Sociolinguistic Study Of Cultural Effects On Speech Acts In The South And West Of Saudi Arabia Community

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the speech act of welcoming unexpected guests in the Hijaz and Al-Janoub communities in Saudi Arabia. Discourse Completion Task (DCT) is adopted to gather the required data, where all the questions are open-ended questions. The study investigates how the gender of the host/guest affects the welcoming speech act of an unexpected guest and what strategies contribute to welcoming an unexpected guest in Hijaz and Al-Janoub areas. It also focuses on the significant impact of religious values among Saudis. Selected coding schemes of Ebrahimi, Pirbabaei and Mehrabad (2015), Al-Zubaidi (2012), Setin (2018), and Allami (2012) are utilized for the data analysis of this study. The results show that both of the above communities, whether males or females, accept unexpected guests. It has been revealed that language, gender, and religion have a great impact on the results of this study. The majority of the female participants opt out of communicative patterns that show rejection to welcoming strange or relative males in some situations where they are visited by a strange male or relative from the opposite sex while they are alone at home.

Keywords Sociolinguistics, Hijazi, Al-Janoub, welcoming speech act, unexpected guest.

1. Introduction

Language and culture are inseparable. They are always part of the community lifestyle. The co-evolution of genes and culture has a significant impact on human development. As a result, language is viewed as a means of human communication that is inextricably linked to cultural influences (Feller, 2007). It is very important to emphasize gender and age because it is a big factor in welcoming guests. To comprehend the various greetings in any region, it is necessary to have a closer look at the accent and the phrases that are commonly used there.

Language and identity are related to each other, and culture is known as a person's tradition, the way of living their lives with their own norms and rules. According to Tylor (1871), culture includes all the acquired knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, and customs of a person living in a society. Moreover, Su Kim (2003) indicates that "without culture, language cannot exist" (1). So, we can recognize the identity of people by their languages, dialects, and norms.

Speech acts are related to sociolinguistics because they are all about interactions with people from different cultures and with different norms. Austin (1962) emphasizes that speech acts are not only for expressing information, but for performing actions as well. For example, it is considered a speech act if people react to the request with some help when someone says, "Can you help me." This shows that the person needs help and the other person will react and help him/her.

Everyday, people produce speech acts while they are speaking, such as apologizing, greeting, and requesting. All these are types of speech acts go through the five categories that Searle (1985) has established. These are representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations.

Welcoming speech acts encounter some of these categories. For instance, the representatives are committing the speaker to the truth-value of propositions such as assertions, statements, claims, hypotheses, descriptions, and suggestions. On the other hand, directives try to get the addressee to do something, like commands, requests, and challenges. Welcoming speech acts may include both directives and representatives. We welcome someone by offering someone to join the group or by requesting to enter their home. However, the welcoming speech act is a wide field of study, and it is as greeting speech act.

The meaning of "welcoming" is "behaving in a polite or friendly way toward a guest or

new arrival" (Online, Oxford Dictionary). Certain rules can be used by a speaker in order to communicate with other people effectively and to avoid miscommunication (Alfaleh, 2019). Also, the choice of words that are made by the intercalants plays an important role, which may be considered polite or impolite depending on the situation, relationship, and culture.

Arabs seem inclined to show politeness when greeting one another by using religious vocabulary and giving religious praise (Bouchara, 2015).

In Saudi Arabia, welcoming guests can be a huge part of culture, is affected by traditions, and differs from one region to another. Before Arab people host their guests, they prepare the house by cleaning it and tidying it up. They make some coffee and desserts, and they dress up nicely.

Furthermore, Hijaz is the western region of Saudi Arabia, bordered on the west by the Red Sea and the east by the Najd region. Centuries ago, it has been ruled by different empires, thus causing different dialects, traditions, and norms from the rest of the countries. It is influenced by Islam; people are following the instructions of this religion. When people invite someone for a coffee, it is not considered just a coffee offering. Moreover, these norms are spread all over the kingdom's regions. For instance, in the southern region of Saudi Arabia, which is called Al-Janoub, Islam is reflected in both areas — how the hosts are welcoming and honoring the guests.

In Saudi Arabia, people use different words and phrases to refer to things or certain acts depending on their region. For instance, in the South of Saudi Arabia, welcoming speech act is different from that of Hijaz (West of Saudi Arabia) or Al-Janoub (South of Saudi Arabia). In Al-Janoub, people are known for their generosity and good treatment of guests. They usually welcome their guests by saying "اقلط \ āqlṭ \ or "ارحبوا \ ārḥbw\, which means "you are welcome, come in," while in Hijaz people may say "اتفضل \ ātfḍḍal \ or "اهلا و سهلا \ \āhln w shln\ "come in' or "you are most welcome.' Both of them are known for their generosity and good treatment of guests.

This study paves the way for social situations: how to practice language to convey a social meaning; how society and language affect each other; and how individuals understand the meaning behind these actions. This research also investigates the influence of gender on the way they convey the appropriate sociolinguistic speech act of welcoming guests in the Hejazi and Al-Janoub communities.   Linguistic resources

and strategies are used to carry out speech acts to vary significantly from one culture to another, according to politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Furthermore, different cultures and languages might vary in their evaluation of the social and related variables which suggest the strategies to be used, like the power of the speakers or the distance between the speakers and the ranking of the imposition resulting from performing the speech act.

2. Significance of the Study

The study recognizes the relationship between culture and welcoming speech acts in Saudi Arabian. Knowing their norms and boundaries will avoid being misunderstood and, at the same time, establish closer social relationships. Moreover, realizing the cultures of others, such as the Hijazi (the West) or Al-Janoub (the South) communities in Saudi Arabia, will profit in an understandable social communication.

The findings of this study will redound to the benefit of sociolinguists in presenting new theoretical views on the discussion of social responses to unexpected guests, especially concerning the speech act of welcoming in Hijazi and Al-Janoub dialects.

3. Objectives of the Study

This study aims to inquire about the influence of the cultural background of Saudi Arabia in the West and South areas, which is reflected in the responses and reactions of welcoming guests to unexpected events. The objectives of this study are as follows:

1) To identify the appropriate strategies regarding the speech act of welcoming an unexpected guest in Al-Hijaz and Al-Janoub regions.

2) To investigate how the gender of the host/guest affects the response to the welcoming speech act.

4. Questions of the Study

1) What are the strategies contributing to the welcoming of an unexpected guest in Al-Hijaz and Al-Janoub communities?

2) In what way does the gender of the host/guest affect the welcoming of an unexpected guest?

5. Review of Literature

Many studies examine different speech acts such as greetings, requesting, or offerings. This research focuses on the speech act of welcoming. Therefore, this part will deal with some literature reviews to help the reader understands how the types of speech acts

are relevant. For instance, hospitality, greetings, and studies of Saudi norms and culture are included.

Brown and Levinson's model of politeness is applied to an Arabic context by Al-Ageel (2016) to describe polite behavior and speech acts of requesting in Saudi Arabia. In order to gain a better understanding of cultural aspects, he focuses on the impact of social variables on the listener's gender, social distance, and power status among young Saudi women. The study examines variances between two generations of Saudi women and the consideration of social rules according to age and religious values. The researcher uses a role-play interview with five different scenarios. The total number of participants is 50, divided into two equal groups by age difference. The results show Saudis prefer to use positive politeness strategies. Furthermore, the social status effect of the hearer's gender is most visible in distant relationships, as evidenced by a preference for negative politeness or opting out strategies.

In some verses of the Glorious Qur'an, Rabee (2017) investigates the socio-pragmatic functions of greetings. Within the context of Austin and Searle's speech act, he studies Qur'anic greetings. The data is gathered by collecting and translating 33 greetings from the Glorious Qur'an. Following that, these utterances are classified and analyzed using Qur'anic exegesis. The information is separated into three categories: addresser, addressee, and occasion. The findings show that Qur'anic greetings are significant and meaningful, with socio-pragmatic meanings that include polite functions like praising, honoring, welcoming, requesting, carrying glad tidings, appreciating, honorable mention, rich reward, reassurance, establishing friendship and closeness between strangers, generating mutual love, and a sense of cohesion.

Moradi (2017) looks into the sociolinguistic aspects of greetings in Persian and English, as well as the differences between expressive and productive greetings. The aspects of language depend on cultural influence. The descriptive sociolinguistic analysis of the greeting speech act and style is the focus of this paper. A questionnaire, observation, and interviews are used by the researcher to collect data. The participants are teachers and students from the same high school in Kermanshah. The researchers conduct descriptive and statistical analysis on a variety of video and audio materials. The findings show that social contexts have an impact on expressing the speech act of greeting in both Persian and English, and each language has its own quirks and even

some similarities with the other.

