

# The Importance of ‘Pragmatics’ in Interpreting the Intent Speech in English and Arabic languages

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The explicit meaning of speech may not express the intended meaning and may lead to ambiguity in speech communication. The current study aims to explain how pragmatics can facilitate an understanding of the speech communications and convey the intended meaning. Furthermore, the study shows how encapsulated (implicit) meaning in many phenomena of pragmatics may fundamentally influence the nature and the quality of translation between Arabic, and English languages. In this regard, the study demonstrates the pertinence of pragmatics theories for translators’ work by providing authentic examples of translation between Arabic, and English languages. It argues how a pragmatically oriented process can perform the balance in human communication to avoid breakdowns of communication.

**Keywords:** *Pragmatics, Translation, Arabic, English, Face, Communication.*

## General Framework

### *Introduction*

Although communities have common events that assist human communications, each community has a different culture that differentiates it from others. Language is considered one of the main distinguishing events that play a significant role in determining each community identity. Different cultures stressfully reflect different habits, values, and behaviour that differentiate each community from others. Various cultures may consider select norms as being more significant than others. For instance, British society looks at the ingenuity maxim as being sturdier than the generosity maxim,

whereas Mediterranean societies consider the generosity maxim more powerful than the tact maxim (Kecskes, 2014).

This means that when an individual tries to maintain a positive interaction with another from a different community, he or she needs to obtain a good understanding of the other's culture. This interactive communication between two different cultures' persons requires more than the understanding of the literal meaning of a sentence from an author or discourse from a speaker. Pragmatics, as a subfield of linguistics, deals with this linguistic issue. It is concerned with how contextual factors and linguistic elements work cohesively for the purpose of utterance interpretation, enabling the reader or hearer to comprehend the writer's or the speaker's intended meaning rather than closing on the referential meaning of a speech.

The importance of 'pragmatics' goes beyond the simple utterance interaction between individuals from the same community and appears to be highly crucial in cases of communication between people of different cultures.

### ***Research Problem***

The majority of semantico-pragmatic research, which is based upon meaning, has paid relatively little attention to social considerations and social meanings. This makes sense from a historical perspective; modern formal semantics is rooted in the analytic philosophical traditions of Frege and Russell, where their outlines comprise only a proper subset of the range of principles at work in designing and interpreting utterances (Farghal & Almana, 2014).

With the knowledge that speech acts including suggesting, warning, requesting, ordering, allowing, and so on are globally employed, every language has its own traditional ways to show such speech acts (Benthalia & Davies, 1989; Abdel-Hafiz, 2003; Hall, 2008; Banikalef & Bataineh, 2017). For example, the Arabic language usually utilises religious references in its formulas for greeting and thanking as indirect speech acts, such as "بارك الله فيك", which means "God bless you", whereas English utilises traditional indirect speech acts to show requests or orders.

Generally, people use language to express a certain purpose, which may be manifested in two diverse levels. Firstly, the surface level, which is used for stating something, such as “*it is cold in here*”. Secondly, the other is doing something but in an indirect intention but in determined manner. For example, “*could you please close the window?*”. Usually, the implied meaning of a speech surpasses the surface speech, thereby relaying and creating added effects such as those concerned with saying a request or admonition, which has several assortments that can be concerned with the speaker (e.g. dialects) (Grundy, 2013). Thus, according to situations and context, language changes and differs. Moreover, according to the language functions that differ, various groups of speakers use various dialects within the same language.

Most language users extract inferences of moods, the social relations of speakers, backgrounds, and opinions based on the literal content of the utterance, specifically, where most of these references depend indirectly on the deep meaning of the utterance context (Trosborg, 2011).

Furthermore, in the context of the Arabic, and English languages, as each one has its own sovereignty, what is said in the English language is not to be interpreted literally from the perspective of the Arabic language. Instead, it should be translated into the Arabic language, giving the same meaning intent from the speaker of the English language, and vice versa. Therefore, the research problem can be manifested in this main question:

What is the importance of ‘pragmatics’ in interpreting the intent speech?

