

# **Gender Differences in Using Compliment Responses Strategies: A Case Study**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study intended to investigate the English compliment response strategies as used by gender groups, to find out if there are significant differences in responding to compliments according to gender variable. One hundred students (50 female, 50 male) from the undergraduate Arabic students of Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) participated in the study. In order to collect the data of the study, a borrowed Discourse Completion Test (DCT) consisting of 10 situations was used as an instrument of data collection. Mainly, the situations of the DCT were designed to collect responses to compliments addressed by the same and the opposite gender of the respondents. The situations of the DCT covered two main compliment topics, appearance and performance. In order to answer the research questions: what are the most frequent CR strategies used by male and female Arabic undergraduate student of EMU to respond to compliments addressed by the same and the opposite gender? And are there any significant gender-based differences in using CR strategies between Arabic undergraduate students of EMU? The collected responses were coded and classified according to Herbert's (1986) taxonomy of Compliment Responses (CRs). Then, SPSS program was used to calculate the frequencies of the responses and a cluster of independent-sample t-tests were done in to order to find any significant statistical gender-based differences in using compliment responses.

The findings of the study showed that both female and male Arabic students of EMU preferred to show agreement with compliments addressed by both the same and the opposite gender. Also, findings of the study showed that there are significant statistical gender-based differences among Arabic students of EMU in using CR

strategies. Analyses showed a significant female superiority in the use of CR agreement strategies, and that females showed more acceptance to compliments on both appearance and performance than males did. On the other hand, male students used more disagreement in responding to compliments on appearance addressed by males. These findings can be taken in consideration by English as Foreign Language (EFL) teachers and syllabus developers in order to raise awareness of communicative language teaching and using.

**Keywords:** Gender Differences, Compliment Speech Act, Compliment Responses.

## ÖZ

Bu çalışma cinsiyet gruplarının İngilizce iltifatta bulunma stratejilerini cinsiyet değişkenine göre önemli bir fark olup olmadığını ortaya koymak için araştırmayı amaçlar. Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesinden (DAÜ) 100 Arap üniversite öğrencisi (50 kadın, 50 erkek) çalışmaya katılmıştır. Çalışmada enstrüman olarak on adet senaryo içeren ödünç alınmış bir Söylem Tamamlama Testi (STT) katılımcılara dağıtılarak veri toplamak için kullanılmıştır. Esas olarak, STT'nin senaryoları hemcins ve karşı cinsin iltifat için kullandıkları cevapları elde etmek için tasarlanmıştır. Ayrıca, STT'nin senaryoları görünüm ve performans olmak üzere iki ana iltifat konularını kapsamıştır. Araştırma soruları olarak , kadın ve erkek Arap lisans öğrencilerinin ne kadar sıklıkla ve hangi iltifat karşılığı stratejilerine hemcins ve karşı cins olarak başvurdukları? Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi lisans öğrencileri arasında cinsiyete dayalı iltifat karşılığı önemli farklılıklar gösteriyor mu? soruları cevaplandırılmıştır. Araştırma sorularına cevap bulabilmek için, edinilen cevaplar Herbert'in (1986) İltifat Cevaplarının tasnifine göre kodlandı ve sınıflandırıldı. Ardından, SPSS programı iltifat için kullanılan cevaplarda cinsiyet bağlantılı herhangi önemli istatistiksel farklılıkları belirlemek için cevapların sıklıklarını hesaplamak için kullanılmıştır.

Araştırmanın sonuçları DAÜ'deki erkek ve bayan öğrencilerin hemcins ve karşı cins tarafından yapılan iltifatları kabullenmeyi tercih ettiklerini göstermiştir. Ayrıca, araştırma bulguları, DAÜ'deki Arap öğrencilerin İltifat karşılama stratejilerinde cinsiyet bazlı önemli farklılıkların olduğunu göstermiştir. Yapılan analizler iltifat karşılama stratejilerinin kullanımında önemli derecede kadın baskınlığını ve ayrıca

kadınların görünüm ve performans ile alakalı iltifatları daha fazla kabullendiğini göstermiştir. Diğer bir taraftan, erkek öğrenciler erkekler tarafından kullanılan görünüm ile alakalı iltifatlara karşılık vermede daha isteksiz olduklarını göstermiştir. Bu bulgular yabancı dil öğretmenleri ve müfredat tasarımcıları için iletişimsel dil öğretimi ve kullanımı ile bağlantılı olarak farkındalık yaratmak için kullanılabilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Cinsiyet Farklılıkları, İltifat Söz Edimi, İltifat Cevapları.

## **DEDICATION**

To the spirit that never left her place in my heart; the most beloved Maisa’.

I take pleasure in dedicating this thesis to my father, mother, brothers, sister, and to everyone in my family. Each of them has helped to shape my own spirituality in a distinctive way.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

F	Female
M	Male
DCT	Discourse Completion Test
CR	Compliment Response
FTA's	Face Threatening Acts
EFL	English as Foreign Language
EMU	Eastern Mediterranean University

# Chapter 1

## INTRUDUCTION

This chapter presents the overview of the study, statement of the problem, aims of the study, research questions, hypothesis, significance of the study, limitations of the study, definitions of terms, and organization of the thesis.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Language and culture are in a reciprocal interrelation in ways that influence each other. Since 1970's, inter-language and inter-cultural studies has become an attractive area of research in the field of pragmatics. The richness of speech act behaviours, such as requests, apology, compliments and compliment responses, and other behaviours have grabbed the attention of the researchers of linguistics and pragmatics towards the field. Compliment behaviour research has its importance and attractiveness, because it is used frequently in our daily life, as well as it is used to build solidarity between people in conversations (Holmes, 1988).

In this regard, there are some rules that govern the cross-cultural behaviours, such as requesting, apologizing, and complimenting. The rules are directed to achieve mutual understanding between the parties of the conversation. Hymes (1972) mentions that for achieving an effective communication, in addition an active participation, there should be knowledge of communicative rules between the speakers. Compliment behaviour is addressed by speaker or addressee and usually receives a compliment response (CR) from the other party in a conversation. The use of compliments and

CRs is frequently affected by some rules and factors related to cultural aspects, individual characteristics and social power, conversational topic and context, and gender differences among the speakers and the respondents. The correct use of compliments makes people closer to each other since compliments and CRs are used as social devices to obtain solidarity between people (Holmes, 1988).

Theoretically, most of the rules that govern the use of compliments and CRs are driven from Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory and Grice's (1975) 'cooperative principle' which includes the four cooperation maxims; Maxims of Quantity, Maxim of Relevance, Maxim of Quality, and maxim of manner. Afterwards, many researches in the field were conducted in order to classify the strategies and the topics that people use while complimenting or responding to compliments such as Herbert (1986), Holmes (1988), and Ye (1995) taxonomies of CRs.

Since 1970, as the starting point of speech acts research, the vast majority of speech acts' compliment behaviour and CRs studies are conducted about native English speakers' use of compliments (Pomerantz, 1978; Holmes, 1988; Herbert, 1990). Afterwards, few studies were conducted from other languages in comparison with English, such as Persian (Chamani, 2014), Turkish (Mızıkaçı, 1991), Chinese (Zhao, 2013), Russian (Ogiermann, 2008), Arabic (Salameh, 2001; Al-Khateeb, 2009), and other languages. These comparative studies show cultural and linguistic gaps in using compliment speech act and in the use of CRs in a pragmatic pattern rather than syntactic and semantic patterns. According to studies in the field, females tend to use more polite expressions and they show more acceptance strategies when they respond to compliments addressed by females especially in situations related to

appearance, while males use less acceptance strategies when they respond to compliments addressed by males. In the case of cross-gender use, both females and males tend to use an amount of acceptance which is usually less than female to female interaction and higher than male to male interaction (Holmes, 1988).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Communicating with people who speak other language is a complicated behaviour that requires the speakers to have a pragmatic and linguistic competence. The way we communicate is affected and related to the sociocultural norms and behaviours of the speaker and the hearer. Speech acts as a cultural concept might vary between different societies (Hudson, 1980). This means what is accepted in one society or culture may be unacceptable in another one. Also, the scale of acceptance is defined by some sociocultural norms that differentiate between what is considered as a compliment in one society and might be considered as an insult in another one. For example, in the American culture, it is a normal act to refuse food to make the visit easier to the host, while in Arabic culture it is inappropriate to refuse food offered by host (Rizk, 2003).

Most of the problems that face the Arabic students who study in an English medium of instruction and English language environments occur in the intercultural communications Al-Khateeb (2009).

The fact that Arabic students don't have an exposure to English language in real situations before studying abroad might cause a pragmatic failure in responding to compliments in English.

There are some factors that influence the individual use of the speech acts such as: gender, age, educational background, social distance, ethnicity, and so on (Sari, 2013). This study looks at the gender variable as a factor that might affect the behaviour of responding to compliments in English among Arabic students who are studying in English medium university.

### **1.3 Aims of the Study**

The purposes of conducting the current study are:

1. To explore the differences between Arabic male and female undergraduate students of Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) - North Cyprus in using English compliment responses.
2. To find the most frequent CR strategies used by Arabic male undergraduate students of Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU).
3. To find the most frequent CR strategies used by Arabic female undergraduate students of Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU).

### **1.4 Research Questions:**

Based on the purposes of the study, the researcher formulates the following five research questions:

1. What are the most frequent CR strategies used by male Arabic undergraduate students of EMU for responding to compliments addressed by males (M-M)?
2. What are the most frequent CR strategies used by Arabic undergraduate male students of EMU for responding to compliments addressed by females (M-F)?

3. What are the most frequent CR strategies used by Arabic undergraduate female students of EMU for responding to compliments addressed by females (F-F)?
4. What are the most frequent CR strategies used by Arabic undergraduate female students of EMU for responding to compliments addressed by males (F-M)?
5. Are there any significant differences in using CR strategies between Arabic undergraduate female and male students of EMU?