Meiirbekov, Elikbayev, and Temirbaev (2015) investigate the sociolinguistic aspects of the greeting speech act and its differences in expressing or producing forms of greeting in Kazakh and English. Data collection methods include a questionnaire, observation, interview, introspection, and statistical analysis. Participants are students at the International Kazakh-Turkish University Kazakhstan. The materials being analyzed include real-life Kazakh greetings and audiovisual internet greetings. The findings show that social contexts influence how people express the speech act of greeting in both Kazakh and English, and that each language has its own quirks as well as some similarities.

Almegren (2017) compares the greeting speech acts of native Arabic speakers from Saudi Arabia and native English speakers from the United States. He collects data using a personal information questionnaire and a discourse completion test, which allows him to easily determine the speech of a group of respondents based on their reactions to various situations. He has chosen only female respondents in order to obtain detailed and specific information. He chooses 100 female students from Penn State University in the United States and Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University in Saudi Arabia, all between the ages of 20 and 25. Half of them are native English speakers from the United States, and the rest are native Arabic speakers from Saudi Arabia. The study's findings reveal both similarities and differences between Arabic and English speakers. The use of an oral greeting strategy and the use of terms of address and initiation words are examples of these similarities. The conclusion is based on the previous data, which shows that oral strategies are used similarly across groups, with differences in the use of other strategies. The researcher also discovers that the social state has an impact on greeting strategy selection.

Altalhi (2014) investigates the Hijazi dialect's thanking speech act and the strategies used by Hijazi females in Saudi Arabia. She gathers data by recording information on a card during everyday interactions with females in order to observe naturally occurring thanking and responses to thanking in Hijazi dialect speaking. She gets responses from 400 people, some of whom are related to her and others who are strangers, and they come from all over the world. Discourse completion tasks, interviews, and field observation are among her data collection methods. As a result, depending on the type

of benefit, Hijazi females employ various strategies.

O'Gorman (2007) examines the emerging paradigm of hospitality studies and discovers that it lacks a coherent philosophical foundation. The review of philosophical concepts is set within three perspectives in order to examine and critically evaluate the possibility of the construct of a philosophy of the phenomenon of hospitality: individual moral philosophy, hospitality and nation-states, and hospitality and language. This paper demonstrates that critical analysis is more important than unquestioning acceptance of philosophical theorists' views. Although reading Derrida and others' writings provides insight into the phenomenon of hospitality, a coherent philosophy of hospitality remains elusive, possibly because hospitality is not a matter of objective knowledge.

Shirazi (2018) employs the concept of hospitality to investigate how educational practices contribute to the formation of citizens. The information comes from an ethnographic case study conducted in 2013–2014. The findings investigate the conditionality of hospitality by presenting three recurring boundary-drawing techniques: questioning belonging, conditioning speech, and conditioning space. These hospitality techniques demonstrate how schools are designed to be welcoming places, the terms on which the welcome is extended, and how the imperative to be welcoming itself may work to reinforce rather than dispel hierarchies of membership.

Grainger et al. (2015) investigate the traditional linguistic practices used in daily hospitality situations. Instead of focusing on the differences between how people in these two cultures make offers, they compare offers in Arabic and English. Instead of focusing on similarities between the ways offers are made, the argument goes; we should focus on differences because no two cultural/linguistic groups have ever been diametrically opposed. Furthermore, no linguistic or cultural group can be said to be homogeneous. They investigate the nature and sequencing of offering and receiving hospitality in each cultural community, as well as the extent to which it offers, through a detailed analysis of four naturally occurring hospitality encounters. While there are similarities in offering behavior in both English and Arabic, the interactional moves of insisting and refusing are slightly more conventionalized, according to a qualitative analysis of the data. This does not, however, represent a significant difference in the offerings and norms of these two cultural groups. The results show the differences between Arabic and English, where the same elements appear in both languages, but

at different stages of the interaction.

Cetin and Okumus (2018) study tourists' perceptions of local hospitality and propose a typology of Turkish hospitality based on international tourists' perspectives. Semi-structured interviews are used to gather data. Tourists visiting Istanbul are among the participants. The content of interview transcripts has been analyzed and coded under various themes that define local hospitality. According to the research findings, there are 64 items that describe local Turkish hospitality. These are classified into four categories: sociability, care, helpfulness, and generosity.

Mansor (2017) conducts research on politeness and hospitality in Libyan society in order to investigate the attitudes and beliefs underlying Libyan Arabic linguistic practice. The data are gathered through an audio recording of nine different groups of people ranging in age from 28 to 49 years old, and the interviews have been taken place at the host's home or workplace. The conversation is informal, and the participants are not informed of the nature of the interview in order to encourage spontaneous interaction. The audio recording lasts approximately 49:32 minutes. According to the study's findings, Libyans prefer nonverbal behaviors such as smiling or warm greetings. The nonverbal behavior is intended to make the guest feel at ease with the host. They even put it ahead of food.

Alqarni (2017) investigates young Saudis' lack of awareness of the use of compliments and compliment responses. A discourse completion test with 12 open-ended statement situations is used. The participants are 80 Saudis, 40 males and 40 females ranging in age from 18 to 25. They are all university students learning English as a second language. According to the data, compliments are heavily influenced by the social need not to offend the other person. Furthermore, there is no gender difference in compliment types. The only difference is that females tend to compliment more than males.

Politeness in requests, according to Said (2011), is a communication strategy that the speaker employs to achieve specific goals; levels vary depending on the situation. The information is gathered from 60 people, 32 of whom are female and 28 of whom are male, using a discourse completion test questionnaire. They are asked to respond to five different situations in which they perform the speech act of request using their native dialect. They are all in the same age range, ranging from 30 to 45 years old, because strategies differ depending on age. The study's findings show that when the

social distance or social rank between the requester and the requestee is significant, participants prefer indirect strategies and negative politeness over other strategies. When interacting with a peer, they use direct strategies and positive politeness.

Alqarawi (2018) investigates the differences in formality, social status, and scale directness in forming a request or a refusal between Saudi Arabic learners of English and American English speakers. Discourse completion task and role-play are the most common methods for gathering data. This study involves 30 Saudi and American graduate students, both males and females. According to the software, they spend an average of 20 minutes answering all 12 role-plays and save 88 responses, 15 of which are from American speakers and 30 from Saudis. The end result reveals the complexities of social interactions, politeness, and facial expressions.

6. Methodology

In this section of the study, the researcher discusses the data collection, the participants, and the code scheme for analyzing the data.

6.1 Data Collection

The data for this study is collected by means of an online Discourse Completion Test (DCT) consisting of seven different social situations. According to Kasper (1992), discourse completion tests are "written questions including a number of brief descriptions, followed by a short dialog with an empty slot for the speech act under study" (221). The questionnaire is used to analyze the participants' performance of the welcoming speech act. The data is collected from Hijazi and Al-Janoub's male and female speakers. The participants are asked to imagine themselves in each unexpected situation and write down genuine answers they would naturally give, using their own dialect in each situation. The situations differ in terms of reaction to the opposite gender, social relations, and the time of the visit in order to collect correct data. The participants are also asked to send it to a friend or a family member who lives in the region after finishing the test.

6.2 Participants

A total of 181 Hijazi and 152 Al-Janoub people have contributed to this research. The participants of the first group are native Hijazi speakers living in the western province of Saudi Arabia. The corpus consists of 86 males and 95 females. Moreover, the second group is native Al-Janoub speakers living in the southern area of Saudi Arabia. The

corpus consists of 75 males and 77 females. Their ages vary from 20 to 50, but 60% are from the age group of 20 to 30 years old. The distribution of the questionnaire is done online.

6.3 Data Analysis

This research selects some techniques and code schemes of greeting strategies of Ebrahimi and Pirbabaei (2015), apology strategies of Al-Zubaidi (2012), and offering strategies of Allami (2012). The classification of the types of greeting, offering, and apologizing speech acts are shown below:

Table 1. Selective Strategies of Welcoming Speech Act

Strategies	Sub-Strategies	
Greeting	a.	Greeting the person who comes
	b.	Humanize the entrance
	c.	Prayers
	d.	Ask for reasons
Offering	a.	Generosity
	b.	Request to come into home
Apologizing	a.	Expressing apology
	b.	Expressing embarrassment
Others	a.	Expressing pleasure
	b.	Expressing surprise
	c.	Expressing uneasiness
	d.	Non-response
	e.	Thanking
	f.	Avoiding the existence of the guest

7. Results of the Study

In this part of the study, the researcher concentrates on the results regarding the responses of the participants. The strategies below show various responses presented by the two groups in the two regions of Saudi Arabia (males and females).