From this main question, the following questions can be branched off:

1. What is the significant role of ‘pragmatics’ in interpreting speech acts in the Arabic language?
2. What is the significant role of ‘pragmatics’ in interpreting speech acts in the English language?
3. How can ‘pragmatics’ assist in the positive exchange and understanding between Arabic and English languages, as different cultures?

## **Theoretical Background and Literature Review**

### ***Theoretical Background***

#### ***Conception of Pragmatics***

In contrast with semantics, linguistic pragmatics is concerned fundamentally with matters that go beyond a purely semantic account. Such issues involve speech acts, conversational implicatures, politeness, and presuppositions (Kadmon, 2001; Grundy, 2013).

Pragmatics can be defined as the study of language use in terms of using linguistic forms to serve study purposes (Geis, 2006). In addition, when an individual states an action and determines a function of performing an action, they cannot create an utterance without planning it to have an impact. Moreover, the message that has been invoked here is that three dimensions control the utterance creation. These dimensions include: locution, which refers to what is said; illocution, which refers to what is intended; and perlocution, which refers to what will follow, in terms of psychological and physical consequences, respectively (Farghal & Almanna, 2014).

Definitely, pragmatics deals with how contextual factors and linguistic elements work cohesively for the purpose of utterance interpretation, enabling the reader or hearer to comprehend the right meaning intended by the writer or speaker, rather than just closing to the referential meaning of an utterance (Genovesi, 2020). Emery (2004:150) said that “we have to negotiate a text’s coherence in a dynamic, interactive operation in which the covert potential meaning relationship among parts of a text is made overt by the reader/listener through processes of interpretation”.

Many studies in the literature of languages (Emery, 2004; Hall, 2008; Farghal, 2012) have discussed the main issues of pragmatics, such as conversational implicature, speech acts, addressing terms, and politeness strategies, which require many efforts upon speakers, especially in cases of translation, to make encoding and decoding for contextually based implicit information.

Pragmatics can be defined as the use of language via interpersonal communication. This relates to the speakers’ choices, in addition to the constraints and options applied in social communication. It concentrates on examining the effect of language upon the persons participating in communication (Taavitsainen & Jucker, 2010).

Pragmatics is closely related to semantics. Semantics includes several levels, such as syntax and grammar (Thomas, 2014). Hence, pragmatics can be spread via several fields within linguistics, and thus, is found to be coherent to sociolinguistics and semantics. In this vein, pragmatics cannot be confined to a specific definition (Trosborg, 2011).

Pragmatics can be recognised into three main subgroups (Farghal, 2012; Kecskes, 2014), which are: pragma-linguistics, socio-pragmatics, and applied pragmatics. Pragma-linguistics relates to the context that is encoded formally in the language structure. Therefore, it is concerned with the linguistic end of the pragmatic spectrum and is viewed from the language structural resources. Socio-pragmatics relates to social interaction. Here, usage is seen from the perspective of social communication. Lastly, applied pragmatics relates to the practical problems facing persons through their communication. It is most likely used in cases where critical communication occurs, such as official counselling, medical interviews, law courts, and interrogations.



There is also a philosophical type of pragmatics, which was developed by several precursor philosophers, such as Charles Peirce and William James in the late nineteenth century (Farghal & Almanna, 2014).

There are common typical themes discussed in the literature of pragmatics, which are represented in the following sections.

### *Speech Acts*

Speech acts are defined as an utterance spoken in actual communication. The concept was created by Austin, the representative of the ordinary language philosophy school (1911–1960). Austin elaborated his idea via a series of lectures, and which was published in 1962 with the title: “*How to do things with words*”. Austin asserted that carrying out social actions is considered one of the main effective functions of language.

Austin started his attempt by providing a distinction between ‘performative’ verbs and ‘constative’ verbs. Performative verbs work as instrumental tools in performing an interactional goal between two or more speakers. The following sentence serves as an example:

In the statement, “*I promise to help you with the work*”, it appears that no work is achieved by the speaker. However, he intends sincerely to perform work in the near future. In a different situation, constative verbs are used for describing reality. For example, in the following sentence:

“*It rained heavily all through the weekend*”. Here, the speaker expressed a situation by introducing a sentence with a truth value.