### **1.5 Hypothesis**

Based on the findings of previous studies, the hypothesis of this study states that CR strategies of Arabic students of EMU differ and are affected by gender as:

1. Females tend to use more agreement CR strategies than males.
2. The strategies used are affected by gender factors.
3. Gender differences in using CR strategies among the participants of this study are slightly less than the differences that have been studied in former studies in the Arabic context due to some factors such as the level of English proficiency of the students of this study which is intermediate and higher, and the fact that the students use English language as a tool of communication in their daily situations.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Due to the scarcity of studies on Arabic students who are studying abroad and those who use English in their daily communications, the significance of this study arises as a result of some factors and circumstances. Firstly, the current study fills the gap in the compliment responses research by investigating Arabic students who are

studying abroad in an English medium of instruction university such as; Eastern Mediterranean University. These students are subject to daily use as they communicate with people and with their instructors in English language. The previous studies on the Arabic context were conducted in Arabic countries, where the participants differed in their level of English proficiency, and English language was not used in daily situations. Secondly, the current study focuses on the pragmatic transfer of compliment responses which is related to gender differences rather than the linguistic and sociolinguistic norms. In other words, due to the sample of the study there is no attempt to investigate other variables that might affect CR strategies since the participants are undergraduate students of EMU, and their level of English proficiency is by-law intermediate and higher. And the participants' age and cultural background are in close range. Lastly, this study gives attention to CR strategies used by the students who are studying abroad, which leads to gain awareness towards the communicative aspect of language. This gives directions for further research in the fields of speech acts, inter-language communication, inter-cultural communication, and other fields such as curriculum development.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The current study is limited to the following limitations:

1. The study investigates the gender differences in using CR strategies among Arabic students of Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) in Northern Cyprus. EMU is giving an English medium of instruction education. Moreover, the verity of nationalities in the university allows the students to use English in their daily communications.

2. Participants of the study are 100 Arabic undergraduate students divided into two gender groups (males and females). All of the participants are by-law in intermediate level or higher of English proficiency.
3. The investigation is based on the participants' CRs for a situational Discourse Completion Test (DCT) consists of 10 situations (see appendix E). The DCT borrowed with a permission to use it from Furkó and Dudás (2012) (See appendix C).
4. This study is also limited to online data collection which is a trending method of data collection for academic research that saves time and money, as well as it can easily access large population and get returns in a short period of time. However, the lack of face-to-face communication may have prevented the participants from asking clarification questions (if they had any).

## **1.8 Definition of the Terms**

### **1.8.1 Speech Acts**

Speech acts are all actions and things that can be done by words, units, symbols, and sentences when we communicate with others. This means that speech acts are actions interpreted by language. We use words and utterances to do things with them; we might use them to make a request, to apologize, to make a compliment, to threaten someone and so on (Searle, 1969).

### **1.8.2 Locutionary Act**

Locutionary act is the direct meaningful expression, and the act of uttering sentences with a reference or a sense that is close to the actual meaning. Generally speaking, it is the act of saying something meaningfully (Austin, 1962).

### **1.8.3 Illocutionary Act**

The illocutionary act is connected with the intended meaning of the utterance and the action that is in the speaker's mind or the action required from the hearer by the speaker. This means that it is the utterances that carry actions or forces like requesting, offering, informing, guessing and so on (Austin, 1962).

### **1.8.4 Perlocutionary Act**

Perlocutionary act is related to the effect of the utterance on the hearer. In other words, it is the way that the hearer understands the required thing addressed by the speaker. The speaker may be performing a compliment, threat or request by using an act (Austin, 1962)

### **1.8.5 Compliment**

A compliment is a speech act that attributes to maintain rapport and obtain solidarity between the speaker and the hearer. It also shifts the credits from the speaker to the hearer or to someone for giving a positive value by the speaker and the hearer. Mainly, compliments are given on appearance, possession, skills, personality and so on (Holmes, 1986, Wolfson, 1983).

### **1.8.6 Compliment Response**

A compliment response is defined as a verbal acknowledgement gained by the compliment receivers in which the compliment receivers have to react by responding to the compliment whether they like the compliment or not (Nelson, 1996).

## **Chapter 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter introduces review of the literature related to the topic of the study. It is divided into two parts; the first part introduces the theoretical background of the study which includes the speech act theory, cooperative principle, politeness theory, and face theory. The second part introduces studies about compliments and compliment responses including studies on the functions of compliments, taxonomies of compliments and CRs, also, previous studies on gender differences in compliment speech act behaviour and CR strategies in different context.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Background**

##### **2.1.1 Speech Act Theory**

Speech act theory was presented by Austin (1962) as the first general pragmatic theory. Austin (1962) argues that speech acts are all actions that can be done by words when we communicate with others. Here comes the role of speech act theory in investigating the relation between what have been said and the behaviour of both the speaker and the hearer. In the speech act theory, Austin (1962) suggests that people use words and utterances to do things with them; they might use them to make a request, to apologize, to make a compliment, to threaten and so on. Austin (1962) divides speech acts into three types. The first type is the locutionary act, in which this force is considered as the direct meaningful expression, such as; yes/no questions. For example, “is that his house?” The second type is the illocutionary act. The illocutionary act is connected with the intended meaning of the utterance and the

action that in the speaker's mind or the action required from the hearer by the speaker. For example, "show me how you did it?" or in other example on the intended meaning: the speaker wants the hearer to close the window, he/she may say "it's dusty outside". The third type is the perlocutionary act, which is related to the effect of the utterance on the hearer. In other words, it is the way that the hearer understands the required thing addressed by the speaker. Austin defines the verbs that used in the illocutionary acts as 'illocutionary force', and proposed a tentative classification based on five categories to distinguish between the verbs of illocutionary force as:

1. Verdictives: verbs of evaluation, such as to appraise.
2. Exercitives: verbs of showing power, like order and to appoint.
3. Behabitives: verbs of reaction and surprise, like to compliment and to threat.
4. Commissive: verbs of commitments, such as to promise.
5. Expositives: verbs of explanations, like to assume and to argue.

Searle's (1969) study is considered as a development of Austin's (1962) study. In his book of speech acts, Searle (1969) relates speech acts not only for words level, but also for unit and symbols, as well as for sentence level. He argues that all linguistic patterns can be considered as acts according to the purpose of producing them. Searle (1975) presents the indirect speech act based on his criticism of illocutionary act in the bases of the mutual understanding between the speaker and the receiver. He presents four principles for the speaker and the receiver in order to achieve perfect understanding of the indirect speech act, which are background of the speaker and the receiver, the receiver's ability of understanding, speech act theory, and application of cooperative principles. Accordingly, Searle (1975) criticizes Austin's

(1962) classification of illocutionary force as: there is confusion between the illocutionary acts and illocutionary verbs, and some of the verbs don't fit the category that they have been listed under it, as well as, there is an overlap and no fixed principles of the categorization. Based on his criticism of Austin's classification of illocutionary force, he classifies illocutionary acts into five categories:

1. Expressive: includes 'apologizing' and 'compliments'.
2. Declarations: including 'resign', 'dismiss' and 'declare'.
3. Representatives: including 'describing' and 'claiming'.
4. Directives: including 'requesting', 'suggesting', and 'ordering'.
5. Commissives: including 'promising' and 'threatening'.

According to Searle's (1975) classification, compliments are listed under expressive pattern of classification, since they attempt to maintain positively rapport between the speaker and the receiver.

Hudson (1980) analyzes the classification of the speech acts from a social perspective rather than universal perspective as in Searle (1975) and Austin (1962). Hudson refers to the distinction between illocutionary acts and perlocutionary acts as respectively an inherent act and effect. Hudson describes speech acts as a kind of social behavior that goes between a speaker and a hearer in two different ways. And this social behavior differs from one society into another, which means that classifying speech acts is a typical cultural concept that is defined in terms of prototypes. For example, defining the conditions for using some acts that carry a count, such as: 'offering', 'promising'.

Yule (1996) proposes a more simple method for distinguishing the types of speech acts of English language. His classification is based on the relation between the communicative function and the three structural forms, such as the relation between declarative, interrogative, imperative structural forms and respectively statement, question, command/request functions. Based on this relation, Yule (1996) gives an explanation of the directness of speech acts. He states that if there is a direct relation between the statement and the communicative function then the speech act is direct speech act. For example, the statement 'you have to join us' is declarative structure and use directly as a statement; therefore, it represents a direct speech act. But if the relation is indirect relation between the statement and the communicative function, then the speech act is indirect speech act. For example, if the declarative statement is used to form a request like 'do you have to join us?', in this case it functions as an indirect speech act.

### **2.1.2 Cooperative Principle**

To speak means to communicate and convey a meaning or send a message from one person to another. The role of the speaker is to intend the meaning to be understood in a correct way by the receiver. If the receiver misunderstood the meaning of the message, this means that the speaker misused the correct expression in the context even if the utterance is syntactically and semantically correct. To avoid such communicative breakdowns and obtain a socially accepted utterance, speakers have to cooperate and use more connotations and cooperate in order to obtain a successful conversation. Moreover, utterances have to be addressed directly in a clearly unambiguous way. This technique goes with Grice's (1975) cooperative principles which deal with the performance of speech acts and give directions to deliver the intended meaning successfully by requiring an amount of engagement between

speakers and receivers. Grice's four cooperation maxims as presented in Brown and Levinson (1987) are:

1. Maxim of Quality: speak what is true, be sincere.
2. Maxims of Quantity: Don't say less than required, don't say more than required.
3. Maxim of Relevance: Be relevant.
4. Maxim of Manner: Be perspicuous, avoid ambiguity and obscurity.

Grice's maxims of cooperation have been criticized by many researchers on basis of the difficulty of applying and overlapping these maxims in all contexts. Moreover, the four maxims don't have the same weight or the same value in all cultures, so they vary in perception and use across cultures. Also, it's not easy to find the four maxims in the same situation or in the same context (Mey, 1998). Furthermore, even if these maxims are considered as the basic set of any conversation, it does not mean that it is efficient to use them if the face desires are met (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

### **2.1.3 Politeness Theory**

Leech (1983) and other scholars like Brown Levinson (1987) argue that speech acts are part of linguistic etiquette, which affect the relationship between the speakers, since what we say is directed by politeness rules. The notion of politeness is presented in Leech's (1983) politeness theory as a development of Lakoff's (1973) notion of 'be polite' who argues that politeness is the main motivation for obtaining indirect request, as politeness goes in a correlation with indirectness. Leech (1983) proposes six maxims of politeness as 'politeness principle':

1. Tact maxim: minimize the beliefs and expectations by giving options, this way maximize the benefit to receiver.
2. Generosity maxim: minimize the cost to the other by minimize self-benefit, this implies maximize the benefit to the receiver. For example, offering a company by saying 'you will come with us' rather than saying 'we will go with you'.
3. Approbation maxim: show approval and avoid criticism. In other words, say what is good and nice or keep silent.
4. Modesty maxim: give the praise to the receiver rather than appraise self (on the cost/benefit scale).
5. Agreement maxim: show disagreement with others indirectly, and show agreement with others directly.
6. Sympathy maxim: minimize the effect on yourself by using glossy expressions with others. For example, use expressions such as 'bit', 'slightly'. Like in 'it was slightly hard to complete the scenario'.

