer.

أنت تواجه مشكلة في جهاز الكمبيوتر الخاص بك؛ فهو يتعطل باستمرار. تعرف شخصًا معك في العمل خبيرًا في أجهزة الكمبيوتر، وتطلب منه مساعدتك، مع أنكما لستما صديقين مقربين. يتردد

الشخص لانشغاله الشديد، لكنه يوافق على مساعدتك، ويصلح جهاز الكمبيوتر الخاص بك. بعد إصلاحه، ماذا تقول؟

Male: مشكور جدا اسف عذبتك وياي Female: مشكور تعبتك معاي وسويت عليك زحمة

Both responses above starts with the word "مشكور" to express thanking so the first strategy of thanking is used here which is represented by the words مشكور only. Then both male and female complete their thanking expression by another statements , as it is observed above , male's response ends with "اسف جدا تعبتك وياي" here, the speaker uses the strategy of apology by saying "اسف جدا" and the strategy of recognition of imposition by saying "تعبتك وياي" in that he acknowledges that he may cost his colleges in the company and take a time to fix the computer so he chooses to express his thanking and gratitude in such a way that's to say, his response includes three strategies of thanking strategies. As far as female's response is concerned, it also end with a statement "تعبتك معاي وسويت عليك زحمة", by saying so, she acknowledges that she may cost the person who fixed her computer, accordingly, she uses the strategy of recognition of imposition. Regarding politeness principle, it is applied it both responses particularly the tact maxim by which they minimizes the cost to the hearer.

أنت وصديقك، الذي تعرفه جيداً، خرجتما لتناول الغداء. عندما ذهبتما لدفع ثمن الغداء، لم تجدا محفظتك. ثم أدركت أنك نسيتها في المنزل. عرض صديقك دفع ثمن الغداء. بعد أن دفع، ماذا قلت؟

Male:

اشكرك صديقي العزيز وفي المرة القادمة انت

معزوم على حسابي

Female:

شكرا استمتعت معك لكن سأدفع انا المرة

القادمة

Both male and female open their thanking firstly by simply saying "اشكرك" "شكرا" and the use of such words stands for following the first strategy by male and female in both situations. After that , both of them promise their friends to pay the bill for next times by saying the statements like "سأدفع أنا في المرة القادمة" و "في المرة القادمة انت معزوم على حسابي". The two mentioned statements give the meaning of "next time it's my turn to pay!", in both cases the speakers follow the strategy of repayment through which they offering and promising to pay the money for next times as a way of expressing their gratitude to their close friends who do such a favor. Politely, and according to such responses , both male and female follow the generosity maxim through which they maximize cost to self and minimize benefit to self by promising to pay next times.

ترغب في التقديم لجامعة في الخارج، ويتطلب الأمر خطابات توصية من ثلاثة أساتذة. وقد طلبت بالفعل من أستاذين تعرفهما جيداً كتابة خطابات. ورغم أنك لا تعرف الأستاذ الثالث جيداً، قررت أن تطلب منه كتابة خطاب نيابةً عنك لأنك درست معه مقرراً دراسياً في الفصل الدراسي الماضي. وافق الأستاذ على كتابة خطاب التوصية نيابةً عنك. بعد بضعة أيام، عندما قابلت الأستاذ ، أخبرك أنه أرسل خطاب التوصية، ماذا قلت؟

Male:

استاذي العزيز انا في غاية الخجل منك

وفضلك هذا لن انساه ابدا

Female:

اشكرك جزيل الشكر على تلتطفك بكتابة خطاب

التوصية لي لدعم طلبي بالالتحاق بالجامعة

Responses above include three different strategies of expressing thanking. Starting with male's response, the speaker here follow two strategies. First, the strategy of apology by saying "انا في غاية الخجل منك", the speaker seem so embarrassed to ask the professor to write the letter of recommendation for him, then he said "وفضلك هذا لن انساه ابدا" to show positive feeling to the favor that has been done by the professor so here he follows the strategy of positive feeling. While female's response involve the use of thanking strategy. When saying "اشكرك جزيل الشكر على تلتطفك بكتابة خطاب التوصية لي لدعم طلبي بالالتحاق بالجامعة", the speaker here is thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor. As far as politeness principle is concerned, both speaker in their response follow the approbation maxim, they, in both cases maximize praise of professor's favor.