7.1 Results of Situation 1

Below is the analysis result of responses for situation 1:

You are at home with your family at dinner time, and a neighbor knocks at the door, bringing with him/her a plate of food. What would you say?

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Saudis use different strategies to express greeting and welcoming speech act. It is evident in the data that the highest strategy used by male participants is "request to come into home", with 34.88%, while female participants prefer to use "thanking' with a high rate of 33.68%. In the second rate for male participants, comes the "thanking' strategy with 25.58%, while females use "prayers' with 29.47%. "Prayers' is another welcoming strategy used that shows gratitude and reflects the influence of Islamic culture, especially in Hijaz.

For instance:

"هلا اطعمكم الله طعام أهل الجنة'

/ halā āṭʿamakum āllah ṭaʿām ʾahl ālğnh/

 "Hello, Allah feeds you of heaven's food.'

"جزاك الله خير"

/ğazāk āllah ẖayr/

 "May Allah reward you."

Table 2. Hijazi Responses of Situation 1

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greeting the person who comes	15	17.44%	22	23.15%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	0	0%
Prayers	9	10.46%	28	29.47%
Ask for reasons	0	0%	0	0%
Tranquility and joy	0	0%	0	0%
Generosity	0	0%	0	0%
Request to come into home	30	34.88%	5	5.26
Expressing apology	0	0%	8	8.42
Expressing embarrassment	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing self-denigration	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing pleasure	10	11.62%	0	0%
Expressing surprise	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing uneasiness	0	0%	0	0%
Non-response	0	0%	0	0%

Thanking		22	25.58%	32	33.68%	
	Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	0	0%	0%

In the data, some of the participants intend to greet the guest directly without prayers. Male participants would like to use the "greeting the person who comes" strategy with 17.44%. Females use this strategy as well (23.15%). They use many words to express greetings, for example:

"يا مرحبا يا فلان اتفضل"

/ yā marḥabā yā flān ātfaḍal/

"Hello my friend, come."

"اتفضل تعشى معنا"

/ātfḍḍal tiˈašā maˈānā/

"Please come and have dinner with us."

Other strategies are also used with a low rate, such as "expressing pleasure" with 11.62% and "prayers" with 10.46% for male participants, while female participants use "expressing apology" with 8.42% and "request to come into home" with 5.26%.

When we look at the responses of Al-Janoub participants to this situation, we find different strategies in the highest as well as lowest rates, as Table 3 shows:

Table 3. Al-Janoub Responses of Situation 1

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greeting the person who comes	17	22.66%	7	9.09%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	4	5.19%
Prayers	14	18.66%	27	35.06%
Ask for reasons	10	13.33%	0	0%
Tranquility and joy	0	0%	0	0%
Generosity	0	0%	0	0%
Request to come into home	22	29.33%	23	29.87%

Expressing apology	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing embarrassment	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing self-denigration	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing pleasure	12	16%	6	7.79%
Expressing surprise	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing uneasiness	0	0%	0	0%
Non-response	0	0%	0	0%
Thanking	0	0%	10	12.98%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	0	0%

The same strategy of "request to come into home" is used at the highest rate by Al-Janoub's male participants as the Hijazi ones, which reflects the males' norms of welcoming guests.

Male participants are expressing their kindness by greeting and offering guests to come into their houses. Offering guests to come in by using words such as:

"أتفضل أو أقلط"

/aqliṭ / or /ātfaḍḍal /

"Come in."

Also, greeting guests using Islamic expressions such as:

"هلا الله يحيكم"

/hala, āllah Yiḥayīkum/

"Welcome, May Allah greet you."

Al-Janoub's reaction to Situation 1 shows the influence of religion. Islam affects people's responses and also culture in Saudi Arabia. Al-Ageel (2016) claims that the use of "a number of religious expressions reflects the profound connection between Saudis and their religious values" (217).

Al-Janoub people use "prayers" strategy, but with different rates. For female participants, the "prayers" strategy comes in the first rate with 35.06%. They use common prayer phrases, such as:

"الله يكثر خيرك "

/ āllah yikaṯṯir xyrak/

"May Allah bless you abundantly."

According to Bajri (2021), invoking the name of Allah in offering meals shows the deep

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gratitude to Allah for all the comfort and provision people enjoy, which is a positive politeness strategy. She says, "[a] genuine acknowledgement that all blessings come from Allah should be manifested through utterances and gestures of politeness not only in words but also in deeds" (p. 169).

In the second rate for male participants comes the strategy of "greeting the person who comes" with 22.66% and then "prayers" with 18.66%. On the other hand, female participants prefer to use "request to come into home" with 29.87% and then "thanking" with 12.98%.

Other strategies are also used in this situation, such as "expressing pleasure" with a percentage of 16% by male participants, while females use the strategy of "greeting the person who comes" with a percentage of 9.09%. There is also evidence of using the strategy of "ask for reason" with 13.33% of male participants, which is considered a strange reaction of Al-Janoub people. Meanwhile, it is only females who use "humanize the entrance" strategy with a percentage of 5.19%. For example:

"البيت نور بجيتكم"

/albeit nauwar biğyatkum/

"The house is brightened because of your coming."

7.2 Results of Situation 2

The participants are asked to respond to the below situation:

You are alone and a strange man knocks at your door. What is the appropriate action you would do and say?

Table 4. Hijazi Responses of Situation 2

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greeting the person who comes	15	17.44%	0	0%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	0	0%
Prayers	0	0%	0	0%
Ask for reasons	30	34.88%	44	46.31%
Tranquility and joy	0	0%	0	0%
Generosity	0	0%	0	0%
Request to come into home	0	0%	0	0%

Expressing apology	16	18.60%	29	30.52%
Expressing embarrassment	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing self-denigration	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing pleasure	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing surprise	0	0%	7	7.36%
Expressing uneasiness	23	26.74%	0	0%
Non-response	2	2.32%	15	15.78%
Thanking	0	0%	0	0%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	0	0%

It is clear from the data that males use various strategies of welcoming speech act. The highest strategy is "ask for reasons" with 34.88%. There are two main factors behind this reaction. First, both the speaker and hearer are of the same gender, and as a result, this establishes some equality between them. Second, Islam urges Muslims to help each other, and this is reflected in the responses. The second strategy that comes in second place is "expressing uneasiness", with 26.74%. A significant number of male participants use "expressing apology" with a percentage of 18.60% and some would like to "greet the person who comes" with 17.44%, which shows that Hijazi people welcome whoever comes to their houses, even strangers.

Moreover, Hijazi females show their reserved upbringing in this situation by following the norms when a strange man visits them. They use different strategies, such as "ask for reasons" with 46.31% and "expressing apology" with 30.52%. Other significant strategies are also used, such as "non –response" with 15.78% and "expressing surprise" with 7.36%.

Female examples of the "non-responding" strategy are as follows:

"لا أرد ولا افتح الباب"

/lā ārd walā āftaḥ ālbāb/

  "I wouldn't answer or open the door."

"ما أرد علي أحد غريب"

/māārd ʿala āḥad ġaryb/

  "I don't answer any stranger."

Nevertheless, as it is mentioned above, there are female participants who would like to use the "ask for reason" strategy, as in the example below:

"تفضل اخوي اي مساعده ابونا ماهو بالبيت"

/tifaḍḍal āxwy āy musāʿadah ābw-nā māhw bi-ālbyt /

 "Hello brother. How can we help? Our father isn't at home."

According to Salameh (2001), females lean towards not responding to the opposite sex because it is considered a social or religious taboo, specifically a strange male. Whereas male participants apply this strategy of "ask for reason" as in the examples below:

"اتفضل كيف اقدر اخدمك"

/ātfaḍḍl kyf āqdar āxdimak/

 "Welcome! How can I help you?"

"اسأل مين وايش يبغى"

/āsāl myn wāyš yabġa/

"Ask who he is and what does he want."