Austin (1962) expressed speech acts as the intended meaning or the illocutionary force rather than the literal meaning or the locutionary force of utterances in communication. Although users can mean what they say exactly in their utterances, they can make their utterances mean much more than what they say. For instance, by using the interrogative forms in the Arabic, and English languages, it allows users to ask questions intending several illocutions, including requesting, wishing, suggesting, rebuking, complaining, approval, disapproval, and so on, while maintaining the same locution.

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### *Types of Speech Acts*

Speech acts can be classified into three divisions (Asher & Lascarides, 2001; Geis, 2006; Ogborn, 2020), which are locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. In locutionary acts, this division expresses a reference or sense, such as: “*The earth is round*”. In illocutionary acts, this division sees the speaker use a performative verb to express his or her intension, such as: “*I baptise this ship: The Spirit of Galway*”. In perlocutionary acts, expressions have a visible impact upon speakers, such as convincing someone.

The last two types relate to intention and effect. Therefore, they are described as the more prototypical type of speech acts. It is possible that one can attain more subdivisions relying on the exact action which is performed.

### *Indirect Speech Acts*

Indirect speech acts are a more prototypical form of speech acts.

The literal meaning is one of the recurrent situations in language usage in an utterance. It is not necessarily the case that the speaker wants the hearer to understand it (Meibauer, 2019; Pourmousayi & Mohamadi Zenouzagh, 2020). For example, in the sentence:

“*It’s very draughty in here*”, the speaker indirectly and politely wants the hearer to close the window. In this kind of speech act, the speaker may choose this circuitous and indirect mode of communication to realise a directive speech act. This speech act gives the addressee the option of not adhering to the implied request, without losing face (El-Dakhs, Ambreen, Zaheer, Gusarova, 2019).

### *Further Development of Speech Acts*

Speech theory was developed in 1969 by John R. Searle, who asserted that expressions and signs must be highly related to the social context which they occur in. This ‘speech acts’ theory evolution has divided philosophical semantics into two main segments: speech-act semantics, including performatives; and truth-based semantics, including constatives. According to Searle, the distinction manifests clearly between those two splits in meaning in language, as opposed to meaning in communication, which falls within the field of pragmatics.

Managing speech acts appropriately between Arabic and English is considered highly important for translation activity in two main facets. First, the translator needs to understand the intention (illocution) in the source language (ST). Then the translator needs to examine and explore the alike

speech acts in the target language (TL) to be able to select the most appropriate option which suits the alike illocution. According to Farghal and Almana (2014), the focus should be directed to the choice between the semantic and pragmatic rendering of a speech act. In the scenario that the context does not support semantic translation enough, the translator needs to favour the pragmatic one.

The semantic approach of the speech acts requires having creative solutions to make sure of the adequacy and the possible acceptability in the TL, whereas a pragmatic approach requires having enough understanding of conventionalised speech acts in the TL to guarantee acceptability.

### *Presuppositions*

A pragmatic presupposition can be defined as ‘an implicit assumption about the world or background belief relating to an utterance whose truth is taken for granted in discourse’ (Almehmadi, Tenbrink, & sanoudaki, 2020). As this construction is represented by background assumptions that are very near to some lexical structures, called presupposition-triggers (such as cleft structures, definite expression, iteratives, etc.), they can be realised in cases of changing and switching between Arabic and English languages (Farghal & Almana, 2014).

### *Conversational Implicatures*

H. Paul Grice (1975), the English philosopher, was interested in accounting for how human beings conduct and behave in ordinary discourse. To this end, Grice came up with the notion of ‘conversational implicatures’, which are implications that are deduced by speakers during conversations. According to George and Mamidid (2020), to achieve successful behaviour in the deduction of the intended meaning of one’s interlocutors, the latter has to abide by using certain conversational maxims.

Grice recognises four conversational maxims: quality, quantity, relevance, and manner. Quality refers to what you say is assumed to be true; quantity refers to being informative, but not too much so; relevance refers to being relevant to the purpose of the exchange; and manner refers to being perspicuous, and avoid absurdity and ambiguity.