These maxims of 'politeness principle' are proposed by Leech (1983) as a completion and gap filler of Grice's (1975) 'cooperation principle', especially while applying them to different cultures; each maxim's value is subject to change according to norms in different cultures. For example, agreement maxim is given the highest value in responding to compliments in the American culture, while in Malayan culture modesty maxim had a higher value than agreement in responding to compliments.

#### **2.1.4 Face Theory**

Brown and Levinson (1987) introduce the 'face theory' as a developed form of 'politeness theory'. Face theory is based on a combination of psychological and

sociological patterns of language use. This combination is concerned in explaining the differences in politeness strategies among different cultures.

Brown and Levinson (1987) define politeness as the notion of 'face', depending on people's desires to be understood and respected as well as been valued by others, people adapt rational behaviors to show self-image and leave a good impression about one's self to others in the society. Brown and Levinson (1987) introduced two aspects of 'face': 'negative face' and 'positive face'. Negative face is related to people's need of being autonomous, independent and the need of not losing the face with others, while positive face is related to the desire to be appreciated and recognized by others, and the hope of improving the self-image by interactions.

#### **2.1.5 Face Threatening Acts**

While uttering some speech acts in purpose, some speech acts are said to threaten the face of the receiver or the hearer. This kind of face threatening exists in two types: positive threatening face, and negative threatening face. Therefore, to achieve a good communication, people should give a value for others positive face, as well as people should give attention and take care of others negative face. In this way, people can keep their face and at the same time keep others face. Brown and Levinson (1987) relate the face threatening acts to three social elements and the influence of choice of strategies of uttering face threatening acts are: social power, social distance, and social imposition. Brown and Levinson (1987) present five strategies in order to moderate these three social elements and avoid threatening or minimize the threat:

1. Bald-on-Record: cooperate and use direct speech acts, be clear and unambiguous.

2. Positive Politeness: enhance the hearers positive face by giving the face wants to get self-face back and create self-image.
3. Negative politeness: take care and give attention to the receivers' positive face, respect others face without losing one-self face.
4. Off-record: use indirect utterances, there could be more than one ambiguous intended meaning for the utterance
5. Don't use face threatening acts: avoid using face threatening acts in the cases of extreme imposition.

Compliment speech acts belong to the positive politeness since they are concerned with the self-image and the face wants of the speaker and the receiver. For example, saying 'you are looking good today' to a female friend, she usually responds 'thank you' happily. In this case the speaker addresses the appearance of the female friend in a positive way that he/she gives an attention to the appearance, and happiness expressions of the female friend gives the positive face back to the speaker.

## **2.2 Research on compliments and CRs**

### **2.2.1 Functions of Compliments and CRs**

In accordance to the politeness theory and the face theory, many researchers list multiple functions of the compliments and CRs. Wolfson (1983) state that compliments are 'social lubricants' which help us and make it easier to maintain relation and create rapport with others. In other context, Herbert (1990) suggests that compliments and CRs are considered as verbal reflection of the relationship between the compliment addresser and the respondent, as it facilitates the encouragement between the parties of the conversation, as well as it facilitates the praise according to the social power. Holmes (1995) defines compliments and CRs as 'social devices'

that are used as a tool to 'express and obtain' solidarity between the compliment addresser and the compliment respondent. Holmes (1995) proposes the functions of compliments as multifunctional speech acts that are used to express solidarity and facilitate the praise as they positively evaluate and admire the appreciation between the compliment addresser and the respondent. Also, compliments function as verbal harassment, and to express and facilitate the desires of the compliment addresser according to their rank of possession.

The entire contexts agree on expressing solidarity function, while all other functions are subject to overlapping in different contexts. Otherwise, while analyzing compliments in different contexts there are some factors must be taken into consideration such as; social power and status, gender, and the relationship between the speaker and the respondent (Sun, 2013). Furthermore, Wolfson (1981) gives a high value to the nature of interaction as a major factor for the influence of the compliment response. Gumperz (1982) argues that the correct choice of language is governed by the social acceptance. And this correct choice is directly related to the aim of using the compliments and identifies the correct choice of the response that is socially accepted. The convenience of the language choice is related to the speaker's linguistic competence that speakers have to obtain for conversational cooperation (Gumperz, 1982).

### **2.2.2 CR Taxonomies**

Investigating compliment responses in context is started Pomerantz (1978), who studies different strategies of responding among American native speakers. Pomerantz (1978) points out that American CRs are conditioned by using agreement strategies and at the same time by avoiding self-praise. These conditions are related to the politeness theory, in which Americans are avoiding Face Threatening Acts. In

Pomerantz's (1978) investigation, CRs are classified into three strategies: acceptance, non-acceptance, and avoid face threatening acts. According to Pomerantz (1978), there is a problematic issue in responding to compliments occurs in both acceptance and non-acceptance strategies; if the respondent accepts he/she might accuse self-praise, and if he/she rejects the compliment, it might be considered as face threatening act. To avoid this issue, it's better to respond with a simple acceptance, for example, 'thank you' can help in avoiding face threatening acts (Pomerantz, 1978).

Herbert (1986) presents a more detailed framework of CRs. His taxonomy is based on three macro-level of CRs: Agreement, Non-agreement, and Request interpretation. Under these three macro level strategies, Herbert lists twelve micro-level CRs (See appendix B). By analysing more than a thousand of CRs, Herbert finds out that only of the 36.35% of the CRs are used by Americans shows agreement. In this taxonomy, agreement strategies mean and include acceptance appreciation of the compliment and can include an avoidance of face threatening acts by adding a comment to the CR. While non-agreement strategies include no acceptance an appraisalment where the respondent can scale-down the compliment which could be considered as face threatening act. Request interpretation is divided into two types, the first is offering, for example, 'do you like to have it?' And the second part is the interpretation which can be done by changing the subject or keeping silent.

Another taxonomy is presented by Holmes (1988) based on three macro level CR strategies: Accept, Reject, and Evade. And ten micro CR strategies underlie the macro level CR strategies. Accept strategies include both appreciation and agreeing

with the compliment addresser, besides complimenting back. Reject strategies include disagreeing and questioning an accuracy, which might be considered as face threatening act. While evade strategies include shifting the credit and requesting reassurance which could be considered as a politeness strategy that helps in avoiding face threatening acts. In a context of New Zealand, Holmes conducts her study on compliments across gender. The focus of the study is to find out what are the most frequent face functions that are used, the positive face acts or the face threatening acts. By examining the frequencies between genders on 484 compliments that are addressed by the participants, Holmes finds that males are more likely to address compliments to females, and the most frequent interactional topic of complimenting is 'appearance' where the female-female interaction is the highest and male-male interaction is the lowest.

Ye (1995) investigates the gender differences in compliments speech act behavior in the Chinese context by using different taxonomy, Ye's (1995) taxonomy is based on studying the implicit and explicit compliments in Chinese language the differences could be spotted by investigating the occurrence of complimentary words such as 'that's so nice' as an explicit compliment, and 'that brought the brightness to my eyes' as an implicit compliment. Ye (1995) divides the compliments strategies into four strategies: implicit compliment, explicit compliment, no-response, and no-compliment

### **2.2.3 Previous Studies on Gender Differences in CRs**

There are some individual differences in addressing compliments and responding to compliments, these differences are related to the differences between different cultures in the norms of compliment behavior. Thus, every culture has its different manners in addressing and responding to compliments. Furthermore, these cultural

and social differences affect the individual choices of strategies of addressing and responding to compliments. In addition to some factors that influence the individual use of the speech acts such as: gender, age, educational background, social distance, ethnicity, and so on (Sari, 2013).

Another research on compliment behavior and gender differences is initiated by Wolfson (1983) who states that females receive more compliments than men. Herbert (1986) and Holmes (1988) studies on the native English language contexts considered as a base for studying gender differences in compliment speech act behavior and compliment responses. Afterwards, their frameworks are used widely in other inter-language and intercultural contrastive studies as well as in other languages native contexts. The bold lines of findings of Herbert (1986) and Holmes (1988) confirms that females tend to accept more compliments from males than from females, while the female-female interaction is the most frequent interaction when the compliments and responds are related to the appearance. Holmes (1988) finds that females prefer to use compliments to express solidarity and as a tool of positive politeness and compliments are less used by men in order to avoid any misunderstanding that might be considered as face threatening act.

In the American context, Sari (2013) investigates the gender differences in compliment speech act behaviour and CRs that are used in ten randomly chosen 'Oprah Winfrey Show' videos. The researcher collects the data from the interactions between females and males in the videos including the host, guests and audience. Afterwards, the researcher transcribes compliments and CRs that occurred in the conversations of the participants, then the transcriptions are coded in two stages; in the first stage, compliments are coded and classified according to Ye's (1995)

taxonomy of compliments. The second stage, CRs are coded and classified according to Herbert's (1986) taxonomy of CRs. And the data are divided into two denominations, same gender and different gender. The main finding of Sari (2013) that females tend to pay more compliments than males in general. And across genders, both genders tend to pay compliments to the opposite gender and the male-male interaction recorded the fewest which means that females are receiving more compliments from both genders than males do. This finding goes with Wolfson (1984) finding that females receive significant amount of compliments than males do. At the level of complimenting strategies used, both genders used explicit compliment strategy for addressing compliments to same and different genders. Moreover, males use slightly more implicit compliments than females. Sari (2013) argues that these findings which contradict with previous studies are reason for the participants' raised awareness of the equality between genders. Finding of used CR strategies show that both genders used the ten strategies of Herbert's taxonomy with the same and the opposite gender, with slight differences while using CRs with same gender. These differences are presented clearly in using non-acceptance and no-acknowledgment strategies in the CRs from male to male. On the other hand, females use both acceptance and non- acceptance in the same frequency.