Looking at the responses of Al-Janoub participants, it is clear that 44% of males choose the strategy of "ask for reasons", "greeting the person who comes" with 30.66%, and also "expressing uneasiness" with 25.33%. For female participants, they do not use "greeting the person who comes." Further, they prefer to use more strategies than male participants, such as the "non-response" strategy with 28.5%, followed by the "ask for reasons" strategy with 19.48%. Moreover, 18.18% of females use the strategy of "expressing apology" as Table 5 indicates.

Table 5. Al-Janoub Responses of Situation 2

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greeting the person who comes	23	30.66%	0	0%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	0	0%
Prayers	0	0%	0	0%
Ask for reasons	33	44%	15	19.48%
Tranquility and joy	0	0%	0	0%
Generosity	0	0%	0	0%
Request to come into home	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing apology	0	0%	14	18.18%
Expressing embarrassment	0	0%	0	0%

Strategies	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Expressing self-denigration	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing pleasure	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing surprise	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing uneasiness	19	25.33%	2	2.59%
Non-response	0	0%	22	28.57%
Thanking	0	0%	0	0%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	24	31.16%

The strategies which Al-Janoub females choose are evidence of the norms used in Al-Janoub culture. It is unacceptable that females invite male strangers to their homes, if there is no male relative at home. They either avoid the guest or apologize in a kind way. For example:

"اعذرني مافي محرم"

/āʿḏurny māfy miḥram/

 "I'm sorry, there is no man at home."

7.3 Results of Situation 3

Below is the analysis result of responses to situation 3:

You are at home spending time with your kids, and some relatives knock at the door to visit you, what do you say?

Table 6. Hijazi Responses of Situation 3

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greeting the person who comes	34	39.35%	33	34.73%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	0	0%
Prayers	0	0%	22	23.15%
Ask for reasons	0	0%	4	4.21%
Tranquility and joy	0	0%	0	0%
Generosity	0	0%	0	0%
Request to come into home	38	44.18%	11	11.57%
Expressing apology	0	0%	8	8.42%
Expressing embarrassment	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing self-denigration	0	0%	0	0%

Expressing pleasure	14	16.27%	0	0%
Expressing surprise	0	0%	7	7.36%
Expressing uneasiness	0	0%	10	10.52%
Non-response	0	0%	0	0%
Thanking	0	0%	0	0%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	0	0%

It is reflected in the findings of this situation that a great number of the participants welcome and greet the guests. The researcher finds out that 44.18% of Hijazi males use "request to come into home", while females use it with a low rate of 11.57% when compared to male participants. Further, females prefer to use the strategy of "greeting the person who comes" with 34.73%, while male participants use it with 39.35%. Arab culture, especially Hijazi, has a strong bond with their family and relatives since Islam encourages family kinship. For instance, females greet the guests to come in:

"اهلاً نورتوني حياكم"

/ āhlāͨn nawartuwny ḥayakum/

 "Hello, you illuminated the house, come in."

On the other hand, males greet the guests using various welcoming phrases and invite them to come into their home. For instance:

"مرحبابكم اهلا وسهلا زارتنا البركة"

/marḥbā-bkum āhlān wsahlān zārat-nā ālbaraka/

 "Hello, Welcome, We are blessed by your visit."

The third strategy, which is only used by male participants, is "expressing pleasure" with 16.27%. In contrast, we find out that Hijazi females use more strategies than males, such as "prayers" with 23.15%, "expressing uneasiness" with 10.52%, "expressing apology" with 8.42%, "expressing surprise" with 7.36%, and the final one, "ask for reasons", with a low rate of 4.21%. Examples of Hijazi females expressing apology or uneasiness are as follows:

"حياكم الله بس انا مشغوله قليلا"

/ḥḥāyākum āllah bas ānā mašġwlah qalylān/

 "May Allah greet you, but I'm a little bit busy right now."

Another example such as:

"افتح الباب و اخليهم يدخلو و عادي بس ببين لهم إني مشغوله عشان يفهموا ما يجو غير بموعد! او اسوي أني

كنت طالعه عشان يبطلو دي الحركات و ما يجو من غير موعد لأني إنسانه أحب أرتب وقتي و مواعيدي مو بهذي
العشوائية"

/āftaḥ ālbāb w āxly-hum yudxu-lw w ʿādy bas babayin luhum āinny mašġwlah ʿašān
yifhamw mā yiǧw ġiyr bimawʿid! āw āsawy ānny kint ṭālʿah ʿašān yibaṭṭlw dy ālḥarakāt
w mā yiǧw min ġayr mawʿid liānny āinsānah āḥib ārattib waqty w mawāʿydy mw bihaḏy
ālʿašwāʿiyah/

"I will open the door as usual and let them come inside, but I will show them that I'm
busy, so they will not visit suddenly again without checking with me, because I like to
organize my own time."

These examples clarify the reason behind this strategy that females use to show the
guests that they are busy, and they should have let them know in advance.

Looking at Al-Janoub's responses to this situation, the results in Table 7 below, show
that male participants use only two strategies to welcome their relatives even if they
come at an inappropriate time.

Table 7. Al-Janoub Responses of Situation 3

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greeting the person who comes	29	38.66%	28	36.36%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	13	16.88%
Prayers	0	0%	10	12.98%
Ask for reasons	0	0%	0	0%
Tranquility and joy	0	0%	0	0%
Generosity	0	0%	0	0%
Request to come into home	46	61.33%	20	25.97%
Expressing apology	0	0%	3	3.89%
Expressing embarrassment	0	0%	4	5.19%
Expressing self-denigration	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing pleasure	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing surprise	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing uneasiness	0	0%	0	0%
Non-response	0	0%	0	0%

Thanking	0	0%	0	0%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	0	0%

They prefer to use "greeting the person who comes" with 38.66% and "request to come into home" with 61. 33%. They express greetings by using words like:

"ارحبو"

/ ārḥbw/

"Welcome."

"يا هلا ومرحبا"

/yā halā wmarḥabā/

"Hello and welcome."

The results show that female participants use various strategies in welcoming their relatives. It is clear from the table above that 36.36% of females use the "greeting the person who comes" strategy, which is the most used in this situation, such as:

"مرحبا"

/marḥabā/

"Hello."

Further, some of the female participants prefer to use "humanize the entrance" strategy, such as:

"نور البيت وياهلا ويا مرحبا"

/nawwar ālbyt wiyā hālā wiya marḥaba/

"The house is brightened, hello and welcome."

Another strategy that is used in this situation is "prayers" with 10.98%, such as:

"حياك الله"

/ḥāyak āllah/

"May Allah greet you."

Moreover, there is evidence in which Al-Janoub's female participants show their inconvenienced situation by welcoming relatives at an inappropriate time. They use the strategy of "expressing apology" with 3.89% and "expressing embarrassment" with a percentage of 5.19%.

7.4 Results of Situation 4

Below is the analysis result of responses to situation 4:

Some of your neighbors visit you at an inappropriate time. What would you say?

Table 8. Hijazi Responses of Situation 4

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greeting the person who comes	17	19.76%	31	32.63%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	0	0%
Prayers	0	0%	28	29.47%
Ask for reasons	25	29.06%	5	5.26%
Generosity	0	0%	8	8.42%
Request to come into home	17	19.76%	0	0%
Expressing apology	6	6.97%	9	9.47%
Expressing embarrassment	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing pleasure	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing surprise	21	24.41%	0	0%
Expressing uneasiness	0	0%	14	14.73%
Non-response	0	0%	0	0%
Thanking	0	0%	0	0%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	0	0%

Table 8 shows that both males and females tend to greet their guests. Males use "greeting the person who comes" with 19.76%, while females use it with 32.63%. For example:

"اهلا وسهلا"

/āhlān wsahlān/

"Hello, welcome."

"ارحب به"

/ārḥib-buh/

"I will welcome them."

However, females are more likely to use "prayers" with a percentage of 29.47% showing their intimate relationship with their neighbors. They are decent about giving their guests a warm welcome. For example:

"الله يحييك البيت بيتك"

/āllah yiḥayyik ālbyt bytak /

"May Allah greet you, the house is yours."

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"الله يحيكم"

/āllah yiḥayikum/

  "May Allah greet you."

Unlike females who prefer to use "asking for reasons" with 29.06%, "request to come into home" with 19.76%, and "expressing surprise" with 24.41%. Below are examples of "asking of reasons" strategy:

"هلا والله عسى خير ان شاء الله؟"

/halā wāllah ʿasā ẖyr āin šāʾ āllah/

"Hello, everything is good?"

"اهلين فلان حصل شي ؟"

/āhlyn fulān ḥaṣl šay/

"Hello [name], is everything okay?"

