Congratulation Strategies in Syrians' Wedding Parties in Jordan

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Abstract

The study aimed at examining the politeness strategies used in the Syrians' wedding parties. The sample consisted of 72 respondents from the Syrian refugees dwelling in north Jordan. Half of the sample were males, and the other half females. A questionnaire which consisted of fourteen questions was distributed to the sample. The results showed that Syrians use exaggeration in their strategies of congratulations, and they like to express their happiness to the two brides. Results also showed that Syrians avoid asking about private issues, and avoid joking in their wedding parties. Finally, the results showed no difference between males and females in using politeness strategies in Syrians' wedding parties.
Keywords: Syrians' wedding parties, politeness strategies, the brides

INTRODUCTION

A wedding is a social event that unites a couple in marriage. Sullivan (2018) maintains that a wedding ceremony is a tradition rooted in the culture of a given society that reflects rituals, customs, values, and beliefs. Yet wedding traditions are not the same in all societies; they vary from one culture to another.

Weddings as well as other happy occasions and events trigger people's favorable feelings and attitudes towards the bride and groom. People exchange congratulations indicating their sincere, real feelings. People use a variety of expressions and strategies manifesting that they share and participate others' happiness and pleasurable experience like wedding ceremonies and success in one's career and profession.

Marki-Tsilipakon (2001) maintains that congratulations are the speakers' expressions of joy and praise on a happy occasion. Orecchioni (2004 – cited in Allami&Nekuuzadeh2011, p. 1607) considers congratulations as an expressive speech act which is associated with positive politeness and is a face-saving act because it consolidates the hearer's positive face. Elwood (2004) states that congratulation strategies and expressions are not alike in all societies. Speech acts are a reflection of

cultural values and traditions. Speakers of different cultures and different linguistic backgrounds would have different devices and manners to express speech acts.

Theoretical Framework

When a joyful event happens, it is expected that speakers and/or listeners would react towards and participate in that event. This reaction and participation manifest the speaker's good intentions, feelings, and attitudes towards the listener who joyfully experiences this good event. A speaker offers, utters, or uses congratulation expressions and strategies displaying his favorable intentions and wishes.

Various theories and viewpoints are presented by different theorists and scholars concerning the speech act of congratulations. Austin (1969) views congratulations as a behavior act and proposes the following conditions for this act:

1. There is some event related to the hearer.

2. The event is in the hearer's interest and the speaker believes the event is in the speaker's interest.

3. The speaker is pleased at the event.

4. It counts as an expression of pleasure at the event.

It is evident that Searle's views show that the speaker and hearer are participants in that social event and the speaker's responsibility is to show his sincere feelings towards the hearer.

In (1975) Searle considers it as an expressive speech act.Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 101-129) view it as a positive politeness strategy. They state the main positive politeness strategies and sub-strategies as follows:

1. Bald on record;

2. Positive politeness;

3. Negative politeness;

4. Off record;

5. Do not perform the FTA.

The politeness sub-strategies are listed as follows:

1. Notice, attend to H(his/ her interests, wants, needs, goods);

2. Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with H);

3. Intensify interest to H;

4. Use in-group identity markers;

5. Seek agreement;

6. Avoid disagreement;

7. Presuppose/ raise/ assert common ground- Joke;

8. Assert or presuppose S knowledge of and concern for its wants;

9. Offer promise;

10. Be optimistic;

11. Include both S and H in the activity;

12. Give (or ask for) reasons;

13. Assume or assert reciprocity;

14. Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperating).

Because of the nature of congratulations as being positive and polite, Leech (1983, p. 132) considers congratulation as convivial since it deals with "approbation maxim" which says: maximize dispraise of other and maximize praise of other.

Searle and Venderveken (1985) believe that the speech act of congratulating is associated with the hearer who need not be responsible for any event or attitude.

Wierzbicka (1987) thinks the listener is responsible for the happy wedding event. This is the case since the speaker congratulates the listener because the former wants the latter to know his feeling of and attitude towards the good pleasant event.

Marki-Tsilipakou (2001) feels that congratulation is a means of expressing the speaker's joy, happiness, and praise on an interesting pleasant occasion. Otherwise, the speaker, we think, would not perform the act of congratulating.

Elwood (2004) classifies the congratulations' strategies as follows:

1. Illocutionary force indicating device (IFID): (e.g., "Congratulation");

2. Expression of happiness:

 a. Expressions of personal happiness (e.g., "I am so glad")

b. Statements assessing the situation positively (e.g., "That's great");

3. An offer of good wishes (e.g., "I wish you the best of luck in your new life");

4. Request for information (e.g., "Is your new baby a boy or a girl?");

5. Asking for sweets (e.g., "You must bring me some sweet");

6. Self-related comments: an expression of envy and longing (e.g., "May God give me a cute baby as yours");

7. Joking (e.g., "You better if you didn't get married").

8. Thanking God ("Thanks God")

9. Encouraging (" Always try your best")

There is some overlap in Elwood's proposal. Expressing happiness and joking can be considered as one strategy since they both show the speaker's positive intention. Likewise, request for information and self-related comments are not truly expressive of congratulations.

Moreover, Pishghadam and Moghaddam (2011) propose another model on the basis of Elwood's strategies and on the basis of their findings of a study they have carried out

contrasting the speech act of congratulating utterances in Persian and English. The model consists of the following congratulation strategies.