Another study in the American context is conducted by Bolton (1994), the researcher examines the influence of gender on complimenting behaviour. Also, the researcher studies the relationship between sociolinguistics and TESOL and the relationship between TESOL and compliment behaviour. The data of the study are corpus of 90 compliments collected by three procedures; Wolfson's method, self-observation (for the compliments are used by the researcher), and noting compliments that are used in three American TV shows. Data analyses are conducted upon two stages according

to the aims of the study. The first stage, the findings show an agreement with Holmes's findings especially at the level of functions of compliments. Surprisingly, three trends are noted due to the number of the sample; first, CR as deflection of the compliment, also known as lax acknowledgment which is used by males twice as females do. Second, using 'Well' frequently in the most of CRs which are considered as preferred response in some cases and non-preferred response in other cases. The third trend is in some cases, compliments receive more than one CR without finding any relation between the used compliment strategy and CR strategy. Other findings agreed with Holmes (1988) and Wolfson (1983) that females receive more compliments than males, and the most frequent topics are appearance and ability, while males receive more compliments on possession. In the second section of the study, the researcher investigates gender differences in compliment speech act behaviour among six TESOL textbooks. The evaluation of the textbooks shows that the authors of the books try to use compliments strategies and CRs strategies equally between same and different genders. Moreover, the researcher notes that the sociolinguistic research helps in better understanding of compliment behaviour in American English.

In the Chinese context, Ye (1995) uses Discourse Completion Test DCT for collecting the research data. The DCT is designed as a dialogue in order to investigate the gender differences in complimenting on 'Appearance and Ability topics'. Ye's (1995) investigations reveal that most people tend to give compliments when they are facing the compliment object. Findings of the study reveals that both males and females tend to use compliment strategies. Statistically, the results show a difference in applying the four strategies among genders. Males apply both implicit compliments strategy and no-compliment strategy more than females. This implies

that different strategies are used by each gender. The analyses of CR strategies reveal that males use more non-acceptance strategies and no-response strategy while females prefer to use more acceptance strategies. These findings go with Holmes'(1988) and Herbert (1990) findings which say that females tend to accept and agree to the compliment while males prefer to non-agree and scale-down the compliment.

Ye's model is used widely in the compliment and CRs research in the Chinese context. For example, Quan (2004) follows Ye's (1995) model and uses DCT to collect research data. Quan's (2004) findings agree exactly with Ye's (1995) findings that there is gender based differences in using compliments and in responding to compliments. Furthermore, females use more acceptance and direct strategies than males while males preferred indirect and no-response strategies and non-compliment strategies.

Furkó and Dudás (2012) investigate gender differences in CR strategies in the Hungarian context. The participants of the study are 19 male and 38 female undergraduate EFL students, they are selected from an institute for teaching English language and American studies in Hungary, the participants age range is (18-23) years. The authors of the study designs a DCT of ten situations where the participants are asked to give two responses for each compliment, one for the same gender and the other for the opposite gender. The collected data are coded and classified according to Herbert's (1998) taxonomy of CRs. Their main findings of English CRs show that both female and male students prefer to use agreement macro CRs to non-agreement or request interpretation CRs. Furthermore, among female responses, there is a tendency to use agreement CR strategies in response to compliments

addressed by females more than to compliments addressed by males. This finding contradicts the results of Wolfson (1983) that compliments offered by males are more likely to be accepted than compliments offered by females. Furthermore, their finding contradicts With Herbert's (1998) who finds that males prefer to reject a compliment addressed by a female than a male. While Furkó and Dudás (2012) find that at macro level strategies, males offer agreement CR strategies to both the same and opposite genders with approximately same frequency. Meanwhile, at the micro level of CR strategies, the main finding is that females tend to use more variety of micro strategies than males.

In the Iranian context, Khaneshan and Bonyadi (2016) investigate the differences in CR strategies used among Iranian EFL learners regarding age and gender factors. Participants of the study are 100 advanced Iranian EFL learners divided into two groups based on gender, 50 males and 50 females, with age range (16-40). All the participants attend First Certificate in English (FCE) test to make sure of their level of English as well as for the reliability of the results. Then the researchers gives the participants a DCT consists of four situations with four answer spaces for each situation in case of multiple answers borrow from Chen and Yang (2010). The collected CRs are coded and classified according to Holmes' (1988) taxonomy of CRs. Afterwards; the frequencies are calculated in two stages. The first is according to gender. The second stage is according to age differences, teenagers and adults. In this regard, results of gender differences analysis show that for acceptance strategies, both females and males use these strategies in a very close rate. The same results are recorded for rejection and evade strategies which reveal the first main finding of the research that there are no significant differences in the use of CR strategies among gender groups of the study. Correspondingly, the results of age differences analysis

show no significant differences between adults and teenagers in using CR strategies. But the only different is spotted at the level of humour used by teenagers was higher than adults.

Another study in the Iranian context conducted by Ebadi, Beigzadeh, and Sabzevari (2015) study CR patterns and the gender based on differences between Persian and English native speakers in CR behaviour. Participants of the study were 50 EFL native Persian students, they are divided into two gender based groups, 25 female and 25 male. All the participants were at the age range 19-26 years. A Persian DCT consist of 16 real life situations are adapted as data collection instrument for the study. For classifying the CRs, the researcher uses Herbert's (1986) taxonomy of CRs. In addition to Herbert's' taxonomy, the researchers adds one more category used for the Persian CRs, so called 'formulaic expression' adapted from Yousefvand (2010). The results of the study show that at the macro level strategies, most of Persian native speakers tend to use agreement strategies rather than the other two strategies. While at micro level strategies, the most frequently used CR strategy was formulaic expression. The results show that there are no frequent differences between Persian speakers and Native American English speakers in the use of CR strategies. in the case of gender differences in CR strategies, the results of the study show that males prefer to use formulaic expression strategy as their first choice for responding to compliments, while females tend to use 'appreciation token' strategy unless if they received the compliment from unknown male, then they tend to use non-agreement strategies. The researcher mentions that these results are in accordance with the results of Yousefvand (2010).

#### **2.2.4 Previous Studies on Gender Differences CRs in the Arabic Contexts**

There are some studies in the Arabic contexts that investigate gender differences in compliment speech act behaviour and gender based differences in CRs strategies in use. Most of the studies focus on EFL learners and undergraduate Arabic students in the Arabic universities. Meanwhile, no record find any studies that focus on Arabic students who live and study abroad, in non-Arabic speaking countries, those students who use English language as a tool of communication in their daily life. In this section the researcher will present some of the studies of the same topic and related topics that are conducted in the Arabic contexts.

In the Iraqi context, Ebadi and Salman (2015) investigate and categorize the CR strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners, and focus on the effect of gender on the use of CR strategies. The researcher, randomly, select 100 undergraduate EFL learners who are divided into two groups, 50 females and 50 males. An adapted DCT are designed by the researchers and used to collect the study data in both languages; English and Arabic. The DCT consists of 12 situation on four compliment topics; appearance, possession, ability and accomplishment. The collected data are codified manually by the researchers according to Herbert's (1986) taxonomy of CRs. Furthermore, 'formulaic expression' strategy is added to Herbert's taxonomy. The main drawings of their results from the English DCT show that Iraqi EFL learners prefer to accept compliments rather than reject them. Also, three of the participants show a transfer of expressions from Arabic language into English. Secondly, in the results of Arabic DCT, most of the participants tend to use formulaic expression strategy rather than other strategies, while agreement strategy occurs on the second place in using strategies. The analysis of the data based on cross-gender patterns show that, in English language, female learners use 'appreciation token' more frequently than

male learners. In general, female participants show high tendency in the use of agreement strategies than males. Meanwhile, in the results of the Arabic DCT, male learners prefer to use 'praise upgrade' strategy more than females, while females use 'question' as disagreement sub-category response.

Salameh (2001) investigates the universality of CRs realisation patterns through investigating the performance of producing CRs by American English native speakers, Saudi Arabic native speakers as, and Saudi EFL learners 50 person in each group, with a reference to the effect of social status, social distance, and cross-gender differences in applying CRs patterns. The researcher uses triangulation method for data collection. Mainly, the researcher designed DCT as data collection tool. The collected responses are classified according to a framework that is designed by the researcher. In general, the results of the study show that Americans use agreement and non-agreement strategies slightly as Saudis do. The high differences are shown in the use of 'Deflection' strategies, in which the responses of both Saudis and American are affected by the social class and social distance of the compliment addresser. The analysis of the effect of gender shows that Saudis use more acceptance strategies while interacting with the same gender, as well as they use more rejection with the opposite gender. Meanwhile, the American responses were not affected by the gender of the compliment addresser or the gender of the respondent. Furthermore, in the Saudi context, the female-female interaction had had the highest tendency of acceptance. By contrast, in the American context, the male-female interaction has the highest tendency of acceptance. This entails that in both contexts, females use more acceptance CR strategies than males.

Alrousan, Awal and Salehuddin (2016) examine the CR strategies that are used by Jordanian university students. The participants of the study are 36 university students, they are divided into two groups, 18 female and 18 male Arabic native speakers. The researchers agree on 'note taking' technique as a data collection instrument; using this technique helps the researcher to collect naturally occurred CRs in different daily situations. The researcher notes down on his notebook 611 CRs addressed by the participants. Then, Herbert's (1990) taxonomy of CRs is used in order to classify the collected data. In the bases of used strategies, the results of the study show that both genders tend to use agreement strategies rather than the other strategies. In the light of gender differences in the use of CRs, the results show that female students prefer to agree with the compliment more than male students do. Furthermore, female students agree with compliments addressed by females more than the compliments addressed by males.

In the Palestinian context, Al-Khateeb (2009) conducts a comparative intercultural study which aims at investigating the speech act of thanking as a CR used by Palestinian students. The participants of the study are 227 students distributed as: 214 non-native English speakers and 13 native English speakers are divided into two gender groups. The researcher distributes a DCT consists of 10 situations in both English and Arabic languages in order to collect CRs. The general findings of the study show significant differences between native and non-native English speakers in the use of speech act of thanking in the basis of cultural background, specialization, and proficiency level. Meanwhile, the results show no significant differences according to the gender of the compliment addressee and the respondent. Furthermore, both male and female participants use politeness strategies in

responding to the compliments. However, females show more sensitivity while responding to compliments on appearance.

In conclusion, the discussion of gender differences in using CR strategies has been in the agenda of many scholars for a long time; yet the results they reached are still far from being conclusive. Because gender itself is not a stable factor; it depends on many variables such as cultural and social elements etc. In this study, it is intended to investigate gender-based differences in using CR strategies among Arabic undergraduate student in an English speaking environment.