"Expressing surprise" is shown in:

"والله جيتك مفاجئة يا ليت المرة الجاية تبلغني"

/ wāllah ğayatk mufāğʾah yā lyt ālmrah ālğāyah tibalġny/

"I swear to Allah, you surprised me with this visit. I hope next time you'll inform me"

Males" use of "asking for reasons" indicates that they feel dominant and speak with authority. According to Cameron (2007), men use language to get things done, talk about things and facts. The way they use language reflects their general interest in acquiring and maintaining a status. In contrast, female participants use this strategy at a low rate of 5.26%.

Nevertheless, 6.97% of male participants apply the strategy of "expressing apology" such as:

"اعتذر الان مشغول"

/ āʿtaḏir ālān mašġwl/

"My apologies, I'm busy at the moment."

"اسف الوقت غير مناسب"

/ āsif ālwaqt ġayr munāsib/

"I'm sorry, but this is not a good time."

24.41% of male participants use another strategy like "expressing surprise", for instance:

"هلا والله ايش جابك ذحين شكلو معاك مصيبه"

/halā wāllah āyš ğābik ḏaḥyn šaklw maʿāk muṣybh/

"Hello, what is the reason behind this visit at this time? Is there any problem?"

Moreover, 14.73% of the female participants use "expressing uneasiness" as in:

"الافضل لو اعطيتوني خبر"

/ālāfḍal law āˈṭytwny xabar/

 "It would be better if you have informed me of your visit ahead up."

In contrast, male participants never use this strategy.

Although, it is found that 9.47% of female participants use "express apology" indirectly, like in the example below:

" بعرف وش السبب ممكن يكون ظرف طارئ له وإذا كانت مجرد زياره عاديه بعتذر ونخليها بوقت ثاني يناسب الجميع"

/baˈrf wiš ālsabab mumkin yukwn ẓarf ṭārˈi luh wˈiḏā kānat muǧarad ziyārah ˈādyah baˈtiḏir wnxalyhā biwaqt ṯāny yināsib ālǧamyˈ/

"I will know the reason for the visit. It might be an emergency or if it is just a causal visit, then I will ask them to reschedule it at an appropriate time for all of us."

Other female participants prefer to use a direct apology using an excuse, as in:

"أعتذر لكم لكن لا أستطيع إستضافتكم في الوقت الراهن لكن سعيدة برؤيتكم على أية حال"

/āˈtaḏir likum lakin lā āstaṭyˈ āsitiḏāfatkum fy ālwaqt ālrāhin lakin saˈydah birwˈyatikim ˈalā āyaẗ ḥāl/

"My apologies, I can't invite you in at the moment, but I'm glad to see you anyway."

Or showing "generosity" as in:

"سامحوني عندي مشوار كنت بنزل الآن"

/ sāmḥwny ˈindy mišwār kint banzil ālan/

"Sorry, I'm about to leave."

This strategy is used by 8.42% of females. It is considered another sub-strategy of apology, but it shows embarrassment, and at the same time, humbleness.

Also, 12% of females use "expressing uneasiness" such as:

"احييهم و ادخلهم و اضيفهم بس بقلهم انو عندي اشغال"

/ āḥyyihum w ādaxilhum w āḍayifhum bas baqul-luhum ānw ˈindy āšǧāl/

"I will greet them and host them, but I will tell them that I'm busy."

When we look at the responses of Al-Janoub participants, we find that male participants use three welcoming strategies: "greeting the person who comes" with a very high rate of 60%, then "prayers" with 26.66%, and finally "request to come into

home" with 13.33%, as Table 9 indicates.

Table 9. Al-Janoub Responses of Situation 4

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greeting the person who comes	45	60%	31	40.25%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	0	0%
Prayers	20	26.66%	15	19.48%
Ask for reasons	0	0%	5	6.49%
Generosity	0	0%	8	10.38%
Request to come into home	10	13.33%	0	0%
Expressing apology	0	0%	9	11.68%
Expressing embarrassment	0	0%	9	11.68%
Expressing pleasure	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing surprise	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing uneasiness	0	0%	0	0%
Non-response	0	0%	0	0%
Thanking	0	0%	0	0%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	0	0%

In the southern area of Saudi Arabia, the neighborhood is highly respected. The people there live close to each other and know themselves very well, as if they are one family. This structure of Al-Janoub neighborhood urges the participants to react to their neighbors, especially males, using words or phrases to greet them, such as:

"مرحبًا ألف"

/mārḥban ālf

"A thousand welcomes."

Prayers such as:

"يا الله حيهم"

/ya-āllah hayihum/

"May Allah greet you."

هلا الله يحيكم

/hala/ /āllah yiḥayikum/

"Welcome, may Allah greet you."

Or "request to come into home" such as:

"أرحبوا"or"أتفضل" ,"أقلط"

/āqliṭ /, /ātfḍḍal / or /ārḥibu/

"Come in."

When we look at female participants, we find that they use the same greeting and welcoming strategies as their male counterparts, but there are also incidents where they use apology or being embarrassed. From the above Table 4.2, females use "greeting the person who comes" with 40.25%, such as:

"اهلا بكم"

/āhlan bi-kum/

"Welcome."

Moreover, the strategy of "prayers" is also used by 19.45% of females. For instance:

"حياكم الله تفضلوا"

/hayakum āllah atfaddalu/

"May Allah greet you, come in."

Other strategies used by Al-Janoub females, which are never used by their males' counterparts, are "expressing apology" with 11.68%, "expressing embarrassment" with 11.68%, and "generosity" with 10.38%. For example:

"اعذرونا"

/āʿḍwrw-nā/

"Pardon us."

Females use "expressing embarrassment" or showing "generosity" as in:

"سامحوني عندي مشوار كنت بنزل الحين"

/sāmḥwny ʿindy mišwār kint banzil ālḥyn/

"Sorry, I'm about to leave."

7.5 Results of Situation 5

In this situation, the participants are asked to imagine themselves as:

You are ready to go to your friend's invitation, but an unexpected relative visits you. What would you say?

It is significant for Saudi people, including Hijazi, to be polite. Qari (2017) claims that Saudi people are inclined to refuse using an indirect apology if someone visits them without telling them in advance. This is done in order to protect their faces and the

visitor's face. Therefore, we find that male participants follow five strategies in responding to this situation, showing more politeness than females, who tend to be more direct and use six strategies.

Table 10. Hijazi Responses of Situation 5

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greet the person who comes	21	24.41%	5	5.26%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	0	0%
Prayers	0	0%	0	0%
Ask for reasons	0	0%	0	0%
Generosity	0	0%	30	31.57%
Request to come into home	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing apology	18	20.93%	21	22.1%
Expressing embarrassment	22	25.58%	18	18.94%
Expressing pleasure	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing surprise	11	12.79%	9	9.47%
Expressing uneasiness	14	16.27%	12	12.63%
Non-response	0	0%	0	0%
Thanking	0	0%	0	0%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	0	0%

Around 24.41% of male participants choose to "greet the person who comes" and cancel their appointment to appreciate the visit, while a very low percentage of 5.26% of females have chosen it. For instance:

"اهلن وسهلا تفضلوا"

/āhlan wsahlān tifaḍḍalw/

  "Hello there, come in."

"اهلن"

/āhlan/

"Hello"

The second strategy, which is only used by females, is "generosity" which indicates their kindness to the guest. They choose it with the percentage of 31.5%. They welcome the guest with generosity, but they tell them that they have an invitation and they have to

leave. If the guest is one of their relatives, they feel free to leave him/her at home with their families. For example:

"أسلم عليهم بسرعه واعتذر لان عندي موعد"

/ǎsallim ʿalyhum biswrʿah wāʿtadir liʾan ʿindy mawʿid /

"Say hello to them and then apology to leave them."

"اهلا وسهلا تفضل وانا اعتذر منك عندي مناسبه باحضرها"

/āhlān wsahlān tifaḍḍal w-ānā āʿtadir minnik ʿindy munāsabah bāḥḍurhā /

"Hello, come. Sorry, but I have an appointment."

The third strategy is "expressing apology" to the guest in a polite way that they have an invitation. The percentage of the participants who opt for this strategy is 20.93% males and 22.1% females. An example of the statements they use:

"اسفه عندي موعد"

/āsfah ʿindy mawʿid/

"Sorry, I have an appointment."

"اعتذر انا خارجة"

/āʿtadir ānā xārğā/

"I am sorry, I have to go."