1. Offering congratulation ("My congratulation")

2. Mentioning the occasion (" Congratulation for having a son at

your age")

3. Blessing wish (" Wishing you a happy marriage')

4. Expressing feeling (" I am so happy for you")

5. Divine statement (" God bless you in this happy day")

6. Complimenting (" Well done")

As a matter of fact, we could not find any significant differences between their model and Elwood's. The only observable difference is their use of phrases like "Divine statement" instead of "Thanking God". Thus, the current research will be carried out within Elwood's proposed strategies since they cover more areas.

This article tries to analyze the terms that are used in Syrians' wedding ceremonies to find out what positive politeness strategies that Syrians in Jordan use in weddings. It follows Elwood's (2004) taxonomy of congratulation strategies and Brown and Levinson's (1987) categorization of positive politeness strategies.

Literature Review

A number of studies have been carried out on the speech act of congratulation in various contexts. Yet congratulations are a relatively understudied speech act (Dastjerdi&Nasri 2012). In what follows those studies are taken up.

Murata (1998) carries out a cross-cultural study, looking upon Japanese and British interpretations of congratulation messages. She concludes that direct and indirect cultural speech styles play a significant role in the misinterpretation of those congratulation letters.

Garibova and Blair (1999) study the socio-pragmatics of congratulations exchanged on holidays and events by people in Azerbaijan. Those people use different congratulation expressions like "I wish you a long life" and " Congratulations on holidays and pleasant occasions". Good events trigger congratulations.

Emery (2000) studies three categories of politeness formulas and patterns of greeting and parting routines, condoling and congratulating in Omani Arabic. Omani Arabic speakers use certain expressions in these domains. They use special formulas and patterns for entering and leaving houses, religious occasions, the arrival of rain, and greeting exchanges. Home-grown Omani expressions are used by all Omani natives but more specially by the old. Concerning weddings, old people use the expression " May God bless your lives", but young people use the expression "May you be blessed". People utilize expressions and patterns expressing long life, fertility, prosperity, giving gifts, and good health. Old women tend to be more conservative than men; young women use patterns making them distinct from old ones. Emery categorizes the expressions and

patterns into three categories of social rapport establishment, joyful events, and anxiety-provoking events.

Marki-Tsilipako (2001) investigates congratulations in Greece. The findings show that the Greeks do not always use "congratulation" since it shows that the speaker belongs to the educated, urban class. On weddings, educated, urban speakers use congratulation expressions and expressions of good wishes like "May that you live an auspicious wedding". Greek congratulations are indicative of social distance between speakers and listeners.

Elwood (2004) looks upon the speech act of congratulation used by American and Japanese students who completed a discourse completion test of seven situations. Those students were asked to respond to good events like grant, wedding and promotion. The findings indicate that there were differences between their responses. Japanese students tended to use comments and expressions of envy, longing, and future success, but Americans asked questions and requested information. On weddings, the expression of happiness was the most popular type of response. Americans only used the expression of validation like "You deserve it" on weddings. Concerning Japanese responses, it is expected that their responses may indicate home-sickness and nostalgia.

Al-Ali (2006) examines 200 Arabic written wedding invitations, pointing out their component patterns and their role in shaping the invitation genre. Results show that religion and masculine authority affect the organizational details of the communicative event, wedding invitation. They also show that religious affiliation and masculinity construct and shape text component selection and the lexical choice and naming practices. Nonetheless, this study does not tackle the issue of congratulating in relation to wedding ceremonies.

Buckley (2006) contrasts and compares Indian and North American white weddings through an examination of film and ritual. She examines the cultural and material components of the marriage cultural ceremonies which are related to popular culture. The study explains the involvement of families and community pertaining to negotiations of this ritualized event. Specifically, the paper tries to answer the following three questions:

> 1) What are the rituals in the marriage ceremony? What are the similarities and differences between wedding rituals in modern and traditional societies?

> 2) How are people socialized into these rituals, and how do participants understand their role in weddings?

> 3) What are the cultural and social meanings of these wedding ceremonies?

The researcher finds the ideal Indian and American wedding rituals are divided into five categories: gender, family kinship, wealth, superstition, religion, and fertility. Indians and Americans seem to be similar in relation to the societal values of gender and religion, but different in relation to fertility, wealth, superstition, and kinship.

Concerning question two, it was found that because of historical presentations of gender roles, socialization processes gave insight to the development of rituals and their

significance. Through media, the white American wedding became seen as the female domain, while males were socialized into thinking that weddings were not a male domain.

Question three deals with the cultural and social meanings and significance of wedding ceremonies. Data analysis indicates that the white wedding has become an example of American consumer culture, but Indian weddings focus on the bride and groom within the society that unites them. Indian values and rituals have not greatly changed over centuries.

These findings show that wedding rituals are influenced by community members' beliefs, attitudes, customs, and traditions. "New rituals and traditions appear every year in all cultures because of globalization. The wedding as well is evolving" (Buckley 2006, p. 20).