## Chapter 3

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology used by the researcher in order to investigate the gender differences in the use of CR strategies in the case of Arabic students of Eastern Mediterranean University – Northern Cyprus. The chapter includes a detailed description of the participant, data collection tools and procedures, context, and data analysis tools and procedures.

#### **3.1 Research Context**

In this study, a quantitative research method using discourse completion test (DCT) is applied in order to answer the research questions about any significant gender-based differences in responding to compliments addressed by the same and the opposite gender, and to find the most frequent Cr strategies used by both female and male Arabic undergraduate students of EMU.

#### **3.2 Participants**

The participants of the study consisted of 100 undergraduate native Arabic speakers from the students of Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) in Northern Cyprus. The participants are randomly chosen and divided into two groups (50 females, 50 males). The participants of the study are Palestinians and Jordanians student due to the same cultural background of these two nationalities. According to the regulations of EMU, the participants' English proficiency level is intermediate or higher. The medium of instructions of EMU is English language. Moreover, the internationality of the university's students has made English language as the language of

communication inside and outside the university's campus. This entails that the participants of the study use English in their daily communications with their instructors, colleagues, and others outside the university.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

#### **3.3.1 Instruments**

In order to collect the data of the study, the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) is borrowed from Furkó and Dudás (2012) (see appendix E) . The DCT consists of two main parts. The first part is designed to collect demographic data about gender, age, nationality, department, and academic year. The second part consists of 10 situations of compliments which required the participants to provide two responses to each situation according to the gender of the compliment addressor, the first response to female compliment addressor, and the second response to male addressor.

Situations of the borrowed DCT are designed to cover appearance and performance compliment topics behaviour. Four situations (2, 4, 7, and 10) are designed in order to collect responses to compliments on appearance and personality topics. Situation six is designed in order to respond to a compliment of admiration on belongings which can be considered as a factor of appearance. Situations 1, 3, 5, 8, and 9 aim to collect responses on performances which include abilities and accomplishments.

DCTs are the mostly common method used for investigating speech acts. It motivates the researcher to elicit the required data in different social situations, and allows the researcher to collect research data in an approximate short time (Ebadi and Salman, 2015). Another advantage of using DCTs is that it allows the researcher to control different variables in accordance with different situations. This permits the researcher to obtain coherence between the situations and the findings (Wolfson, 1986).

### **3.3.2 Validity of the DCT**

The researcher discussed the DCT with an instructor in the department of Foreign Language Education at EMU. At this step the instructor suggested some changes at the consent form and some changes at the first part of the DCT which is the first part which includes personal information of the participants (see Appendix A, Student Questionnaire Consent Form). After having these parts edited, the researcher sent the DCT to two English translators in Yarmouk University in Jordan in order to discuss the cultural validity of the DCT, and then translated the DCT to Arabic for better understanding of the cultural issues in the situations of the DCT (see Appendix D, Certificate of translation). Afterwards, the DCT was presented to the Ethics Committee at EMU by the department of Foreign Language Teaching, and the researcher had the committee's permission to conduct the study at EMU using the presented DCT.

Another procedure of testing the validity and reliability of the DCT was by conducting a minor research presented as a term project for 'ELTE 513 Discourse and Pragmatics' course for MA and PHD students and candidates at the Department of Foreign Language Education at EMU. Ten participants (5 females, 5 males) were investigated according to the first 4 research questions of the current study.

### **3.3.3 Data Collection Procedures**

Firstly, permission has been taken from the author of the DCT by E-mail in order to use it for this study (see appendix C). Then, after discussing the validity of the DCT and taking the permissions to use it in the context of Arabic students of EMU, the researcher distributed the DCT online attached with the consent form which includes a voluntarily declaration of participating in the study.

Lefever, Dal, and Matthiasdottir (2007) argue that online data collection is a trending method of data collection for academic research which might replace the paper in the future. Some of the advantages of online data collection occur in saving time and money, as well as it can easily access large population and get returns in a short period of time.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The collected responses were classified and coded manually according to Herbert's (1986) taxonomy of CRs (see Appendix B) because of the variety of the minor strategies in Herbert's (1986) classification of CRs. The classification procedure was based on three macro-level CRs: Agreement, Non-agreement, and Request interpretation. Under these three macro level strategies, the classification was taken under twelve micro-level CRs:

1. Appreciation token: accepting the compliment verbally or non-verbally. In this case there is no semantic connivance between the compliment and the response. For example, responding by "Thanks, thank you" or giving a smile as a response.
2. Comment acceptance: The addressee accepts the compliment by giving a relevant response that consists of appreciation and a comment on the topic. For example, responding by "thank you, I like it too", "it's one of my choices".
3. Praise upgrade: the case of accepting the compliment but responding with contribution. For example, "Yes, I know that I am the best in doing this".
4. Comment history: the addressee accepts and agrees with the compliment, but responses with information that might be irrelevant to avoid self-praise in some situations. For example, responding by saying "I ordered it online".

5. Reassignment: the addressee agrees with the compliment, but gives the favour or the praise to another person or object. For example, responding by “I learnt that from my father”.
6. Return: The praise is shifted back to the compliment addresser. For example, “you look in good shape, too”.
7. Scale down: the addressee disagrees with the compliment and gives lower feedback about the object to the compliment addresser. For example, “it wasn’t as I expected”.
8. Question: the addressee shows disagreement by responding using question. For example, “do you think so?” or “really?”
9. Disagreement: The addressee disagrees and mentions that the object doesn’t worth the compliment. For example, “I didn’t like it at all” or “I hate that”.
10. Qualification: The addressee disagrees with part of the compliment by using: but, alright, well etc. For example, “alright, but my brother’s is much more beautiful”.
11. No acknowledgement: the addressee shows no interest in the compliment. This might be by giving irrelevant response that changes the subject or keeping silent.
12. Request interpretation: The addressee interprets the compliment as a request rather than a simple compliment and gives an offer as response. For example, “would you like to have it?”

The coding procedure was based on giving numerical value from 1 to 12 to each answer according to the micro level strategies of Herbert (1986) in order to analyse the data statistically. Accordingly, both classifying and coding procedures depended

on the gender of the compliment addresser and the gender of the addressee as Female to Female, Female to Male, Male to Female, and Male to Male.

Afterwards, the frequencies of the strategies used by each group of the mentioned four groups were calculated in order to answer the first four research questions. Then, the frequencies were calculated for the strategies used by the main two gender groups (females and males) in order to answer the fifth research question.

In order to check the reliability of the responses, the researcher used SPSS program to find Cronbach's Alpha. The result of the reliability test was:  $\alpha = .969$ , which is an excellent value.

Then, the researcher made an independent-sample t-test to find any significant gender-based differences in responding to compliments in general. Also, the researcher made a chain of t-tests for each situation of the DCT situations in order to answer the fifth research question. A test value ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) was taken by the research for all of the eleven t-tests.

## Chapter 4

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter demonstrates the findings of the research and discussion of the findings. In this part, the researcher investigates the hypothesis of the study and answers the research questions with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics.

#### **4.1 Findings Related to Research Question 1: What are the most frequent CR strategies used by Arabic undergraduate male students of EMU for responding to compliments addressed by Males (M-M)?**

Table 4.1: Frequencies and percentage of M-M CR strategies

<b>CR strategy</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>A. Agreement</b>		
<b>I. Acceptances</b>		
1. Appreciation Token	168	33.6
2. Comment Acceptance	45	9.0
3. Praise Upgrade	13	2.6
<b>II. Comment History</b>	125	25.0
<b>III. Transfers</b>		
1. Reassignment	21	4.2
2. Return	25	5.0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>79.4</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>		
<b>I. Scale Down</b>	53	10.6
<b>II. Question</b>	29	5.8
<b>III. Nonacceptances</b>		
1. Disagreement	6	1.2
2. Qualification	5	1.0
<b>IV. No Acknowledgment</b>	4	0.8
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>19.4</b>
<b>C. Other</b>		
<b>I. Request</b>	6	1.2

As it is shown in Table 4.1, at the macro CR strategies level, the most frequent strategy used by Arabic male students of EMU “for responding compliments addressed by males” is the agreement strategy. 79.4% of the participants use the ‘agreement’ strategy, while 19.4% of them use ‘nonagreement’ one.

At the micro level CR strategies, the most frequent strategy used by male participants is ‘appreciation token’, where the percentage of using it is 33.6% of all the strategies they use. This means that many of male participants respond with ‘thank you’ or give a smile instead of saying anything as a response for compliments addressed by males. Moreover, male participants tend to use ‘comment history’ strategy while responding to compliments addressed by males with a percentage of 25% of all the strategies they use. This percentage of using ‘comment history’ strategy entails that male participants tend to avoid self-praise in some situations of interaction with males and use only acceptance comment.

Another spot-worthy finding of micro level CR strategies is in the use of ‘scale down’ strategy with a percentage of 10.6%. This confirms that some of the male participants tend to disagree with compliment addressed by a male, or disagree about the object that the compliment is addressed for it. For example, in some situations, some of the male participants get irritated and harassed to respond to a compliment based on appearance which is addressed by males.

**4.2 Findings Related to Research Question 2: What are the most frequent CR strategies used by Arabic undergraduate male students of EMU for responding to compliments addressed by Females (M-F)?**

Table 4.2: Frequencies and percentage of M-F CR strategies

<b>CR strategy</b>	<b>frequency</b>	<b>percentage</b>
<b>A. Agreement</b>		
I. Acceptances		
1. Appreciation Token	109	21.8
2. Comment Acceptance	109	21.8
3. Praise Upgrade	28	5.6
II. Comment History	114	22.8
III. Transfers		
1. Reassignment	15	3.0
2. Return	70	14.0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>		
I. Scale Down	21	4.2
II. Question	18	3.6
III. Nonacceptances		
1. Disagreement	1	0.2
2. Qualification	1	0.2
IV. No Acknowledgment	3	0.6
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>8.8</b>
<b>C. Other</b>		
I. Request	11	2.2

At the micro level strategies, Table 4.2 below shows that Arabic male students of EMU tend to use ‘comment history’ strategy for responding to compliments addressed by females where 22.8% of all the responses are given by using ‘comment history’ strategy. Besides, the percentages of using ‘appreciation token’ and ‘acceptance comment’ are equal 21.8% for both of these strategies, which is close to the percentage of using ‘comment history’. This entails that male participants tend to avoid self-praise and avoid using FTA’s while responding to compliments addressed by females. Another noticed frequently used strategy is ‘return’ strategy which male

participants use it with a percentage of 14% of all the CR strategies they use. This also, entails that Arabic male students of EMU tend to avoid self-praise in some situations and shift the praise to the compliment addresser while responding to compliments addressed by females.