The fourth strategy is "expressing embarrassment" used with a high percentage rate of 25.85% by male participants, while females use it at a low rate of 18.94% compared to their male counterparts. For example:

The last two strategies are "expressing surprise" which is used by 12.79% of males and 9.47% of females, and the other strategy is "expressing uneasiness" which is used by males with a percentage of 16.27% and females with 12.63%.

Table 11. Al-Janoub Responses of Situation 5

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greet the person who comes	22	29.33%	35	45.45%
Humanize the entrance	6	8%	0	0%
Prayers	0	0%	0	0%
Ask for reasons	0	0%	0	0%
Generosity	0	0%	0	0%

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Request to come into home	32	42.66%	14	18.18%
Expressing apology	0	0%	6	7.79%
Expressing embarrassment	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing pleasure	15	20%	22	28.57%
Expressing surprise	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing uneasiness	0	0%	0	0%
Non-response	0	0%	0	0%
Thanking	0	0%	0	0%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	0	0%

In this situation, Al-Janoub participants are different in responding to a relative who visits them compared to Hijazi participants. Male participants use "request to come into home" at a rate of 42.66%, while females use it at a rate 18.18%.

"أرحبوا" or"أتفضل" ,"أقلط"

/āqliṭ /, /ātfḍḍal / or /ārḥibu/

"Come in."

In contrast, it is found that females prefer to use "greeting the person who comes" with a high rate of 45.45%, while males use it with 29.33%. For example:

"مرحبًا ألف"

/mārḥban ālf/

"A thousand welcomes."

Another strategy is also used by males and females, "expressing pleasure", that 20% is used by males, and 28.57% is used by females.

The last strategy, which is "humanize the entrance," is only used by male participants with a low rate of 8%.

7.6 Results of Situation 6

In this situation, the participants imagine themselves to:

You are alone at home and some of your relatives of the opposite sex visit you. How would you respond to her/him?

Table 12. Hijazi Responses of Situation 6

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage

Greeting the person who comes	14	16.27%	6	6.31%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	0	0%
Prayers	9	10.46%	0	0%
Ask for reasons	0	0%	21	22.10%
Generosity	0	0%	0	0%
Request to come into home	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing apology	33	38.37%	36	37.89%
Expressing embarrassment	30	34.88%	18	18.94%
Expressing pleasure	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing surprise	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing uneasiness	0	0%	0	0%
Non-response	0	0%	9	9.47%
Thanking	0	0%	0	0%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	5	5.26%

Many researchers claim that language is related to religion and culture. For example, Al-Ageel (2016) indicates that the role of religion is obvious in Saudi Arabia, which is "categorized as a strongly monocultural society" (p. 20). This effect is reflected in people's interactions when welcoming unexpected guests of the opposite gender, which is revealed in this situation. They refuse to welcome a guest of the opposite gender because Islam forbids a man to have a private event with the opposite gender — except in-laws relationship. However, the question does not mention the degree of the relatives, so some participants choose the greeting strategy because Hijazi people are very welcoming. The male participants are the most likely to opt for "greeting the person who comes", with a moderate rate of 16.27% and a low rate of 6.31% by female participants. Male participants are shown to be more polite in this situation when they use "prayers" strategy with a percentage of 10.46%, not like their female counterparts who never use it for the aforementioned reason.

Moreover, it is noticed that no one has chosen the strategy of "request to come into home" due to cultural and religious factors. Instead, they express their regrets in very kind words. Therefore, "expressing apology" is highly used by both male and female participants, with 38.37% and 37.89% respectively. For example:

"لا يوجد نساء اعتذر"

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/lā ywǧad nisāʾ āʿtaḏir/

 "There are no women inside, I'm sorry."

Choosing "expressing embarrassment" is also used by both male and female participants. The percentage of 34.88% is used by male participants and 18.94% is used by their female counterparts.

In addition, some females choose neither greeting nor apology; instead they employ the strategies of "ask for reasons" with a percentage of 22.10%, "non-response" of 9.47%, and "avoiding existence of the guest" of 5.26%.

Table 13. Al-Janoub Responses of Situation 6

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greeting the person who comes	0	0%	0	0%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	0	0%
Prayers	0	0%	0	0%
Ask for reasons	28	37.33%	3	3.89%
Generosity	0	0%	0	0%
Request to come into home	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing apology	47	62.66%	44	57.14%
Expressing embarrassment	0	0%	18	23.37%
Expressing pleasure	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing surprise	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing uneasiness	0	0%	0	0%
Non-response	0	0%	0	0%
Thanking	0	0%	0	0%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	12	15.58%

Al-Janoub's male participants use only two strategies in responding to the welcome of a relative of the opposite sex, while their female counterparts use four ones. The most common strategy used here is "expressing apology", with 62.66% by males and 57.14% by females. They express apology because, in their society and tradition, they are not allowed to welcome the opposite genders and invite them to come into their houses. From their perspective, it is considered offensive to the other gender's face, and that is why the use of "expressing apology" is high in rate for both male and female

participants. For example:

"العذر والسموحة مافي محرم"

/ ālʿiḏur w ālsamwḥah māfy miḥram/

"I am sorry, my brother or my husband is not in the house."

"اعذرونا"

/āʿḏwrw-nā/

"Pardon us."

The second strategy used is "ask for reasons", which is also used by males with 37.33% and females with 3.89%. It is noticed that the rate of female responses to this strategy is very low when it is compared with their male counterparts. They feel embarrassed in such a situation. So, they apply "expressing embarrassment" with a percentage of 23.37%. Moreover, they use "avoiding existence of the guest" strategy with 15.58% in order to keep their faces and avoid the guest seeing them.

7.7 Results of Situation 7

This situation is about:

You are at home alone when your mother's friend knocks at the door. What would you say?

Table 14. Hijazi Responses of Situation 7

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greeting the person who comes	12	13.95%	15	15.78%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	14	14.73%
Prayers	0	0%	23	24.21%
Ask for reasons	15	17.44%	0	0%
Generosity	19	22.09%	0	0%
Request to come into home	0	0%	32	33.68%
Expressing apology	28	32.55%	0	0%
Expressing embarrassment	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing pleasure	10	11.62%	6	6.31%
Expressing surprise	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing uneasiness	0	0%	0	0%

Non-response	2	2.32%	0	0%
Thanking	0	0%	5	5.26%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	0	0%

Saudis give great value to parents. In Islamic religion, a son or a daughter is expected to obey parents and the people in Hijazi culture follow the Islamic values.

In Table 14 above, the most common strategy used by female participants is "request to come into home", with a percentage of 33.68%. Since the visitor is a female, it is easy to allow her to come inside, blessing the visitor with "prayers", which is used 24.21%, "humanize the entrance" which is used 14.73%, "expressing pleasure", which is used 6.31%, and finally "thanking" strategy, which is used 5.26%. For example:

"أرحب بيها واستقبلها أحسن استقبال"

/ạraḥib byhā wā-ʾastaqbilhā ʾaḥsan āistiqbāl /

  "I welcome her and give her the best of offering to come in."

"اكيد راح افتح الباب واستقبلها ريحة الوالدة الله يجعلني فداها"

/ākyd rāḥ āftaḥ ālbāb wā-ʾstaqbilhā ryḥat ālwāldah āllah yǧʿalny fidāhā/

"Of course, I will open the door to welcome her and be blessed by my mother's friend, may Allah bless her."

When we look at strategies used by male participants, we notice that they feel that it is necessary for them to be generous and kind with their mother's visitor in order to respect their parents' desire. However, they use "greeting the person who comes", with a percentage of 13.95%, "generosity", with 22.09%, and "expressing pleasure", with 11.62%. They reveal some formulaic greeting phrases, such as:

"اهلا وسهلا"

/āhlan wsahlān/

"Welcome."

Furthermore, some participants choose "ask for reason" with a percentage of 17.44%. This is considered impolite behavior in Hijaz culture. In addition, the "non-response" strategy is also used by male participants with a percentage of 2.32%.