Gebrael (2006) investigates the opinions and perceptions toward the significant symbols of the Lebanese- Canadian Maronite wedding ceremonies from the perspective of three pre-defined Lebanese groups living in Canada. Symbols include mate selection, parents' role in mate selection/ guest list, color white, purity, innocence, virginity, dressing the bride, traditional chants, church ceremony, wedding party, gift of money, adoption/ integration of Canadian customs, and wedding perception. The sample that consisted of thirty Lebanese respondents was interviewed using an unstructured interview. The findings indicate that the significant symbols have a shared meaning by both first-generation groups and those who have recently arrived in Canada, but the second-generation group have a general and vague understanding of those symbols. Further, when the bride and groom and their parents are congratulated, they reply with "Abelik" (May you be next to wed), or "Abeil le la endeck" (May whom you ever have at home be next).

Singing and dancing seem to play a significant role in wedding ceremonies. Nhlekisana(2007) looks upon the cultural role of music in wedding celebrations in Botswana. Songs are meant to fulfill a role which socializes the couple and makes them familiar with prospective new roles in the future. Music is expressive of love and good relations marking their new marriage life.

Technological innovations have greatly affected the industry of weddings. Photographs play a significant role in weddings. Lozada(2008) believes that photography tends to demonstrate the happiest day of the couple in terms of decorations, clothing, cuisine, and videotaping of the party for their future reference. In this regard, technology and the digital era has replaced traditional camera photos which are ephemeral.

Dunak(2009) studies the role of African American weddings in the life of the couple and their society. Weddings indicate trends and outlooks agreed upon by the couple. Those weddings are marked by self-representation, identification of both the bride and the groom, social identity, invitation of guests, friends, peers, coworkers, place of the party, the couple's responsibilities and change of their life. Also, weddings are considered a significant means for making the couple's new role, honor, and status known to the society at large.

Garcia (2009) studies congratulation used by the speakers of Peruvian Spanish. She finds out that the Peruvian Spanish speakers use congratulations as a means of a rapport- maintenance orientation to establish integrity, solidarity, and harmony in the community.

Muhanna (2009) deals with the customs of wedding celebrations. They include having a belly dancer, the happy couple's cutting their wedding cake, musical groups that sing and conduct sword fights during weddings, party in the groom's hammam or wedding bath, the groom's being dressed in a wedding suit, getting the blessing of a saint, friends' singing and dancing (Dabke dances), offering the guests food, and a special bridal henna (a natural dye) party. However, nowadays wedding celebrations last less than 24 hours, having a quick, short party. This present day ceremony does not seem like a traditional party.

Allami and Nekuuzadeh (2011) investigate the speech act of congratulation in terms of Elwood's (2004) taxonomy which represents the verbal strategies used by Iranian Persian speakers in offering congratulations. They also examine the positive politeness strategies in the speech act of congratulation on the basis of the modified version of Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of the politeness speech act. The respondents were fifty male and female informants coming from different socio-economic backgrounds who filled in a discourse completion test of nine situations reporting happy news.

Data analysis shows that illocutionary force indicating device, offer of good wishes, and expression of happiness were the mostly used types of congratulation strategies. As far as the positive politeness strategies are concerned, the findings indicate that Iranians, reacting to happy news, mostly used the strategies of giving gift to listeners, exaggeration of interest, approval and sympathy with the listener, and in-group identity markers (e.g., markers like using address forms, in-group language, contraction, and ellipsis). The greatest number of used positive politeness strategies was seen in wedding situations.

The findings of their study could be summed as follows:

_ Iranians used the illocutionary force indicating device

' congratulations'

_ Expressions or exclamations of surprise

_ Expression of personal happiness (I'm so happy)

_ Assessing the situation positively (Great)

_ Requesting for general information saying (Why didn't you inform me; Are you satisfied now?)

_ Asking specific questions about the identity of spouse (Why did you marry?)

_ Offer of good wishes (God willing; be successful; become prosperous)

_ Use of jokes (Now you have got married, why did you marry one guy/ girl?)

_ Expression of personal happiness

Regarding positive politeness strategies, they used the following:

_ Giving gift to the listener (congratulation; well-done)

_ Exaggeration (Great)

_ In- group language (Very good; you've got married)

_ Jokes (Give or ask for a reason; why didn't you let me know?)

_ Safe topic (Congratulations but it was better if you wouldn't get married)

_ Use of address forms (My darling)

Can (2011) investigates email congratulation messages sent by Turkish university students. She concludes differences were observed among those messages depending on the topic and gender of the exchanged congratulations. Her study does not deal with congratulations specifically exchanged on weddings.

Pishghadam and Moghaddam (2011) carry out a cross – cultural study to examine the difference between congratulation strategies between the English and the Parisian people according to semantic formulas (e.g. mentioning the occasion, expressing feeling, and divine statement). The researchers make use of Elwood's (2004) classification of the congratulation strategies with an amendment. They removed the overlapping strategies. The sample consisted of (100) movies; half of them were English and the other half Parisian. Results show that there were differences between the two language utterances in the areas of mentioning the occasion, expressing feelings, and divine statements, on the one side. On the other side, there were no differences in the areas of complimenting, offering congratulation and blessing wish.

The least used category for English speakers was divine comments. This finding demonstrates Western secular values. In this regard, Berry et al. (2002, p. 63) maintain that " English speaking countries are intermediate on secular and high on self-expressive values". Thus, culture plays a pivotal role in congratulation and other traditions. However, Persian speakers tended to use less self-expressive comments, but English speakers showed more self-enhancement which expressed their attitudes (Schwartz &Sagiv, 1995).