أنت تعمل في شركة كبيرة، وعادةً ما تكون مزدحمة. ترسل إلى مديرك طلبًا لإجازة لبضعة أيام. يسمح لك بذلك ماذا تقول؟

Male:

اشكرك كثيرا لكرم اخلاقك وسماحة نفسك بتفهمك

ظروفي الخاصة

Female:

شكرا جزيلا أستاذ جزاك الله خير

Male's response starts with "اشكرا كثيرا" then it is followed by "الكرم اخلاقك وسماحة نفسك لتفهمك" by saying so, the speaker follows the first strategy which is thanking strategy through which the speaker, in one response, present his thanking and stating the favor of his manager. Accordingly and politely, the speaker follow the approbation maxim when he maximizes praising the manager reaction towards his request by saying "الكرم اخلاقك وسماحة نفسك". Female's response consists of two statements. The first one is represented by "شكرا جزيلا" and the second one is represented by the prayer "جزاك الله خير". In this case the speaker here mixed two strategies in one response. She opened her response by "شكرا جزيلا" so she follows the thanking strategy then she ends with the prayer "جزاك الله خير" so she use the prayer strategy.

اتصلت بك والدتك واخبرتكم بأنها احضرت لك اكلة لذيذة انت تحبها، ماذا تقول لها؟

Male:

الله لا يحرمني منك يا امي دائما تفكرين بي

Female:

عاشت ايدك والله يحفظك النا

Both speakers, male and female, use the strategy of prayer in that they reply with a prayer as a way of expressing their thanking and gratitude towards their mother who call and tell them that she prepared a lovely meal for her son or her daughter so as a kind of expressing their emotional feeling and love they reply her with statements presented above. A sense of politeness can be inferred from the mentioned responses. Regarding Leech's principle, it seems that they follow the approbation maxim through which they maximize praise of others, the praise here is represented by the prayers that they reply their mother with, that's to say, a prayer can be considered as a strategy of praising other to express thanking in certain context.

لديك مشكلة في عملك-دراستك ذهبت الى والدك واخبرته مشكلتك ، والدك قدم لك النصيحة
تساعدك في حل مشكلتك

Male: الله يديمك فوق راسنا

Female: انت احلى اب

It can be said that female's response here is more emotional and expressive than male's response. When father helps his daughter with her problem, she replied with "انت احلى اب" as a kind of expressing her gratitude to her father and showing how she is happy by his advice. She described him that he is the most awesome father, in this case , it can be said that she follows the strategy of expressing a positive feeling to the favor giver. While male's response is represented by the prayer "الله يديمك فوق راسنا" also as a kind of expressing a gratitude towards his father. Both male and female through their responses were very polite in that they follow the approbation maxim when they maximize praising their father, particularly, through female's description of her father.

عليك ديون كبيرة، سدد لك اخاك / اختك جزءا منها، كيف ستعبر عن شكرك؟

Male: وقفتك كبيغي

Female: شكرا كثير ان شاء الله ارجعها في اقرب وقت

Male's response involve praising the favor that his brother/sister present. Accordingly , he follows the strategy of expressing positive feeling towards the given favor. As far as female's response is concerned, she starts with "شكرا كثير" and then complete her thanking by a promising statement which is "ان شاء الله ارجعها في اقرب وقت" , it can be said that she follows two strategies to express her gratitude to her brother/sister. The first strategy is thanking strategy which involves saying "شكرا كثير" only , the second one is the repayment strategy by offering and promising her brother/sister to repaying the money that has been received in a nearest time. Regarding Leech's PP, the male follows the approbation maxim when he maximize praising the favor by saying "وقفتك كبيغي" while the female follows the tact maxim to minimize the cost to the hearer as much as possible when saying "ان شاء الله ارجعها في اقرب وقت" .

أنت في قاعة دراسية\قاعة اجتماعات. تحتاج إلى تدوين ملاحظات، لكنك لا تجد قلمًا. تطلب من زميلك، الذي لا تعرفه جيدًا، الجالس بجانبك أن يُقرضك قلمًا. بعد انتهاء الاجتماع، عندما تُعيد القلم، ماذا تقول لزميلك؟

Male: ممنون منك يا ورد

Female: شكرا

An apparent difference can be observed between the responses presented above. Male's response involves thanking and compliment. The speaker here follows the appreciation strategy when he starts his thanking with "ممنون منك" then it follows by the word "ياورد" , this word is used as a compliment as a kind of expressing gratitude so he praises the pen giver by this word and in this concern , it can be said that since he expresses a positive reaction to the favor giver so he follows the positive feeling strategy. While the female simply said "شكراً" only so she is following the thanking strategy. Leech's pp is followed by male's response when he praises the other person who present the favor and gives him the pen to write the notes, that is to say , he follows the approbation maxim.