Furthermore, the English Philosopher Grice assumed that the interlocutor should retain ‘cooperative principles’. He described this cooperation during human communication as an unspoken agreement in a conversation between speakers interpreting sensibly what is said by one’s interlocutor and abiding actually in conversation. He added that on some occasions, the speaker

may tend to flout maxims for deliberate impact. For example, when one is being sarcastic or ironical.

Rationality and reasoning enable humans to produce and interpret messages successfully which emerge through conversational implicatures in the cooperative method (Rett, 2020). While the speakers of the language generally keep the maxims of a conversation — such as the quality (speaking the actuality and the truth), quantity (using the exact amount of language), manner (expressing things purely and unambiguously), and relation (to be relevant) — on many occasions, they may tend to flout a conversational maxim for a communicative purpose in the indirect approach (Thomas, 2014).

Exploiting or flouting a maxim fits properly with the assumption of cooperation in human interaction (Abualadas, 2020). In this approach, the speaker should be aware of two aspects. Firstly, he may use the mock or flout the way in a maxim of situation or conversation, and secondly, the aspect that the listener in the same conversation can determine the conversational implicit meaning in his utterance. For instance, the speaker may say: “That is great”, implying that the interlocutor who has just spilled tea on his jacket cannot be interpreted at face value; rather it mean that “That’s Terrible” done by the interlocutor and should need an apology. The conversational implicatures witnessed further development in what is called relevance theory, as introduced by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson. The two linguists applied ‘relevance’ to the conversation structure and confirmed that a contribution is relevant in case the effort needed to process it is small, which means it concurs with the assumptions of the addressee (Poggi, 2020).

Although conversational implicatures and speech acts seem to be coherent because both deal with indirectness through human communication, there are different perspectives for each one. While ‘speech acts’ focusses mainly on traditional forms that are applied to reveal and expose illocutions in a language where every conventionalised form can carry out different illocutions in various contexts, ‘conversational implicatures’ concentrates on the speaker’s ability to keep a distance from conventionality and keeps the exact meaning to much more than what the speaker says (Shardimgaliev, 2019)

For instance, in the response: “It's hot”, for the two questions below, it involves several messages conversationally:

- “Shall we go for the work?”  
“It's hot.”
- “What do you think of the exam?”

“It's hot.”

The example above shows that conversational implicature depends basically on the extent to which the speaker seems to be mutual and allows the listener to employ contextual features to cope easily with the implicated messages (Rett, 2020). Sperber and Wilson (1986) stated that the hearer should devote such efforts to deem processing for utterances considering contextual features. In the case that the hearer felt that the relation of an utterance is at a minimum, he would ask for more explanation from the speaker to clear the utterance out. For instance, “I can't get you here” or “will you demonstrate exactly what you mean?”.

Particularly, in a translation case, and depending on the conversational implicature, the translator needs to give utmost care to flouting, in which implicated messages are conveyed to others. For other things to be equal, what is implicated conversationally in the ST should stay implicated conversationally in the TT (Genovesi, 2020).

Conversational implicature is common for all languages. Below is an example in the Arabic language, which demonstrates how the meaning of two contexts of marriage change according to using the same Arabic metaphor “فات القطار”:

(1) اسرع وإلا فاتك القطار.

“Hurry up or you will miss the train”.

(2) لم أفكر بالزواج ذلك الوقت. قمت بهدوء بمناقشة الفكرة مع والدي، وخلصنا إلى نتيجة مشرقة ومرحة، وهي أن القطار لم يفت علي بعد.

“Although I did not think about marriage at that time, I did talk quietly over the idea with my father, noticing the optimistic and happy conclusion that ‘it was not too late for me’”.

By using metaphor in the Arabic texts above, it can be noticed that both did spur the maxim of quality by referring to the case of marriage, and thus implicated the marriage idea.

In the natural communicative practice, the author occasionally clears out just a segment of the message so the reader can complete the missed part, depending on his own experience and knowledge that enables him to access the conceptual relations underling the direct text

(Blakemore, 2002: 71). This means that to reflect the pragmatic function, the reader should go beyond the explicit written text, and present the author's thoughts to determine what the author precisely thinks. The example below quoted from Mahfouz's novel, (زقاق المدق) *Midaq Alley* (1974), explains this pragmatic function:

فقال ضاحكة وكأنها وثقت من امتلاكه للأبد:

"أحطك في عيني وأكل عليك!"