The previous study is a cross – cultural one, whereas the current study deals with only one culture, the Syrian culture. Moreover, the sample was taken from movies in the previous study, whereas the sample is taken from Syrians dwelling in Jordan.

Dastjerdi and Nasri (2012), using a discourse completion test (DCT) as a tool of four situations, examine a sample of 48 Americans, 50 Persians, and 44 Syrian Arabic native speakers who were asked to fill it in supplying congratulation strategies and expressions in different situations. The researchers also investigate the content of semantic formulas and their shifts according to the hearer's status.

The findings indicate several differences and similarities among the three groups. The most frequently used formula was that of IFID of the offer of good wishes. Arabs used fewer questions asking for information and Persians asked the most, but Americans

held the middle position. Arabs and Persians had two semantic formulas, <u>self-related comments</u> and <u>joking</u> which were not used by Americans.

Results also show that Americans did not use any <u>expression of happiness</u>. Arabs were the only group who used <u>humor</u>. Arabs used the formula of <u>asking for sweets</u>, but Persians used it very infrequently, and the American group did not use it at all.

The three groups used the <u>IFID</u>; Arabs and Persians frequently used the formula of the <u>offer of good wishes</u>, but the Americans used the <u>request for information</u>. Arabs' and Persians' use of <u>offer of good wishes</u> is related to their culture and religion. They are Muslims; thus, offering good wishes by asking God's blessings is a religious value deeply rooted in Islam which is always observed and practiced by Muslims.

With regard to the shift of semantic formulas, the three groups used the <u>IFID</u>, the most frequent semantic formula.Arabs have culturally specific expressions for <u>offer of good wishes</u>. For example, Syrian Arabs say " If God wishes, I hope you would have good children; If God wishes, I hope you would have good sons". Arabs having a son is better than their having a daughter since sons help their fathers; sons are considered a source of income.

Ghaemi and Ebrahimi (2014) study the speech act of congratulation as used by a sample of 50 Persian subjects (26 men and 24 women) who completed a discourse completion test. The results indicate that the Persian participants' congratulation expressions fall into three patterns: illocutionary force indicating device, expression of happiness, and best wishes.

Sawalmeh (2014) examines the written invitations in Jordanian wedding parties practiced by Muslims and Christians. Data were collected by a questionnaire and responses were analyzed. Results show that the invitations of both Muslims and Christians are systematic and are affected by social, economic, and religious factors.

The study above sheds light on the difference in the wedding invitation cards between Muslims and Christians in the Jordanian society. Moreover, the researcher imposed the responses on the respondents; he did not give the respondents the chance of identifying their feelings and viewpoints. However, the current one sheds light on the terms and strategies that are used in the Syrians' wedding parties.

Mehdipour et al. (2015) argue that traditional orientation, religious affiliation, masculine power and educational status affected wedding invitations in the USA and Iranian societies. The results also focus on sociocultural forces controlling both Iranian and American societies.

Both studies, the previous and the current ones, deal with wedding parties. Yet the previous study sheds light on factors influencing card invitations, but the current one is concerned with the congratulation strategies.

Al-Shboul and Huwari(2016) look upon both the congratulation strategies used by a sample of 30 Jordanian EFL learners and the type of positive politeness strategies of the congratulation speech act. Collecting data by an adopted version of discourse completion test, the researchers analyze the data referencing Brown and Levinson's

(1987) positive politeness strategies as used by Jordanians EFL postgraduate students in wedding parties. The findings show that offering good wishes and expressions of happiness were the most frequently used strategies of congratulations, and that giving gifts to listeners, exaggerations, and in-group identity markers were the most frequently used positive politeness strategies. The results show the cultural norms and values of the participants that should be considered by communicative interactants.

Marzouk (2017) investigates the wedding ceremony of Syrian refugees after fleeing their hometown in Syria. She states that Syrian refugees celebrate weddings and the joy and happiness of their weddings with sadness. The bride and groom feel sad for the absence of their parents, siblings and friends who might be living in another country. Refugees feel lonely, foreigners and strangers. These refugees, getting married, feel that they are deprived of joy and happiness because of the fleeing and fight conflict back home, but they get compensated for other opportunities like marriage.

Al-Zubaidi (2017) studies the genre of Iraqi wedding invitation cards, their textual and visual components and the effect of sociocultural norms and assumptions on the production of those components. Analyzing 250 wedding invitation cards , the researcher found that Iraqi cards vary in their non-linguistic features like printed forms, colors and calligraphy, and that the organization structure of these cards was greatly affected by Islamic religious beliefs and Iraqi sociocultural norms and values.

Joseph and Alexander (2018) carry out a study to cross-linguistically investigate wedding practices and bridal motivations in the Southern culture of America and the Keralite culture of India. They look upon the cross-cultural divergences and/or commonalities between the American and Indian cultures. Findings indicate trends of personalization within the weddings, appropriation of more responsibility by the bride and the groom, existence of consistent stress exchanged for ultimate relief and comfort, and familial involvement.

The literature review shows that there are many scholars who studied congratulations in many societies (e.g., Joseph and Alexander 2018;Al-Zubaidi 2017; Ghaemi and Ebrahimi 2014; Al-Shboul and Huwari 2016: Mehdipour et al.2015; Sawalmeh2014;PishghadamandMoghaddam 2011; Muhanna 2009; and Gebrael 2006), but there has been no study carried out on Syrians' wedding parties practiced by Syrian refugees staying in Jordan. Such a study will fill a gap in related literature.