جلست في مطعم كانت خدمته جيدة، أحضر لك النادل جميع ما طلبت، ماذا تقول له؟

Male: ما قصرت يا طيب

Female: شكرا عاشت ايدك

A very kind response is delivered to the waiter by the male speaker. When saying "ما قصرت يا طيب" he expresses his gratitude through following the strategy of expressing positive feeling or reaction to the favor giver as with male's response here when calling the waiter with the word "يا طيب" to indicate his satisfaction about the restaurant service. The female speaker starts with the word "شكرا" then adds "عاشت ايدك" which is a very common expression used by Iraqi people in particular. This expression can be considered as prayer also so this is how the female choose to express her thanking to the waiter. Politely, the female tend to follow the tact maxim by minimizing the cost to the hearer while the male tend to follow the approbation maxim when praising the hearer with the word "يا طيب".

Statistical Analysis

Table 1. Strategies For Expressions Of Gratitude

No	Thanking Strategy	Males	Females
1	Thanking	135	156
2	Appreciation	30	27
3	Repayment	22	11
4	Apology	7	3
5	Positive feeling	30	27
6	Others	2	0
7	Prayers	100	137
8	Say nothing	5	7

The table presented above shows the difference in the use of thanking strategies by the target participants which were Iraqi people. The table involves that thanking strategies is the most frequent strategy used by Iraqi people (males and females), when they are exposed to certain situation through which they should thank the other part, they simply say "thank you" or "thanks" or "thanks a lot" no more, no less. The second frequent strategy is prayers strategy through which participants deliver certain statements like "بارك الله ببيك", "خلف الله عليك", "رحم الله والديك", "الله يحفظك" etc.. They choose to thank others by using such prayers as a way of showing and expressing their gratitude. The table shows that females use this strategy more than males. The third frequent strategy is appreciation strategy and positive feeling strategy, as it is observed these strategies are equally frequent for both males and females. Then it is followed by repayment strategy which is used males more than females. Five of male participants say nothing in certain situations and 7 of females also say nothing through other and similar situations which is less frequent strategy and the last one is called others through which participants say phrases like مع السلامة and this expression is adopted by only two male participants.

The present section deals with the findings related to the adopted strategies used by the participants through involving themselves in different daily situations contacting with many people who has varied in their social roles and gender. It has been found that the way of expressing thanking and gratitude to others is affected by many factors, first and the most prominent factor is the social roles or the relationships between the speaker and the hearer. This factor plays a crucial role in shaping the use of expressing thanking and the way each one use and the strategy that follow to express his/her gratitude, for example the way of expressing thanking with members of family differ from thanking strangers, relatives or even friends. According to data being analyzed above, it has been

found that thanking close friends is informal and sometimes has a sense of fun as well as it is noticed that thanking members of family is full of love, emotions, respect and also may have a sense of informality. This indicates that social relationships affect the use of language, particularly, the language of thanking. Moreover, one's attitude and use of language is reflected through contacting with strangers like, neighbors, professors in university or manager in a company or even any man or woman walking everywhere. Contacting with such people seem more formal, full of respect, compliments and doesn't have the sense of fun that the informal thanking has. Another aspect which affects the use of a specific thanking strategy is the situation or the context itself. The use of certain thanking expression is ruled by the value of the favor being done and given to the other part. One may face certain situations like lending a pen or having a delicious meal which is prepared lovely to him/her, perceiving gifts, having the acceptance of the manager for a day off, etc., All the mentioned situations differ in their value according to the participants (males or females). Accordingly, the use of thanking strategies will differ from one to another. It has been found also, the gender itself may affect the thanking strategy that one may follow to express thanking and gratitude, that's to say thanking differ when two males or two females are thanking each other and also differ when it is occurred from male to female or vice versa.

The way males thanking each other may be affected by their masculinity, while when males is thanking females, his attitude and the strategy of thanking adopted may vary and the same is applied to females. The last and prominent finding that is essential to be mentioned is that through out analyzing participants' responses, a new strategy of thanking has been found which is prayer strategy. This strategy haven't been ever mentioned in (Cheng 2005) strategies of thanking and haven't ever used or followed by the participants that have been mentioned in the previous studies. In this case, and according to data analysis Cheng's model of thanking strategies can be modified to have a new strategy which a prayer strategy. It is important to say that this strategy has been followed exclusively by Iraqi people and within Iraqi culture.

CONCLUSION

Different strategies of thanking and gratitude expressions are used by Iraqi people. Thanking and prayer strategies are the most frequent strategies followed by Iraqi people when expressing thanking. There is a slight gender differences through expressing thanking and gratitude by Iraqi males and females. Social roles, familiarity, and the degree of imposition are the most important factors that determine and affect the way of expressing thanking.

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