### **4.3 Findings Related to Research Question 3: What are the most frequent CR strategies used by Arabic undergraduate female students of EMU for responding to compliments addressed by Females (F-F)?**

Table 4.3: Frequencies and percentage of F-F CR strategies

<b>CR strategy</b>	<b>frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>A. Agreement</b>		
I. Acceptances		
1. Appreciation Token	97	19.4
2. Comment Acceptance	116	23.2
3. Praise Upgrade	28	5.6
II. Comment History	116	23.2
III. Transfers		
1. Reassignment	30	6.0
2. Return	56	11.2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>88.6</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>		
I. Scale Down	24	4.8
II. Question	16	3.2
III. Nonacceptances		
1. Disagreement	2	0.4
2. Qualification	0	0.0
IV. No Acknowledgment	11	2.2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>10.6</b>
<b>C. Other</b>		
I. Request	4	0.8

As it is shown on Table 4.3, the most frequent macro CR strategy used by Arabic female students of EMU, who respond to compliments addressed by females, is agreement strategy with a percentage of 88.6%. Meanwhile, the percentage of using nonagreement strategies is just 10.6% of all strategies they use.

According to Table 4.3, the frequencies of using micro strategies are equal to ‘comment acceptance’ strategy and ‘comment history’ strategy with a percentage of 23.2% for either strategy. This means that female participants tend to appreciate the compliment addressed by females. At the same level, they try to avoid showing self-praise while responding to compliments addressed by females.

In some situations, female participants use ‘appreciation token’ with a percentage of 19.4% of all micro CR strategies are used. This can be interpreted as the tendency of some female participants to show acceptance verbally or non-verbally for the compliments addressed by females. For example, some of the female participants respond to female compliment addressers on situation #2 on the DCT which is a compliment based on appearance with: ‘thank you dear’ without adding any comment to the response.

#### **4.4 Findings Related to Research Question 4: What are the most frequent CR strategies used by Arabic undergraduate female students of EMU for responding to compliments addressed by males (F-M)?**

As it is shown on Table 4.4, agreement strategy is the most frequent macro CR strategy used by Arabic female students of EMU to respond to compliments addressed by males with a percentage of 89.6% of all of the strategies they use. This percentage in addition to the percentage of nonagreement strategies which is 10% are almost equal to the percentages used by female participants to respond to compliments addressed by females. In this sense, the illustration of micro strategies reveals the minor differences in the use of CR strategies by females.

According to Table 4.4, ‘appreciation token’ strategy is the most frequent micro CR strategy used by female participants to respond to compliments addressed by males. Furthermore, ‘comment acceptance’ and ‘comment history’ are used frequently by female participants with percentages of respectively 23.2%, 20.4%. This entails that female participants prefer to respond with ‘thank you’ or by giving a smile instead of saying anything as a response for compliments addressed by males.

Table 4.4: Frequencies and percentage of F-M CR strategies

<b>CR strategy</b>	<b>frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>A. Agreement</b>		
I. Acceptances		
1. Appreciation Token	157	31.4
2. Comment Acceptance	116	23.2
3. Praise Upgrade	29	5.8
II. Comment History	102	20.4
III. Transfers		
1. Reassignment	23	4.6
2. Return	21	4.2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>89.6</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>		
I. Scale Down		
II. Question	10	2.0
III. Nonacceptances		
1. Disagreement	3	0.6
2. Qualification	3	0.6
IV. No Acknowledgment	14	2.8
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>10.0</b>
<b>C. Other</b>		
I. Request	2	0.4

#### **4.5 Findings Related to Research Question 5: Are there any significant differences in using CR strategies between Arabic undergraduate female and male students of EMU?**

In order to answer research question number 5, table 4.5 illustrates the frequencies and percentages of CR strategies used by both gender groups, and Tables 4.5.1-

4.5.10 illustrate CR strategies used by both genders to respond to each situation of the 10 DCT situations.

Table 4.5: CR strategies' frequencies and percentages according to gender variable

CR strategy	Female	Percentage	Male	Percentage
<b>A. Agreement</b>				
I. Acceptances				
1. Appreciation Token	254	25.4	277	27.7
2. Comment Acceptance	232	23.2	154	15.4
3. Praise Upgrade	57	5.7	41	4.1
II. Comment History	218	21.8	239	23.9
III. Transfers				
1. Reassignment	56	5.6	36	3.6
2. Return	77	7.7	95	9.5
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>894</b>	<b>89.4</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>84.2</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>				
I. Scale Down				
II. Question	26	2.6	47	4.7
III. Nonacceptances				
1. Disagreement	5	0.5	7	7.0
2. Qualification	3	0.3	6	0.6
IV. No Acknowledgment	25	2.5	7	7.0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>14.1</b>
<b>C. Other</b>				
I. Request	6	0.6	17	1.7
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)*</b>	<b>0.011</b>		<b>0.010</b>	

*\*Test value, ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )*

#### 4.5.1 Findings related to question 5 according to frequencies of using CR strategies

Table 4.5 shows that, according to the statistical level at significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), there are significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies. At the macro level, the differences are slightly noticeable. Responses using 'agreement' strategies are 89.4% for females and 84.2% for males, for 'non-agreement' strategies 10.3% for females and 14.1% for males, and 0.6% for females 1.4% males for 'other/request' strategy.

The most noticeable gender-based differences occur at micro level CR strategies. The highest value is in favour of ‘comment acceptance’ strategy where it is 23.2% of all the strategies used by females, while 15.4% of all the strategies used by males. Another noticeable difference is in favour of ‘appreciation’ strategy, in which 25.4% of all the strategies used by females and 27.7% of all the strategies used by males.

For the micro strategies that are listed under ‘nonagreement’ macro strategy, the most significant gender-based difference is in the use of ‘scale down’ strategy, in which 4.4% of all the strategies used by females, while 7.4% of all the strategies used by males.

These gender-based differences entail that Arabic female students of EMU prefer to accept the compliment by giving a relevant response consisting of appreciation and they comment on the topic more than males do. Meanwhile, Arabic male students prefer to accept the compliment verbally or non-verbally. Moreover, Arabic male students of EMU tend to disagree with the compliment and give lower feedback about the object to the compliment addresser.

#### **4.5.2 Findings related to question 5 according to compliment topics**

As mentioned in chapter three, the DCT’s situations are designed to cover appearance and performance compliment topics. The situations were distributed as follows: situations (2, 4, 6, 7, and 10) cover the appearance topic, and situations (1, 3, 5, 8, and 9) cover performance topic

##### **4.5.2.1 Findings related to responses to the first DCT situation (on performance topic)**

Table 4.5.1 below shows that, according to the statistical scale at significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), there are no significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic

students of EMU in the use of CR strategies to respond to the first situation of the DCT. The highest value of macro CR strategies usage is in favour to ‘agreement’ strategies and ‘comment history’ among micro CR strategies usage

Table 4.5.1: Frequencies and percentages of responses to the first DCT situation

<b>CR strategy</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>A. Agreement</b>				
I. Acceptances				
1. Appreciation Token	0	0	8	8
2. Comment Acceptance	17	17	10	10
II. Comment History	76	76	65	65
III. Transfers				
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>				
I. Scale Down				
II. Question	0	0	3	3
III. Nonacceptances				
IV. No Acknowledgment	7	7	0	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>C. Other</b>				
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)*</b>	<b>0.217</b>		<b>0.149</b>	

*\*Test value, ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )*

#### 4.5.2.2 Findings related to responses to the second DCT situation (on appearance topic)

Table 4.5.2: Frequencies and percentages of responses to the second DCT situation

<b>CR strategy</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>A. Agreement</b>				
I. Acceptances				
1. Appreciation Token	49	49	53	53
2. Comment Acceptance	26	26	15	15
3. Praise Upgrade	4	4	2	2
II. Comment History	6	6	9	9
III. Transfers				
2. Return	8	8	12	12
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>				
I. Scale Down				
II. Question	7	7	4	4
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>C. Other</b>				
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)*</b>	<b>0.079</b>		<b>0.082</b>	

*\*Test value, ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )*

Table 4.5.2 shows that, according to the statistical scale at significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), there are no significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies to respond to the second situation of the DCT. The highest value of macro CR strategies usage is in favour of agreement strategies and ‘appreciation token’ among micro CR strategies usage.

#### 4.5.2.3 Findings related to responses to the third DCT situation (on performance topic)

Table 4.5.3 below shows that, according to the statistical scale at significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), there are significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies to respond to the third situation of the DCT. The highest value of CR strategies usage is in favour of agreement strategies and ‘appreciation token’ strategy among micro CR strategies usage.

Table 4.5.3: Frequencies and percentages of responses to the third DCT situation

CR Strategy	Female	%	Male	%
<b>A. Agreement</b>				
I. Acceptances				
1. Appreciation Token	40	40	36	36
2. Comment Acceptance	27	27	21	21
3. Praise Upgrade	11	11	8	8
II. Comment History	10	10	20	20
III. Transfers				
1. Reassignment	3	3	0	0
2. Return	0	0	1	1
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>				
I. Scale Down	4	4	4	4
II. Question	2	2	10	10
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>C. Other</b>				
I. Request	1	1	0	0
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)*</b>	<b>0.041</b>		<b>0.033</b>	

*\*Test value, ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )*

#### 4.5.2.4 Findings related to responses to the fourth DCT situation (on appearance topic)

Table 4.5.2 shows that, according to the statistical scale at significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), there are significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies to respond to the fourth situation of the DCT. The highest value of CR macro strategies usage is in favour of agreement strategies and ‘appreciation token’ strategy among micro CR strategies usage.