RESEARCH METHOD

Purpose of the Study

The ultimate goal of the present study is to examine the strategies that are used in Syrians' wedding parties.It follows Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness and Elwood's (2004) classification of the strategies..

The study will try to answer the following question:

- -What are the positive politeness strategies of congratulations used in Syrians' wedding parties?

Significance of the Study

Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) state that research on speech acts is mostly ethnocentric in the sense that most research has examined English varieties. Also, Dastjerdi and Nasri (2012, p. 100) claim that little research has been there "uncovering the types of strategies beyond illocutionary force indicating device which fulfill the function of congratulations in different languages".

Ghaemi and Ebrahimi (2014) think that the speech act of congratulating "is not the focus of attention" by researchers. These quotes manifest that this act is rarely addressed by scholars. It is, thus, believed that this study is highly important because it explores the terminology or expressions of congratulating used in Syrians' wedding parties. Moreover, the study will contribute to knowledge regarding the socio-linguistic statements and positive politeness strategies that are used by the Syrians on wedding occasions. In brief, the present research will add up to the few pieces of research on congratulation patterns and strategies utilized in wedding ceremonies.

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis will be tested:

- Syrians in Jordan use all positive politeness strategies in their wedding parties.

Population

The population of the study are all Syrian refugees dwelling in Irbid governorate in north Jordan. According to EnabBaladi Journal (2018), the number of the Syrian refugees in Irbid governorate is 136,000 refugees.

Sample

The sample of the study consisted of 72Syrian respondents who came from different areas in Syria and dwelled in north Jordan. Half of the sample were males, and the other half females. Sixty responded to a questionnaire and twelve were interviewed.

Data Collection

In this study, face - to - face visits to the respondents who live in Irbid governorate were made. A questionnaire was distributed to those families, requiring them to mention the positive politeness strategies that are used in their wedding parties. Since the respondents are Arabic speakers, the questionnaire was written in Arabic. (See Appendix).

Content Reliability

A test group of ten respondents was chosen to establish the reliability of the research tool. The results for the Father's sample was0.884 and for the Mother's sample was0.845. The results indicate that the test is reliable.

Content-validity

The content of the questionnaire was given to a jury of three linguists from the English Department of Yarmouk University in Jordan. They were kindly requested to judge the

content of the questionnaire; that is, to state whether the research instrument is valid for this study or not. The jury stated that the questionnaire (see Appendix 1) is valid for the purpose of this study.

Data Analysis

Collected data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively to see the most commonly used positive politeness strategies by Syrians in their wedding parties. An interpretation of the responses to each question was made according to the positive politeness strategies based on the version of positive politeness strategies by Elwood (2004). The questionnaire had 14 questions distributed to the 60 male and female participants that were visited and kindly asked to point out congratulation patterns used in their wedding ceremonies in the light of the following positive politeness strategies measured by the number of the questionnaire items next to them:

1. Congratulations: 1, 8;

2. Expression of happiness: 2, 9;

3. An offer of good wish:3, 10;

4. Request for information:4, 12;

5. Ask for Sweets: 5, 11;

6. Self-related comments: 6, 13;

7. Joke: 7, 14.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to the Syrians who are dwelling in north Jordan. It sheds light on the positive politeness strategies that are used in the Syrian wedding parties, and will not deal with any other parties.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researchers try to investigate the politeness strategies that are used in Syrians' weddings parties as classified by Elwood (2004).

Illocutionary force indicating device (IFID)

Congratulation phrases are considered one of the major strategies in wedding parties. Table (1) shows the results:

Table 1. Illocutionary force indicating device (IFID)

		Sample			
		Male sample		Female sample	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Q1: I congratulate the bridegroom by saying: Thousandthousand congratulations (Alf Alfmabrook).	Always	25	80%	26	87%
	Often	3	10%	3	10%
	Sometimes	2	7%	1	3%
	Rarely	0	0%	0	0%
	Never	0	0%	0	0%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%
Q 8: I congratulate the bridegroom by saying: I came to congratulate and ask God to bless you (jeenanhanniwimbarik)	Always	28	93%	28	93%
	Often	1	3%	2	7%
	Sometimes	1	3%	0	0%
	Rarely	0	0%	0	0%
	Never	0	0%	0	0%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%

In two questions of the questionnaire that were directed to see how Syrians congratulate, either the bride or the bridegroom, the majority of the male and female respondents showed positive results. On the male side, 80% and 93% of the respondents positively answered questions 1 and 8. On the female side, positive results were also shown for both questions with 87%, and 93% on the two questions.

This finding lends support to that of Dastjerdi and Nasri (2012) who found that their English, Arabic, and Persian subjects used the IFID to express congratulations. Also, our finding is similar to that of Allami and Nekuuzadeh (2011) who also found that Iranians utilized this device. Further, Syrians used Elwood's (2004) suggested strategy of the IFID congratulation.