Table 15. Al-Janoub Responses of Situation 7

Strategies	Males		Females	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage

Greeting the person who comes	26	34.66%	21	27.27%
Humanize the entrance	0	0%	10	12.98%
Prayers	41	54.66%	23	29.87%
Ask for reasons	8	10.66%	0	0%
Generosity	0	0%	0	0%
Request to come into home	0	0%	19	24.67%
Expressing apology	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing embarrassment	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing pleasure	0	0%	4	5.19%
Expressing surprise	0	0%	0	0%
Expressing uneasiness	0	0%	0	0%
Non-response	0	0%	0	0%
Thanking	0	0%	0	0%
Avoiding existence of the guest	0	0%	0	0%

Meanwhile, Al-Janoub participants show more diplomatic skills and use different polite strategies, especially females. These are as follows: 34.66% of males answer by using the strategy of "greeting the person who comes," while 27.27% of females use this strategy. For instance:

"ارحبوا" و " اقلطوا"

/ āiͻrḥbw/ /w/ / āͻiqlṭw/

"Welcome" and "come in."

Another strategy that is used only by females is "humanize the entrance" with a percentage of 12.98%. For example:

"نورتي البيت يا خاله وياهلا ويامرحبا"

/nawwarti ālbyt ya xalah wy-ya-hala wy-yamarḥaba/

"The house is enlightened of your entrance and you are most welcome."

On the contrary, only male participants use the strategy of "ask for reasons" with a percentage of 10.66%. Moreover, both males and females use the strategy of "prayers" and it is considered the highest rate for both of them. Males use it 54.66%, while females use it 29.87%. They feel that the mother's friends deserve to give them prayers showing respect and happiness. For instance:

" حي الله من جانا تفضلي"

/ ḥay āllah min ğānā tifḍḍaly/

"May Allah greet who comes, you are welcome come in."

Further, there are two more strategies used only by females. These are "request to come into home" (24.67%), and "expressing pleasure" (5.19%).

8. Discussion of the Study

The data collected from 86 males and 95 females of Hijazi participants and 75 males and 77 females of Al-Janoub participants using welcoming strategies in the seven situations are summarized below in order to answer the questions raised in this study, which are:

1) What are the strategies contributing to the welcoming of an unexpected guest in Al-Hijaz and Al-Janoub communities?

2) In what way does gender of the host/guest affect the welcoming of an unexpected guest?

The results in the below graph 1, show the most and least strategies used by Hijazi male and female participants throughout all the situations and also the differences in gender in this community.
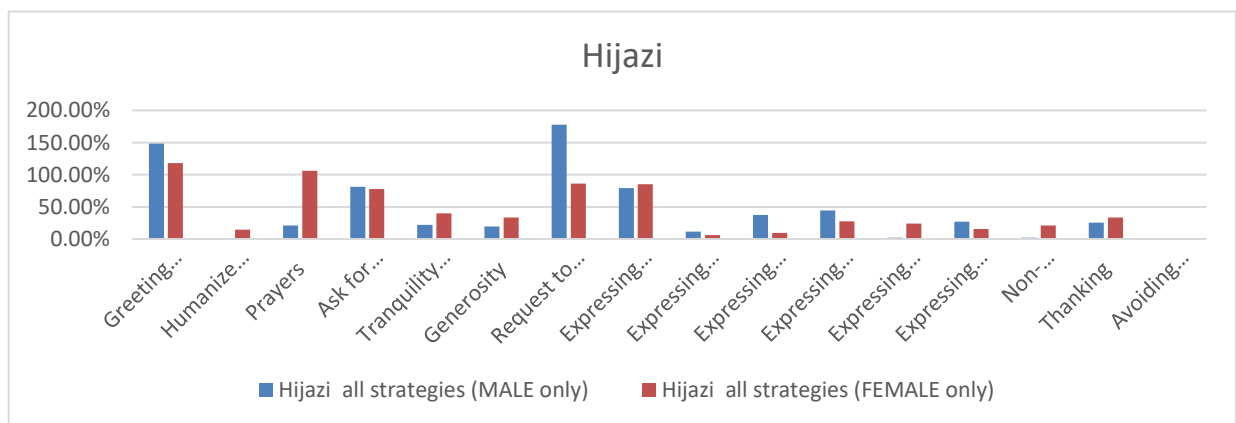
Figure 1. Hijazi Males and Female Responses in all the Situations

On the one hand, Hijazi male participants prefer to use "request to come into" with a high rate percentage of 177.88%, and then they use "greeting the person who comes" with a percentage of 148.62%. The "ask for reasons" strategy comes in the third rate of strategies used with a percentage of 81.38%, while "expressing apology" comes at a low rate with a percentage of 79.06%, as Figure 1 above shows.

On the other hand, Hijazi female participants would like to use "greeting the person

who comes" with a percentage of 177.86%, "prayers" with 106.30%, followed by 86.29%, and then "expressing apology" with 85.24%.

Hijazi people show their politeness and kindness because politeness is one of the most important aspects of human communication. They request their guests to come in by saying:

"اهلين وسهلين نورتونا "

/ āhlyn wisahlyn nawrtu-na/

"Welcome, come in."

They welcome unexpected guests even if they are not prepared and the time is inappropriate. They show their joy by using "prayers" such as:

"حياكم الله "

/Hayakum āllah /

"May Allah greet you."

  Or "request to come into" such as:

"حماتك تحبك! اتفضل اتعشى معانا"

/Həmatk təhobk! Atfdəl atæʃə mæna/

"Your mother in-law loves you. Come and have dinner with us."

These examples indicate that Hijazi people prefer to use in-group membership. This result is similar to the findings of Bajri's (2021). She emphasizes that "the majority of the Hijazi participants prefer to use positive politeness strategies and value using in-group membership" (171). The hearer's in-group membership is indicated by the use of /na/ at the end of the words (معانا / mˈana/ or نورتونا / nawrtu-na /) in the above examples.
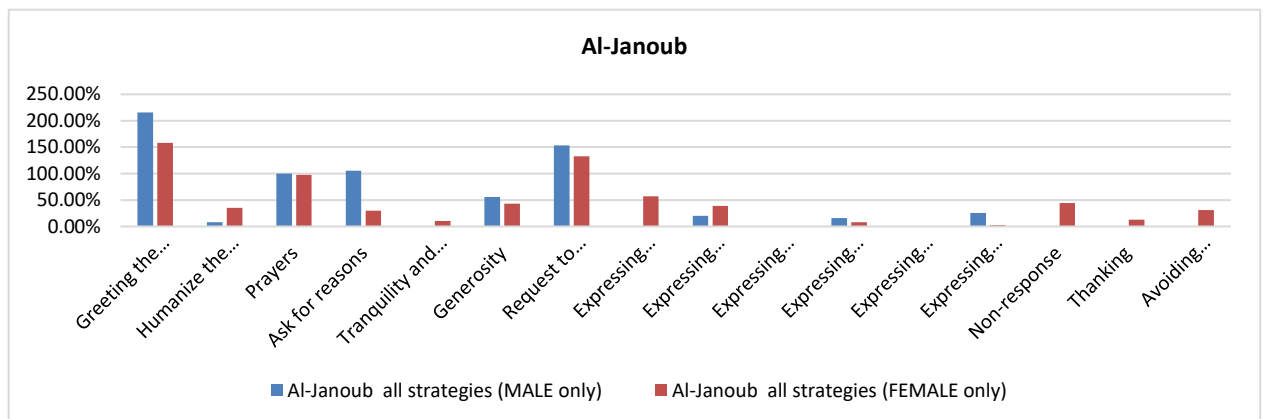
Figure 2. Al-Janoub Males and Female Responses in all the Situations

Regarding Al-Janoub's male participants, the results in the above Figure 2 show that they would like to use "greeting the person who comes" in the first-rate with a percentage of 215.97%, "request to come into home" with 153.32%, "ask for reasons" with 105.32%, and "prayers" with 99.98%.

In contrast, Al-Janoub's female participants would like to use "greeting the person who comes" in the first-rate with a percentage of 158.42%, "request to come into home" in the second rate with a percentage of 132.45%, using "prayers" with 97.39%, and "expressing apology" with 57.12%.

Al-Janoub people are very generous and kind to their guests, even if they are welcoming unexpected guests. They are raised in a society that respects and values guests. The examples below are examples of their generosity:

" حي الله من جانا تفضلي "

/ ḥay āllah min ǧānā tfḍḍaly/

"May Allah greet you. You are welcome, come in."