This statement was translated by Le Gassick (1975: 108), as follows:

"She assured him; as if she was certain of possessing him forever, with me you are very safe".

In this example, the speaker flouted the maxim of quality for a metaphorical expression:

"أحطك في عيني وأكل عليك!"

"I'll put you in my eyes and apply kohl (immediately) after that", assures her feelings giving existence to conversational implicature. That is, you are so precious to me and will be mine always.

Having detected the intended meaning of the metaphorical implicature — in other words, "kohl" in this context as "locking the gate of a prison" — the translator may not find the functional equivalent meaning in the targeted language linguistic and cultural norms. Thus, he should find the communicative import of the original text to have the same concept of the source language context separately of the *form* or *function*, thereby reflecting the maxim of the original text quality.

To interpret the intended meaning of the example above, which refers to "dearness" and possession"; it is better to express to find a more effective English metaphorical expression which can embody a similar implicature, such as "I'll put you in my heart and lock you up there forever". Such this expression should satisfy the targeted language culture and norms as well as maintain the conversational implicature.

### *Politeness*

Politeness expresses the speaker's social behaviour through deference towards the concerns and wishes of an addressee. Two strategies were provided by English linguists (Brown, Stephen, &

Levinson, 1987) to maximise esteem in exchanges by using formal address terms or indirect speech acts.

The purpose of both strategies is the same, which is saving the addressee's face. The word 'face' indicates the mental picture (public self-image) of the speakers and it can be split into two patterns: the negative face, and the positive face. The positive face indicates an individual's desire to be appreciated and honoured by others, whereas the negative face indicates to not disturb or restrict the choices of the individual concerning their social behaviour (Vergis & Pell, 2020).

Hence, politeness is comprehended as a means of showing the realisation of another's face. Social behaviour can constitute face-saving acts by being deferential to others, and emphasising the importance of their wishes and concerns (Rieger, 2018). On the contrary, a face-threatening act tends to encroach on another's freedom of action and may be interpreted as an imposition or indeed an insult (Zhang & Wu, 2020).

Several strategies can be used to maximise the impedance to negative face or to maximise the intensification of positive face. For example, apologising in advance for bothering someone, as a strategy to maximise the impedance to negative face, and pointing out a common interest in a suggestion made to an addressee, as a strategy to maximise the intensification of a positive face (Santamaría-García, 2017).

Brown et al. (1987) have built their politeness theory based on face notion. They defined face as a self-image that everyone claims for themselves reflecting one of two particular interactive behaviours: negative politeness implies negative face, whereas positive politeness implies a positive face.

On the contrary to Brown and Levinson's claim of face universality, and positive and negative, many researchers from different cultures — including Chinese, Korean, and Japanese backgrounds — have contended that negative face is irrelevant to their culture (Sifianou, 1992; 109; Rieger, 2018). Sifianou (1992) claimed that such illocutions (promising, offering, inviting) are not considered threatening in Chinese culture, under ordinary circumstances.

In his model of politeness, Leech (1983: 30) considered politeness as interpersonal rhetoric, which includes three principles: politeness principle (PP), cooperative principle (CP), and irony principle (IP).

Another point of this model is the relative politeness against absolute structure. In this construct, Leech indicates that absolute politeness indicates politeness in a particular action, while relative

politeness indicates politeness in a particular situation. He added that not all illocutions tend to be placed in politeness, where some illocutions are inherently polite, such as offers, and others are inherently impolite, such as orders. In this case, Fraser (1992: 227) contradicted Leech's (1983) view about politeness. In this regard, he quoted an instance where a teacher asked her students (order) to obtain a solution for a prize-winning problem on the class board, in which case the order exceeds its impolite value.

There is uncertain ground which 'politeness acts' inherently stand upon because they vary significantly between different cultures. For example, within Arabic society, asking certain questions about private subjects and issues to strangers, such as questions about marital status, are treated as impolite. In contrast, such questions in American society are considered normal (Beeman, 1986: 105).