Expression of happiness

It is another strategy that can be used in parties such as wedding. Table (2) shows the results for questions (2 and 9) as follows:

Table 2. Expression of happiness

		Sample			
		Male sample		Female sample	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Q2: I show the bridegroom that I am happy for his marriage by saying: we are happy for you (frehnalak).	Always	5	17%	6	20%
	Often	24	80%	22	73%
	Sometimes	1	3%	2	7%
	Rarely	0	0%	0	0%
	Never	0	0%	0	0%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%
Q9: I participate in the party and participate in the songs and dances.	Always	5	17%	2	7%
	Often	2	7%	1	3%
	Sometimes	16	53%	20	67%
	Rarely	5	17%	5	17%
	Never	2	7%	2	7%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%

Responding to this strategy, when asked about showing the bride/ bridegroom that the respondent is happy for his/ her marriage, males and females showed positive results answering the second question with 80% of the choice " often" for male, 73% for the female, and with 0% for the negative choices " rarely" and " never". Responding to the ninth question, respondents showed less interest in participating in songs and dances although the results were positive. For males, the result was 53%, whereas for females it was 67%. The results also showed some negative responses for both genders; 17% males answered " rarely", and 7% females answered " never ".Other studies have already arrived at this strategy of expressing happiness to the brides (e.g., Elwood 2004;Pishghadam & Moghaddam 2011; Joseph &Alexander 2018;Allami&Nekuuzadeh 2011;Marki-Tsilipakon 2011; Emery 2000).

An offer of good wishes

It is a strategy that is used in wedding parties. Table three shows the results of the items measuring this strategy:

Table 3. An offer of good wishes

		Sample			
		Male sample		Female sample	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Q3: I tell the bridegroom happy wishes by saying: hope you luxury and children (bilrafahiwaalbaneen).	Always	26	87%	27	90%
	Often	3	10%	3	10%
	Sometimes	1	3%	0	0%
	Rarely	0	0%	0	0%
	Never	0	0%	0	0%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%
Q10: I bring gifts to the bridegroom.	Always	27	90%	29	97%
	Often	1	3%	1	3%
	Sometimes	2	7%	0	0%
	Rarely	0	0%	0	0%
	Never	0	0%	0	0%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%

The table shows that respondents from both genders are concerned with giving good wishes to the two brides. 87% males and 90% females wished the couples good wishes. The respondents' good wishes seem to be enhanced by their answers to question 10. 90% of the male respondents and 97% of the femalesbring gifts to the two brides. The results confirm that this strategy is highly regarded in the Syrian society. Syrians' wishing good wishes and presenting gifts to the brides are similar to the respondents of Dastjerdi and Nasri (2012, p.100) who used the formula of the offer of good wishes when they exchanged the speech act of congratulation `across cultures. Similarly, the subjects of the present study are like those of Allami and Nekuuzadeh (2011) who utilized this strategy of offering good wishes and giving gifts to brides. Moreover, the result of this study of offering good wishes and gift giving supports the same findings arrived at by Garibova and Blair (1999), Emery (2000), and Marki-Tsilipako (2001).

Request for information

The researchers try to examine this strategy in the wedding parties. Table (4) shows respondents' answers to the questions measuring this strategy.

Table 4. Request for information

		Sample			
		Male sample		Female sample	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Q4: I ask special information by saying how the engagement time was (kaifkanetalkhutoobeh)?	Always	2	7%	2	7%
	Often	3	10%	3	10%
	Sometimes	5	17%	3	10%
	Rarely	3	10%	3	10%
	Never	17	57%	19	63%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%
Q12: During congratulation, I ask him: how did you get married so fast?.	Always	1	3%	0	0%
	Often	1	3%	1	3%
	Sometimes	6	20%	4	13%
	Rarely	2	7%	2	7%
	Never	20	67%	23	77%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%

The table shows that respondents are not used to asking the two brides about special information. Question four shows that both genders do not like to go deeper in the relationship between the two brides. It is found that 7% males and 7% females ask such questions; however, the table shows that 57% males and 63% females do not like to ask private or special questions. Responding to question number 12 shows that both sides do not like to ask the two brides such private questions: 67% males and 77% females answered "never". The 0% and 3% (negative responses) confirm that both sides try to avoid such questions for the two brides.The finding of the present study of not asking the brides questions or asking for information is contrary to Allami and Nekuuzadeh's (2011) Iranian subjects who requested for general information saying "Why didn't you inform me? Are you satisfied now?" and who asked questions about the spouse's identity. However, the present study lends support to the congratulation strategy suggested by Elwood (2004) of asking for information.

Ask for Sweets

Normally, in parties, sweets are presented to guests. While taking sweets, guests start to give wishes. What if the sweets are not presented to a guest, table five shows how respondents react to this situation in addition to giving wishes:

Table 5. Ask for Sweets

		Sample			
		Male sample		Female sample	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Q5: I ask for the dessert if I do not get it.	Always	0	0%	0	0%
	Often	0	0%	0	0%
	Sometimes	2	7%	3	10%
	Rarely	15	50%	14	47%
	Never	13	43%	13	43%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%
Q11: I give happy wishes by saying: we wish to congratulate you when your son comes.	Always	25	83%	27	90%
	Often	3	10%	3	10%
	Sometimes	2	7%	0	0%
	Rarely	0	0%	0	0%
	Never	0	0%	0	0%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%

Respondents tend not to ask for sweets if they are not served. Both sides responded negatively for asking for sweets: 50% and 43% males said "rarely" and "never", respectively, but 47% and 43% females said "rarely and never", respectively. The zero percentage on both sides answering this question means that this community is so polite and shy to ask for desserts. Nevertheless, respondents showed that they (83 % males and 90 % females) are active in giving good wishes. Though the subjects of the present study wish the brides good wishes, they do not ask for sweet. Syrians' not asking for sweet contradictsDastjerdi and Nasri (2012) who found that their Syrian Arabs used the strategy of asking for sweets and that Persian speakers used it very infrequently.