Table 4.5.4: Frequencies and percentages of responses to the fourth DCT situation

CR Strategy	Female	%	Male	%
<b>A. Agreement</b>				
I. Acceptances				
1. Appreciation Token	37	37	44	44
2. Comment Acceptance	28	28	9	9
3. Praise Upgrade	9	9	6	6
II. Comment History	7	7	3	3
III. Transfers				
1. Reassignment	1	1	0	0
2. Return	17	17	21	21
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>				
I. Scale Down	0	0	3	3
II. Question	0	0	5	5
III. Nonacceptances				
2. Qualification	0	0	4	4
IV. No Acknowledgment	0	0	1	1
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>C. Other</b>				
I. Request	1	1	4	4
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)*</b>	<b>0.043</b>		<b>0.043</b>	

*\*Test value, ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )*

#### 4.5.2.5 Findings related to responses to the fifth DCT situation (on performance topic)

Table 4.5.5 shows that, according to the statistical scale at significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), there are significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies to respond to the fifth situation of the DCT. The highest

value of macro CR strategies usage is in favour of agreement strategies and ‘Reassignment’ strategy among micro CR strategies usage.

Table 4.5.5: Frequencies and percentages of responses to the fifth DCT situation

CR strategy	Female	%	Male	%
<b>A. Agreement</b>				
I. Acceptances				
1. Appreciation Token	24	24	15	15
2. Comment Acceptance	9	9	8	8
3. Praise Upgrade	8	8	1	1
II. Comment History				
	5	5	14	14
III. Transfers				
1. Reassignment	24	24	29	29
2. Return	23	23	23	23
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>				
I. Scale Down				
	6	6	6	6
III. Nonacceptances				
1. Disagreement	1	1	0	0
2. Qualification	0	0	2	2
IV. No Acknowledgment				
	0	0	2	2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>C. Other</b>				
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)*</b>	<b>0.014</b>		<b>0.014</b>	

*\*Test value, ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )*

#### 4.5.2.6 Findings related to responses to the sixth DCT situation (on appearance topic)

Table 4.5.6 shows that, according to the statistical scale at significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), there are significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies to respond to the sixth situation of the DCT. The highest value of macro CR strategies usage is in favour of agreement strategies and ‘Appreciation Token’ strategy among micro CR strategies usage

Table 4.5.6: Frequencies and percentages of responses to the sixth DCT situation

<b>CR Strategy</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>A. Agreement</b>				
I. Acceptances				
1. Appreciation Token	31	31	26	26
2. Comment Acceptance	18	18	11	11
3. Praise Upgrade	0	0	12	12
II. Comment History	26	26	14	14
III. Transfers				
1. Reassignment	11	11	2	2
2. Return	1	1	12	12
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>				
I. Scale Down				
II. Question	4	4	6	6
III. Nonacceptances				
1. Disagreement	2	2	0	0
IV. No Acknowledgment	3	3	2	2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>C. Other</b>				
I. Request	0	0	2	2
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)*</b>	<b>0.023</b>		<b>0.004</b>	

*\*Test value, ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )*

#### 4.5.2.7 Findings related to responses to the seventh DCT situation (on appearance topic)

Table 4.5.7 shows that, according to the statistical scale at significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), there are significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies to respond to the seventh situation of the DCT. The highest value of macro CR strategies usage is in favour of agreement strategies and ‘comment history’ strategy among micro CR strategies usage.

Table 4.5.7: Frequencies and percentages of responses to the seventh DCT situation

<b>CR strategy</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>A. Agreement</b>				
I. Acceptances				
1. Appreciation Token	9	9	16	16
2. Comment Acceptance	25	25	5	5
3. Praise Upgrade	2	2	3	3
II. Comment History	26	26	44	44
III. Transfers				
1. Reassignment	2	2	17	17
2. Return	13	13	1	1
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>				
I. Scale Down				
1. Scale Down	13	13	1	1
II. Question				
1. Question	2	2	0	0
III. Nonacceptances				
1. Disagreement	1	1	6	6
2. Qualification	1	1	0	0
IV. No Acknowledgment	6	6	0	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>C. Other</b>				
I. Request	0	0	7	7
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)*</b>	<b>0.010</b>		<b>0.045</b>	

*\*Test value, ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )*

#### 4.5.2.8 Findings related to responses to the eighth DCT situation (on performance topic)

Table 4.5.8 shows that, according to the statistical scale at significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), there are significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies to respond to the eighth situation of the DCT. The statistical differences occur in females' use of CR strategies. The highest value of CR strategies usage is in favour of agreement strategies and 'Appreciation Token' strategy among micro CR strategies usage.

Table 4.5.8: Frequencies and percentages of responses to the seventh DCT situation

<b>CR strategy</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>A. Agreement</b>				
I. Acceptances				
1. Appreciation Token	41	41	40	40
2. Comment Acceptance	26	26	25	25
3. Praise Upgrade	8	8	5	5
II. Comment History	15	15	22	22
III. Transfers				
1. Reassignment	0	0	1	1
2. Return	4	4	3	3
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>				
I. Scale Down				
II. Question	4	4	3	3
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>C. Other</b>				
I. Request	0	0	1	1
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)*</b>	<b>0.049</b>		<b>0.053</b>	

*\*Test value, ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )*

#### 4.5.2.9 Findings related to responses to the ninth DCT situation (on performance topic)

Table 4.5.9: Frequencies and percentages of responses to the ninth DCT situation

<b>CR strategy</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>A. Agreement</b>				
I. Acceptances				
1. Appreciation Token	17	17	31	31
2. Comment Acceptance	27	27	29	29
3. Praise Upgrade	13	13	1	1
II. Comment History	18	18	29	29
III. Transfers				
1. Reassignment	11	11	3	3
2. Return	10	10	3	3
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>				
I. Scale Down				
III. Nonacceptances	0	0	1	1
1. Disagreement	0	0	1	1
IV. No Acknowledgment	2	2	0	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
I. Request	1	1	1	1
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	<b>0.010</b>		<b>0.011</b>	

*\*Test value, ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )*

Table 4.5.9 shows that, according to the statistical scale at significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), there are significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies to respond to the ninth situation of the DCT. The highest value of CR strategies usage is in favour of ‘agreement’ strategies and ‘Appreciation Token’ strategy among males’ micro CR strategies usage and ‘Comment Acceptance’ strategy among females’ micro CR strategies usage.

#### 4.5.2.10 Findings related to responses to the tenth DCT situation (on appearance topic)

Table 4.5.10: Frequencies and percentages of responses to the tenth DCT situation

<b>CR strategy</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>A. Agreement</b>				
I. Acceptances				
1. Appreciation Token	7	7	8	8
2. Comment Acceptance	29	29	19	19
3. Praise Upgrade	2	2	3	3
II. Comment History	29	29	19	19
III. Transfers				
1. Reassignment	0	0	1	1
2. Return	1	1	4	4
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>B. Nonagreement</b>				
I. Scale Down				
II. Question	7	7	16	16
III. Nonacceptances				
2. Qualification	2	2	0	0
IV. No Acknowledgment	5	5	1	1
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>C. Other</b>				
I. Request	3	3	2	2
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)*</b>	<b>0.020</b>		<b>0.011</b>	

*\*Test value, ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )*

Table 4.5.10 shows that, according to the statistical scale at significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), there are significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies to respond to the tenth situation of the DCT. The highest value of CR strategies usage is in favour to ‘agreement’ strategies and ‘Comment

History' strategy among females' micro CR strategies usage and 'Scale Down' strategy among males' micro CR strategies usage

#### **4.6 Summary of the Findings**

To sum up, the findings of the study show that both female and male Arabic students of EMU prefer to show agreement with compliments addressed by both the same and opposite gender. Hence, males tend to avoid self-praise while responding to compliments addressed by females. On the other hand, females show more acceptances in responding to compliments addressed by both the same gender and opposite gender.

Also, findings of the study show that there are significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies. Analyses show a significant female superiority in the use of CR agreement strategies, and that females show more acceptance to compliments on both appearance and performance than males do. However, male students used more disagreement in responding to compliments on appearance that addressed by males.

#### **4.7 Discussions of the Findings**

In the case of male-male interaction, findings of the current study show a tendency of agreement in responding to compliment. The percentage of using agreement as macro CR strategy is 79.4%. Meanwhile, the use of nonagreement strategies' percentage is 19.4%. In contrast, in the case of male-female interaction shows that the use of agreement strategies is 86.6%, while 8.8% of the participants use nonagreement strategies. This indicates that some of the male participants tend to disagree with compliment addressed by a male, or disagree about the purpose of using this compliment.

This finding contradicts with Herbert's (1998) who finds that men are more likely to reject a compliment given by a woman than a man. It also contradicts with Furkó and Dudás (2012) who find that men offer agreement macro strategies to male and female with close to equal frequency.

In both cases of female-female interaction and female-male interaction, the data analyses show that females use all macro CR strategies close to equal frequency where the percentages are respectively 88.6% for agreement strategies use and 10.6% for nonagreement strategies use for female-female interaction, and 89.6% for agreement strategies use and 10% for nonagreement use in the female-male interaction. In both cases, the superiority is in favour of acceptance micro strategies. This entails that females tend to accept compliments addressed by both the same gender and opposite gender.

According to the data analysis in the bases of research questions 1, 2, 3, and 4, both genders prefer to use agreement macro strategies for responding to compliments addressed by both the same and opposite gender.

This finding goes with the findings of Sari (2013), who finds that both genders use the ten strategies of Herbert's taxonomy with the same and opposite gender, with slight differences while using CRs with same gender. These differences are presented clearly in the use of non-acceptance and no-acknowledgment strategies in the CRs from male to male. On the other hand, females used both acceptance and non-acceptance in the same frequency.

The findings of this study also agree with the finding of Salameh (2001) Saudi context. In his study on CRs, his findings show that the female-female interaction has the highest tendency of acceptance. While in the American context, the female-male

interaction has the highest tendency of acceptance. This entails that in both contexts, females use more acceptance CR strategies than males.

According to statistical analyses, there are significant statistical differences in the use of CR strategies due to the gender of compliment addresser and the gender of the respondent. At the macro level, the differences are slightly noticeable. Responses using 'agreement' strategies are 89.4% females and 84.2% males. While the statistical analyses of micro CR strategies show that the highest value is in favour of 'acceptance' strategies where 54.3% of all the strategies are used by females and 47.2% of all the strategies are used by males. These values of agreement and acceptance contradict with the findings of Al-Khateeb (2009) who notes in her study that Arabic female students tend to use more disagreement compliments than male do, and adds that females' responses are more offensive than males' responses. Meanwhile, the participants of this study show less offensive behaviour because of the interactions between both genders is higher in the context of this study than the interactions of Al-Kateeb's (2009) context.