Although politeness is universally recognised through all different cultures, speakers should give respectful consideration to other's expectations regarding self-feelings, self-image, and avoidance of face-threatening acts (Cutting, 2002: 45). How people interact with each other is different from one culture to another. Thus, what is regarded as acceptable in one culture may be taken as unacceptable in another. In this regard, several mitigating devices, such as "Would you ...?", "Could you...?", and "Please". These mitigating devices are used in the English language to soften such severity appearing in the face-threatening mode in human communication more than in the Arabic language because of the degree of severity of the face mode expressions are forceful in English imperative norms than in Arabic (Yule, 1996: 63). For example, in the statement below, quoted from the author Mhfouz's novel (1961: 122), اللص والكلاب (*The Thief and the Dogs*):

"فقال متوجعا":

"نور لا تزيديني عذابا أنا في غاية النكد".

"Noor", he pleaded, "Please don't torture me. I'm terribly depressed".

The speaker used a direct speech addressing his lover (Noor) to express a negative form that is considered a face-threatening mode of action in the Arabic language (Cutting 2002: 64). The translator (Le Gassick & Badawi, 1984: 135) used a mitigating device, 'please', in English to alleviate the severity of the face-threatening mode of action performed by the imperative form.

By looking at both occurrences below, taking into consideration the politeness, in the first occurrence, the translator has opted to delete the term, 'عم', affecting the degree of respect to the referent. Meanwhile, in the second occurrence, he used the term, 'Mr. Mohsen', for the translated

term in Arabic, 'عم محسن', to show the amount of respect of referent, changing the degree of intimacy between both Mohsen and the nurse into a formal case distorting the pragmatic function associated with the original term, 'عم', in the source language (Arabic).

"وهرعت إلى الصالة الشرقية الوثيرة فوقفت أمام عم محسن مضطربة حتى تمتم الرجل خافق القلب.

عم محسن: ربنا يلطف بنا، ماذا وراءك؟"

"همست بعد تردد:

مخلوق عجيب يا عم محسن".

In such cases, either in the deletion or unsuitable lexical term replacement, it distorts the pragmatic function through translation or human communication. The only way to obtain a solution for this type of issue is that when translating, it is important to maintain the social honorific 'uncle' in translation. Farghal and Almann (2014) stated that when equipped with the knowledge that the social honorific term, 'uncle', is frequented in Arabic and is not dissimilar to the 'elderly-young' interaction in English, the use of the address term, 'uncle', in this case, seems to be indicative of an age difference between the midwife, who is relatively young, and the addressee, 'Mr. Mohsen', who is elderly. Thereby, this employs the intimate term, 'عم', in the TL language (English) successfully, otherwise the midwife may tend to use the distance-oriented 'Mr. Mohsen' inappropriately.

### *Politeness in Arabic*

'Mujamilih' is a cultural concept that has an impact upon Arabic deferential behaviour. Moreover, it can be explained as a type of expression about superiority and inferiority in human communication and interaction (Hassan, 2006). Mujamilih matches several notions that are common in the western world, such as compliments, politeness, propriety, and correctness (Cortazzi, 1993:17). The dictionaries of English to Arabic translations provide a broad list of English glosses, such as civility, comity, courteous behaviour, compliment, ceremony, and so on (Balabaki, 2008).

According to Hassan (2006), there are two basic interaction elements which should be considered mainly for politeness purposes. Firstly, the perception of social ethics, which relates to traditions and habits. For example, in Iraqi society, a husband does not mention his wife's name directly, instead he tries to use several expressions that imply his wife indirectly, such as 'زوجتنا' or 'our wife', 'أم الأولاد' or 'the mother of children', and 'أهلنا' or 'our family'. Secondly, the perception

of individual ethics, which is the understanding of certain domains of activity, where one may employ plural forms instead of singular ones.

Alwafi (2009) determines two basic devices of linguistic style that form the core of mujamilih: self-lowering versus other self-raising forms, which are commonly used in the colloquial dialect of the Arabic language; and plural forms versus singular forms, which are used to express reference to individuals.