Self-related comments

Sometimes the strategy of giving wishes to the guest himself is used in the wedding context. Table six shows the results:

Table 6. Self-related comments

		Sample			
		Male sample		Female sample	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Q6: I comment with comments special for me by saying: hope I will get married (ugbalindi).	Always	1	3%	1	3%
	Often	3	10%	3	10%
	Sometimes	15	50%	17	57%
	Rarely	5	17%	3	10%
	Never	6	20%	6	20%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%
Q13: I comment by saying: I will follow you and get married.	Always	1	3%	3	10%
	Often	1	3%	2	7%
	Sometimes	2	7%	2	7%
	Rarely	23	77%	21	70%
	Never	3	10%	2	7%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%

Respondents showed some edging results in this strategy. 13% of both sides responded positively to question number six " always and often"; 50% of males and 57% of females answered "sometimes", whereas 37% males answered " rarely" and "never", and 30% of females gave the same answers. In the confirming question number 13, 78% males and 77% females answered" rarely and never". The results above mean that the Syrian society denies itself in the previous strategy.This is contrary to Dastjerdi and Nasri's (2012) finding which reveals that Syrian Arabs made different comments like "If God wishes, you would have good righteous children; and I hope that your sons will get married".

Joke

Jokes are used on several occasions, but whether they are used in Syrians' wedding parties or not, table (7) shows the results:

Table 7. Joke

		Sample			
		Male sample		Female sample	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Q7: I make joke and say: it would have been better if you did not get married (law ma tzwajetahsanlak).	Always	0	0%	0	0%
	Often	0	0%	0	0%
	Sometimes	2	7%	0	0%
	Rarely	2	7%	2	7%
	Never	26	86%	28	93%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%
Q14: I make a comment by saying: she kidnapped you from us.	always	1	3%	1	3%
	Often	1	3%	1	3%
	Sometimes	5	17%	3	10%
	Rarely	21	70%	23	77%
	Never	2	7%	2	7%
	Total	30	100%	30	100%

In the table above, two questions were meant to see whether Syrians' wedding parties reveal jokes or not. Answers to question number seven show that respondents from both sides try to avoid joking in wedding parties. 86% of males answered " never", and 93% of females answered "never" too. Answering question number fourteen, both groups of the sample answered" rarely": 70% males and 77% females, whereas both genders' answers were 7% for the choice " never". Those results show that in wedding parties, Syrians tend to avoid the strategy of joking with the two brides. This result is opposed to the finding of other studies carried out by Elwood (2004), Allami and Nekuuzadeh (2011), and Dastjerdi and Nassri (2012) that show that joking is a strategy practiced in wedding ceremonies.

In addition to data obtained by means of the questionnaire, one of the researchers had the chance of meeting with other twelve Syrians and talked about wedding congratulations that they normally practice. They maintained that though they were exchanging greetings, looking happy, and wishing the brides pleasant, joyful and prosperous life full of righteous, well-mannered offspring, deeply rooted in their minds and hearts, their home had never been forgotten. Further, they said the partaking guests

who participated their sorrow and joy would make it necessary for them to look happy and seem normal. This is the effect or principle that we term *the partaking guests principle*. It means that people are being happy and behaving normally because of the context of situation.

Syrians are eventually forced to leave home to protect their lives, to care for their families, to help them meet their needs, and to work day and night so that they do not ask for alms and for mercy. To put it differently, such homeless people are completely against begging food, money, and the like. As a matter of fact, their behavior on occasions like wedding ceremonies is indicative of feeling nostalgic: they experience a wistful, excessive sentimental yearning for returning home where they truthfully exchange real sincere congratulations that are free of homesickness. That is the happiness and pleasure that they want to restore and recover. That is the sort of life that they are looking forward to so that they can compensate for their provisional loss of joy and freedom.

Weddings are a significant and expressive part of culture deeply rooted in the heritage of a given community. Community members tend to preserve the role of weddings and pass it from one generation to another. It is a reflection of traditions, beliefs and habits which strongly express people's solidarity, intimacy, social bond and favorable attitudes.

The study deals with refugees, Syrian immigrants, that are unwillingly forced to leave their homeland seeking safety and peace. For them, wedding ceremonies constitute one means of not only intermingling with Jordanians, but also a means of preserving and strongly attaching to their heritage which reveals their adherence to their national identity.

Wedding ceremonies fulfill other functions for Syrian refugees in particular and other community members in general. They help them to enhance contact with Jordanians and to become aware of the way of life, norms and social behavior in the host society. Thus, this is a means of getting over or overcoming possible discrimination. Weddings also have psychological significance. Syrians can overcome anxiety and integrate into the Jordanian society. Thus, they feel that they are part of this new host society.

The sample of twelve Syrians that one researcher had interviewed also maintained that weddings protect their families from poverty, violence, loneliness, and possible rape. They viewed ceremonies as a means of escaping frustration, war brutality, and homesickness. They tried to develop euphoria, a feeling of happiness and cheerful excitement. Further, they experienced intrapsychic process whereby they might detach themselves from the loss of home, climate and culture and link and interact with what the host community requires (Parkes, 1988 & Pollock, 1989).