"ارحبوا " و " اقلطوا"

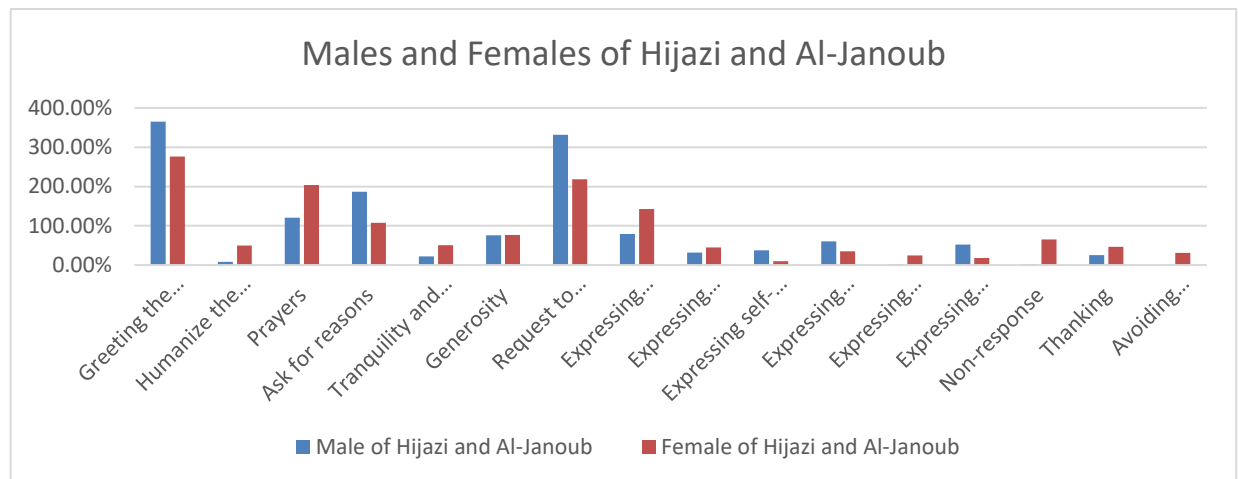/ āᵒrḥbw/ /w/ / āᵒqlṭw/

"Welcome" and "come in"

Figure 3. Males and Female Responses of Hijazi an Al-Janoub in all the Situations

Figure 3 above indicates that both Hijazi and Al-Janoub males and females are similar more than different in choosing the strategies for welcoming unexpected guests. Male participants would like to use "greeting the person who comes" with 34.59%, while female counterparts with 276.28%. Then, the use of the "request to come into home"

strategy comes in the second rate with 331.20% for males, and 218.74% for females. The third rate for males comes with "ask for reasons" with a percentage of 186.70%, while for females "prayers" with 203.69%. In the fourth rate comes "prayers" for male participants with 120.90%, while for female counterparts "ask for reasons" with 107.74%.

Looking at the above graph regarding gender differences, the total percentage will indicate some of the differences regarding the rates of males' and females' usage of strategies. Situations 2 and 6 are very critical for female participants, and gender plays a huge part in welcoming unexpected guests in Hijazi as well as in Al-Janoub communities. The rules of speaking in a society are related to the cultural values of that society (Asma, 1996). In these situations, sociocultural norms must be followed; otherwise, females will be embarrassed in welcoming unexpected opposite-gender guests. They tend to use direct strategies such as "avoiding the existence of the guest," "express apology," or "ask for reasons" without fear of losing face, whether the guests are relatives or strangers. In Saudi culture, it is forbidden for females to host males, especially when they are alone at home. This result is also supported by the findings of Al-Ageel (2016). He emphasizes that "[t]his behaviour is obviously due to the fact that Saudi Arabia is a segregated society that has different roles for both genders in accordance with the instructions of Islam" (119). Hijazi females would say:

" اعتذر لعدم وجود شخص لاستقبالك"

/ˈāˈtḏr liˈadam wwǧwd šaẖṣ lāistiqbāl-ik/

"I apologize for not having someone meets you."

In Al-Janoub norms, they would say:

" العذر والسموحة مافي محرم"

/ ālˈiḏir w ālsmwḥh māfy miḥram/

"I am sorry, no one of my in-laws is at home."

In addition, in the Saudi community, including Hijaz, Al-Ageel (2016) analyzes in his study that "compliments from male strangers [are] rejected and considered offensive behavior from women" (23). This rejection also applies to the welcoming speech act, and that is the reason some responses show some kind of rejection to welcome the guest, which is shown as asking for the reasons.

9. Conclusion

The aim of this study is to examine the sociolinguistic variations in the performance of welcoming speech acts in the Hijaz and Al-Janoub communities. The data are analyzed statistically to support the socio-pragmatic results in the present study. They reveal different strategies used in Al-Hijaz and Al-Janoub areas regarding the speech act of welcoming unexpected guests. The researcher has identified a marked tendency among the participants to accept unexpected guests, whether the time is appropriate or inappropriate. The responses indicate that people in these regions are very generous and kind to their guests.

Religion in Saudi Arabia has a great impact on culture. After all, it is the land of the holy mosques. Al-Ageel (2016) argues that the "role of religion in society also extends further than being one of its cultural components; it partly determines the identity and the social values, and on certain levels, religion shapes the culture of individuals within social groups" (20).

Meanwhile, Al-Hijaz and Al-Janoub societies have high moral values for the elderly since Islam urges Muslims to be respectful and kind to their parents. The above-provided results are in accordance with some of the previous literature. For example, Al-Ageel (2016) states that "showing obedience to authorized members is one essential principle in the Islamic system of Muslims, and this includes all levels of everyday life" (26).

The relationship between language use and gender is reflected in the results of this study. It has been revealed that the majority of the female participants opt out of communicative patterns that show rejection to welcome strange males in situations 2 and 6, respectively. There is a significant difference between both genders, and they agree on the fact that there are some limitations to their interactions. Abu-Gazzeh (1999) claims there are different rules of etiquette applying to both sex and a social distance based on it.

Furthermore, Bouchara (2015) reveals that Arab people are polite and kind to their guests. He says, "Arabs seem inclined to show politeness when greeting one another by using religious vocabulary and giving religious praises" (34). Also, Nemani and Nasekh (2013) emphasize that what we speak and the way we do can disclose how polite we are.

10. Recommendation

This research has certain limitations which are recommended to be overcome in future

research. The limitations are caused by the selected data for this study which involves Al-Hijaz and Al-Janoub people. Therefore, this research cannot be generalized since only two Saudi communities are investigated and further research needs to be conducted with a larger set of data. Hence, the researcher recommends examining larger groups from various regions of Saudi Arabia, such as Riyadh, Damam, Madinah, or Taif. Moreover, it is suggested to use different instruments for collecting data, such as interviews, role-plays, and face-to-face interactions in real-life situations for further study.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix I

الاستبيان

نشكر حضراتكم على اقتطاع الوقت للمشاركة في هذا الاستبيان، ونرجو منكم ملئ الجزء الخاص بالبيانات
الشخصية والذي سيعامل بسرية تامة، ثم التكرم بقراءة وصف المواقف التالية ثم أكتب/ أكتبِ ما ستقوله/
ستقولينه تلقئيا باللهجة العامية في الفراغ أسفل كل موقف.

المنطقة: الغربية – الشرقية – النجدية – الشمالية – الجنوبية

50+   50-40   40-30   30-20 :العمر

الجنس: ذكر   –   انث

الموقف الأول:

كنت/ كنتِ في المنزل مع عائلتك وقت وجبة العشاء، وطرق الباب أحد الجيران حاملاً معه طبًقا. فماذا تقولين/
تقول؟

....

....

الموقف الثاني:

كنتِ في المنزل وحدك ولم يكن معك أحد، وطرق الباب رجل غريب. ما هو التصرف والقول المناسب في هذه
الحالة؟

....

....

الموقف الثالث:

كنتِ في المنزل تقضين الوقت مع صغارك، وطرق الباب بعض الاقارب لزيارتكِ فماذا تقولين؟

....

....

الموقف الرابع:

زارك/زاركِ أحد الجيران في وقت غير مناسب ماذا تقول/تقولين؟

....

....

الموقف الخامس:

تأهبت/تأهبتِ للخروج من المنزل لتلبية دعوة من أحد الاصدقاء، وفوجئت/ فوجئتِ بزيارة من أحد الاقرباء. ما

هو التصرف والقول المناسب في هذه الحالة؟

....

....

الموقف السادس:

زارك/زاركِ أحد الأقارب من الجنس الأخر ولم يوجد غيرك/غيرِكِ في المنزل. ما التصرف الذي ستتخذه/ستتخذينه

مع هذا الضيف؟

....

....

الموقف السابع:

كنت/كنتِ في المنزل بمفردك/ بمفردكِ وطرقت الباب صديقة والدتك في وقت غير مناسب. ما التصرف والقول

المناسب في هذه الحالة؟

....

....

Appendix II   **DIN 31635**