Realising mujamilih linguistically is represented in a pronominal and verbal system. For the verbal system, many verbs are presented regarding politeness. The examples below demonstrate the use of verbal and pronominal terms of mujamilih:

In the verbal system, instead of saying, "تناول الطعام", one may use the expression, "تفضلوا بتناول الطعام". In the pronominal system, the following honorific expressions can be used:

- Plural form of address, such as 'تفضلوا', instead of 'تفضل'.
- First person plural forms instead of second ones, such as 'يجب أن نقوم أنفسنا' instead of 'يجب أن تقوموا أنفسكم'.
- Third person pronouns instead of second ones, such as 'يتفضل الأستاذ بالكلام' instead of 'تفضل أستاذ بالكلام'.
- and other honorifics, such as 'حضرتك', 'حضرتكم', 'جنابك', 'جنابكم'.

### *Literature review*

Samara (2006) conducted a study that dealt with linguistic feedback, which is considered to fall within the domain of cultural description. The study focused upon increasing the importance of feedback for the purpose of understanding the communication problems among cultures. Specifically, the study focused on verbal feedback actions and discussed briefly non-verbal actions. To achieve its main aim, the study discussed the following aspects:

- a) Feedback expressions in spoken Arabic, which involve the following terms: a one-word utterance (feedback), an utterance of more than one word (complex feedback), eliciting feedback, giving and eliciting feedback, self-feedback, and non-feedback turns.
- b) The semantic and pragmatic analysis of feedback actions: criteria for deciding the function of feedback.

The study conducted by Castillo (2012) aimed to explore the application of pragmatics in the teaching of a second language. The study presented pragmatics as a discipline that can be taught and learned based on utilising the experiential learning cycle. It showed challenging pragmatic experiences and how the learning cycle can be used to overcome them. Moreover, it provided a proposed model for teaching pragmatics.

Dajani and Omari (2013) investigated the recesses of Arabic and English languages by intending to pursue the historical development and evolution of both languages and to compare the state of the Arabic language and the language families of Europe in the past, present, and future. The paper compared several pragmatics of Arabic language with the English language, which were provided with several examples. Finally, the study also addressed Arabic teaching for foreign (non-native) speakers and the obstacles encountering them through writing, grammatical forms, and sentence structure.

Acton (2014) developed a socio-pragmatic model for understanding the meaning of utterance beyond the literal. The model consists of four principles: a) the content of utterance comprises entailed and non-entailed associative content; b) the importance of an utterance depends on the context and what differentiates the utterance from functionally-related alternative utterance; c) the significance of the given alternative is concerned with the function of its relatedness to the real utterance and to which extent it adheres to the conversational expectations; and d) particularly, an utterance likely has special importance, where it penetrates conversational expectations. Additionally, the study introduced the scenario of the social meaning in a very dispensable facet of use and interpretation, and explained the advantages of pursuing a pragmatic sociolinguistic, and semantic research in tandem, and pushed a unified theory of meaning beyond the literal.

The study conducted by Fargahal and Almanna (2014) aimed to present the connection of pragmatic theories for the work of translators. According to the chosen body of the authentic translation examples, the study clarified the underlying meaning to be encapsulated in many pragmatic phenomena, including speech acts, conversational, presuppositions, and politeness, which may affect the translation product quality. The study argued for a pragmatically oriented process of translation, in which the translator seeks to provide a balance between what is said and what is meant in human interaction. Besides, the balance should support what is meant, to avoid damage and mistakes occurring through human communication in several situations.

## **Analysis and Discussion**

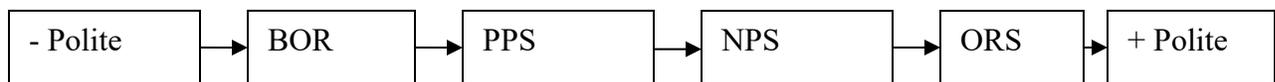
The Brown and Levinson model (1987) determined four strategies that can be used by the speaker and the hearer to try to maintain a 'face' that is described as vulnerable. These common strategies

include: negative politeness strategy (NPS), which refers to politeness exercised among strangers; bald-on-record (BOR), which refers to applying the most direct language to convey information; positive politeness strategy (PPS), which refers to the way of politeness used between friends; and off-record strategy (ORS), which refers to using the language of politeness excessively, and not realising the act at all.