Furthermore, the interviewed Syrians stated that they ought to participate in various cultural events including weddings. Participation would show their insistence on and determination of facing any type of problems. It is a significant device of getting rid of alienation. Thus, a person becomes an affective member of his community and the host community. It achieves solidarity and strengthens integrity and social relationships

among their relatives and friends. In this respect, Joseph and Alexander (2018, p. 12) maintain that

> Weddings within migratory family networks are significant
>
> in bringing together scattered kin to validate the bride and
>
> groom's relationship. The entire family dynamic is brought
>
> together from different contexts to display familialsolidarity.
>
> The entity of family is remembered, celebrated, and grown
>
> through a wedding ceremony.

It is a means against the artificiality and superficiality of relationships that we experience nowadays and that damages the psychic of the society.

Finally, those Syrians' behavior indicates their strength, confidence, insistence on reducing competition, and credence in favorable attitudes. They create trust in the brides that teaches them to strongly encounter challenges that would play a significant role in accepting the *"other"* and in raising children armed with knowledge that would help them eradicate all sorts of problems so that they can live peacefully and achieve prosperity in their respective society.

CONCLUSIONS

The study has revealed many conclusions that show how politeness strategies are used in the Syrians' wedding parties as follows:

1. Syrians use exaggeration in their congratulation strategies during their wedding parties.
2. Syrians express happiness and good wishes for the two brides.
3. Syrians do not try to ask private questions, and they do not ask for sweets if they do not get them, which means that it is a polite society.
4. Syrians ignore themselves by not giving special comments and wishes for themselves.
5. Syrians avoid joking in their wedding parties.
6. There were no gender differences in using politeness strategies.

Politeness strategies are used in the wedding parties all over the world. Each society has its own social values and styles using these strategies. The Syrian society uses some of the strategies and avoid others. The above results supply further evidence that those strategies are universal.

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APPENDICES

Appendix/1 الاستبانة (الذكور)

عزيزي المشارك

يتمثل هدف الاستبانة في فحص استراتيجيات التأدب من خلال المصطلحات المستخدمة في الاعراس السورية . تسأل الاستبانة عن العبارات المستخدمة في تهنئة العروسين. الرجاء عدم كتابة الأسماء؛ سيتم استخدام الإجابات لقصد هذه الدراسة فقط.و تحفظ بسرية تامة ولا تستخدم الاجابات الا لأغراض هذه الدراسة.

ابدا	نادرا	احيانا	غالبا	دائما	التهنئة	ت
					أهنئ العريس واقول له الف مبروك	01
					ابين للعريس انني سعيد بزواجه واقول له فرحنا لك	02
					اتمنى للعريس امنيات سعيدة واقول له بالرفاه والبنين	03
					اطلب من العريس بعض المعلومات الخاصة: كيف كانت الخطبة	04
					اطلب الحلوان ان لم يأت واقول ما تحلينا	05
					أعلقبأمنيات خاصة بي واقول له عقبال عندي	06
					امازح العريس واقول له لو ما تزوجت احسن لك	07
					أهنئ العريس واقول له جينا نبارك ونهنئ	08
					اشارك بالعرس واشارك بالأغاني والدبكة	09
					اجلب الهدايا للعريس	10
					اتمنى امنيات سعيدة واقول له عقبال ما نبارك لك بالولد ان شاء الله	11
					اثناء تقديم المباركة اسأل العريس كيف تزوجت بهذه السرعة	12
					اعلق بالقول انا وراك على الطريق	13
					امازح العريس وأقول له خطفتك منا	14

Appendix/2الاستبانة (الاناث)

اختي المشاركة

يتمثل هدف الاستبانة في فحص استراتيجيات التأدب من خلال المصطلحات المستخدمة في الاعراس السورية . تسأل الاستبانة عن العبارات المستخدمة في تهنئة العروسين. الرجاء عدم كتابة الأسماء؛ سيتم استخدام الإجابات لقصد هذه الدراسة فقطو تحفظ بسرية تامة ولا تستخدم الاجابات الا لأغراض هذه الدراسة.

ت	التهنئة	دائما	غالبا	احيانا	نادرا	ابدا
01	أهنئ العروس واقول لهاالف مبروك					
02	ابين للعروس انني سعيد بزواجها واقول لها فرحنا لك					
03	اتمنى للعروس امنيات سعيدة واقول لها بالرفاه والبنين					
04	اطلب من العروس بعض المعلومات الخاصة: كيف كانت الخطبة					
05	اطلب الحلوان ان لم يأت واقول ما تحلينا					
06	أعلق بأمنيات خاصة بي واقول لها عقبال عندي					
07	امازح العروس واقول لها لو ما تزوجتياحسن لك					
08	أهنئ العروس واقول لها جينا نبارك ونهنئ					
09	اشارك بالعرس واشارك بالأغاني والدبكة					
010	اجلب الهدايا للعروس					
011	اتمنى امنيات سعيدة واقول لها عقبال ما نبارك لك بالولد ان شاء الله					
012	اثناء تقديم المباركة اسأل العروس كيف تزوجت بهذه السرعة					
013	اعلق بالقول انا وراك على الطريق					
014	امازح العروس وأقول لها خطفتيه منا					