Each of these strategies can be used according to the situation occurring between the speaker and the addressee. The speaker may necessarily use more than one strategy to save the face of the hearer. In this manner, the speaker may use the BOR strategy when the least polite or non-polite behaviour occurs. On the contrary, the speaker may use the ORS strategy when the politest behaviour occurs. In the first case, the speaker performs an act directly to convey the required information to the addressee, whereas in the second case, he performs an act indirectly to convey the required information, so that the illocutionary force is ambiguous.

The following scale shows the gradation of polite strategies in the Brown and Levinson model.

**Figure 1.** Brown and Levinson model (1987)



The below examples, in the two languages (Arabic and English), illustrate the usage of these strategies according to the case in which they are particularly used. We can notice through the examples how the most frequent exchange units in the two languages (Arabic and English) have been analyzed and contrasted in term of possessing features of PPS, NPS, ORS, and BOR

Example 1: Greetings

Arabic X: كيف صحتكم

Y: الحمد لله

English X: How are you?

Y: Fine, thanks.

**Table 1:** Analysis of Example One

Language	Speaker	PPS	NPS	BOR	ORS
Arabic	X	Ad	Ad	Ad	N.Ad
	Y	Ad	Ad	Ad	No.Ad
English	X	Ad	N.Ad	Ad	N.Ad
	Y	Ad	N.Ad	Ad	N.Ad

Ad: adherent to the strategy

N.Ad: not adherent to the strategy

Greetings are considered to be good instances of BOR. To obtain effective communication and interaction, the speaker has to accept CP, a principle suggested by Grice. Therefore, he should use BOR. Greetings are acts associated with identifiable redress markers to a positive face. This is true for the English, and Arabic languages. The Arabic speaker (X) mostly uses second-person plural forms, which are attached to the person who expresses his politeness to the addressee. Practically, the units of discourse are considered to be more or less the same in this classification; both Arabic, and English languages.

The table above (Table 1) presents the ability to use the same expression in formal and informal situations to reflect respectful behaviour.

Example 2: Offering

Arabic X: تفضلوا الطعام عسى أن يعجبكم

Y: سلمت يداكم

English X: Have some of my lovely biscuits.

Y: They are so nice, I'd love to.

**Table 2:** Analysis of Example Two

Language	Speaker	PPS	NPS	BOR	ORS
Arabic	X	Ad	Ad	N.Ad	Ad
	Y	Ad	Ad	N.Ad	Ad
English	X	Ad	N.Ad	N.Ad	N.Ad
	Y	Ad	N.Ad	N.Ad	N.Ad

The Table 2 shows that PPS, in both Arabic and English languages, is used in offering situations, but they differ concerning ORS, and NPS. However, while the Arabic speaker could use several different strategies, the English speakers tend to use PPS in this situation.

### Example 3: Question and Answer

Arabic X1: (X says something to Y)

Y: عفواً، ماذا قلتُم

X2: يعيد الكلام

English X1: (X says something to Y)

Y: What did you say?

X2: I said ...

**Table 3:** Analysis of Example Three

Language	Speaker	PPS	NPS	BOR	ORS
Arabic	Y	Ad	Ad	Ad	N.Ad
	X2	Ad	Ad	Ad	N.Ad
English	Y	Ad	N.Ad	Ad	N.Ad
	X2	Ad	N.Ad	Ad	N.Ad

The Table 3 shows that speakers or hearers of Arabic and English languages use suitable expressions to convey communication effectively in this situation (BOR), which means that both languages seem to be different from several other strategies, specifically, NPS, and ORS.

### Conclusion:

The intended meaning goes beyond what is spoken or translated literally. The current study explained how pragmatics significantly use consistently the contextual and linguistic components of a language so that the reader or hearer can get the right and rich meaning of the intended speech by the speaker or writer, not just closing to the literal meaning of an utterance. To achieve this goal, the study has taken both Arabic and English languages as examples; by discussing some examples from the two languages, explaining their literal meaning and intended meaning, linguistic confusion between the two languages in cases of closing to the referential meaning of an utterance. Finally, the study provided an analysis discussion of using four strategies that are used to reflect the behavior according to the situation occurring between the speaker and the addressee.

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