According to the statistical analyses of the CRs used by both genders for responding to compliments based on compliment topics of appearance and performance, there are statistical significant differences in the choice of CR strategies due the gender of the compliment addresser and the gender of the respondent in all of the situations of the DCT except in situations one and two.

The findings of the analyses of situations 4, 6, 7, and 10 which consist of compliments on appearance show that both female and male students use agreement strategies and accept the compliments in close to equal frequency. The differences are spotted in using nonagreement strategies. The analysis of the data in the four

situations on appearance shows that male students use nonagreement strategies with a percentage of 42.5% of all strategies used by males to respond to situations on appearance. By contrast, female students use nonagreement strategies with a percentage of 32.5% of all strategies used by females to respond to situations on appearance. This finding supports Al-Khateeb (2009) that females show more sensitivity while responding to compliments on appearance as it is a feminine habit to express their opinions on appearance and look. Moreover, Al-Khateeb (2009) points out that it is “culturally” considered an unacceptable behaviour from Arab and Muslim males to give females compliments on their appearance.

Analyses of situations 3, 5, 8, and 9 on performance topic show that both female and male students prefer to agree with compliment on performance. Accordingly, participants from both genders tend to accept the compliments on their performance except in responding to situation number 5 where the participants prefer to use ‘transfer’ strategies, as in the example below:

5. You and one of your classmates have recently finished and successfully presented an extracurricular activity in your class. At the end of the presentation your partner says to you: “But for your help and clever ideas, our presentation would not have been so successful.” Your response to:  
Female friend: thank you, it was teamwork  
Male friend: thank you, it couldn’t be done without your efforts

As seen in the response to situation 5 by a male participant, it is clear that the respondent agrees with the compliment, but gives the favour or the praise to the compliment addresser, which can be considered as a tendency by both gender groups to use more politeness strategies in responding to situation 5.

The main differences in responding to compliments on performance topic occur in the choice of acceptance subcategories. The analysis shows that females tend to use

‘comment acceptance’ by giving a relevant response that consists of appreciation and a comment on the topic, of which they use almost twice as males do. This finding goes in accordance with Furkó and Dudás (2012) whom state that women use more elaborations and more personal explanations on the basis of performing and using CR strategies.

Findings also support the first and second hypotheses of the study that; females tend to use more acceptance CR strategies than males. Also, the strategies used are affected by gender factors. On the other hand, the findings contradict with the third hypothesis which says that gender differences in using CR strategies among the participants of this study are less significant than the differences found in former studies in the Arabic context due to some factors such as the level of English proficiency of the student of this study which is intermediate and higher, and the fact that the students are using English language as a tool of communication in their daily situations.

To sum up, some researchers found similar results to this study but some of them found different results. The findings of the study showed that both female and male Arabic students of EMU preferred to show agreement with compliments addressed by both the same and opposite gender. Also, findings of the study showed that there are significant statistical gender-based differences among Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies. Analyses showed a significant female superiority in the use of CR agreement strategies, and that females showed more acceptance to compliments on both appearance and performance than males did. On the other hand, male students used more disagreement in responding to compliments on appearance addressed by males.

## Chapter 5

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study, implications and recommendations of the study, and suggestions for further researches.

#### 5.1 Overview of the Study

This study aims at investigating the difference in the use of English compliment responses between the Arabic male and female students of Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) - North Cyprus. Also, it is intended to find the most frequent CR strategies used by Arabic male students of EMU. In addition, this study aims to find the most frequent CR strategies used by Arabic female student of EMU. One hundred Arabic students, 50 females and 50 males, participated in the study by responding to Discourse Completion Test (DCT) consisting of ten situations. The DCT as an instrument of data collection was borrowed from Furkó and Dudás (2012). Moreover, the DCT is designed to collect responses from either gender for each situation.

In order to answer the research questions, the collected responses were coded and classified according to Herbert's (1986) taxonomy of CRs. Then, the frequencies of using CR strategies were calculated and analysed by using SPSS program, including a chain of t-tests for the data in order to find any significant gender-based differences in responding to compliments.

The main drawings of the findings of the study are that agreement strategies are preferred by both groups of the participants. Also, agreement strategies are used by

both gender groups to respond to compliments addressed by the same and opposite gender. Moreover, the study shows that there are statistical significant differences in using CR strategies among the participants of the study due to gender factor.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

Findings of the study show that both female and male Arabic students of EMU prefer to show agreement with compliments addressed by both the same and opposite gender. Also, findings of the study show that there are significant statistical gender-based differences between Arabic students of EMU in using CR strategies. Analyses show a significant female superiority in the use of CR agreement strategies, and that females show more acceptance to compliments on both appearance and performance than males do. On the other hand, male students use more disagreement in responding to compliments on appearance addressed by males. These findings support the first and second hypotheses of the study saying that females tend to use more acceptance CR strategies than males. As well as, the strategies used are affected by gender factors. On the other hand, the findings contradict with the third hypothesis which is gender differences in using CR strategies among the participants of this study are less significant than the differences studied in former studies in the Arabic context due to some factors such as the level of English proficiency of the student of this study which is intermediate and higher, and the fact that the students are using English language as a tool of communication in their daily situations. Analyses of the responses on appearance show that both female and male students use agreement strategies and accept the compliments in close to equal frequency. Also, analyses of responses on performance topic show that both female and male students prefer to agree with compliment on performance. Accordingly, participants from both genders tend to accept the compliments on their performance.

The main finding of the study contradicts with Herbert's (1998) who finds that men are more likely to reject a compliment given by a woman than a man. As well as contradicts with Furkó and Dudás (2012) who find that men offer agreement macro strategies to male and female with close to equal frequency. This contradiction is result of the environment of daily using of English language among the participants of this study. On the other hand, the findings related to compliment topics support Al-Khateeb (2009) that females show more sensitivity while responding to compliments on appearance as it is a feminine habit to express their opinions on appearance and look. Moreover, it agrees with Furkó and Dudás (2012) whom state that women use more elaborations and more personal explanations on the basis of performing and using CR strategies.

### **5.3 Implications and Recommendations of the Study**

Compliments and compliment responses as in Wolfson (1983) definition are 'social lubricants' which help us to make it easier to maintain relation and create rapport with others. In English as foreign language (EFL) teaching/learning process, there might be misunderstandings of some sociocultural-based communication skills. In some ways, this misunderstanding can be solved by giving chances for EFL teachers to raise their sociocultural awareness. For example, interacting with native teachers in group-teaching sessions could be helpful.

By referring to the study of English CR strategies among Arabic students in an international context, the role of syllabus developers is to pay more attention to the sociocultural-based communication skills in EFL classrooms. This might be achieved by including learner-centred activities that based on authentic materials and real life situations and conversations.

Also, teacher training that focuses on pragmatics and evaluation methods for evaluating pragmatic competence of the learners can help teacher to raise the learners' awareness of pragmatics, intercultural politeness, and appropriateness which can make EFL learners know how to use them in their daily life.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Research**

This study answers some questions related to gender differences in the use of CR strategies among Arabic students. Further research is needed for better understanding of their interactions by using various speech acts such as: requests, offers, and threats and so on.

An intercultural research is needed to understand the syntactical patterns used by males and females in complimenting and responding to compliments with a reference to patterns used in both Arabic and English language.

Furthermore, there are some other variables could be included in future research such as; studying the differences in speech acts according to the academic level of the students. Moreover, studying the differences in speech acts according to the variable of academic major is needed in the field.

This study is conducted in the context of Arabic students of Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU). Further studies are needed to expand the context, for example including more universities that require the same level of English proficiency for their students. Also, conducting comparative studies by including participants from various cultural backgrounds, for example, including participants from Kurdish, Iranian, and Turkish backgrounds is needed to be investigated.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A: Student Questionnaire Consent Form

Dear Participants,

I am a Master's student and I am conducting my thesis on the topic of "**Gender Differences in compliment speech act behavior: A case study**". Therefore, I am collecting the necessary data and information using the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) as the tool of the study. It is very important that you answer all the questions sincerely. Your personal information and individual responses will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. Further information can be obtained directly from me or my thesis supervisor. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Thank you for participation and cooperation.

Mohammad ALMALLAH

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Department of Foreign Language Education

Faculty of Education

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MA Thesis supervisor

E-mail: javanshir.shibliyev@emu.edu.tr

Department of Foreign Language Education

Faculty of Education

✂-----

### Consent form

I have read and understood the main purpose of this study, and I agree to participate in it.

Name- Surname: -----

Date: -----

Signature: -----

## APPENDIX B: Herbert's Taxonomy of Compliment responses

Response	Type Example
A. Agreement	
I. Acceptances	
1. Appreciation Token	Thanks; thank you; (smile)
2. Comment Acceptance	Thanks; it's my favourite too.
3. Praise Upgrade	Really brings out the blue in my eyes, doesn't it?
II. Comment History	I bought it for the trip to Arizona.
III. Transfers	
1. Reassignment	My brother gave it to me.
2. Return	So's yours.
B. Nonagreement	
I. Scale Down	It's really quite old.
II. Question	Do you really think so?
III. Nonacceptances	
1. Disagreement	I hate it.
2. Qualification	It's alright, but Len's is nicer.
IV. No Acknowledgment (silence)	
C. Other	Interpretations
I. Request	do you want to borrow this one too?

Herbert's (1986) Taxonomy of Compliment responses (p. 79)

## APPENDIX C: PERMISSION FOR USING DCT

8/18/2017

Re: permission for using DCT

**From:** Évi Dudás <dudasevi@gmail.com>  
**To:** M.R. Almallah <mallah199@aol.com>  
**Subject:** Re: permission for using DCT  
**Date:** Wed, Apr 12, 2017 3:26 pm

---

Dear Mohammad R.A. Almallah,

If you use my name under the literature cited, **regarding especially the DCT**, it is OK for me to use them.

Due to the scientific regulations, I must enlist all the literature referring to my name here, so please send me the name, title and date, when is is ready.

Good luck to the work!

Best regards,

Eva Dudas

2017-04-10 1:00 GMT+02:00 M.R. Almallah <[mallah199@aol.com](mailto:mallah199@aol.com)>:

Hello;

I am Mohammad R. A. ALMALLAH, Master student at the department of English Language Teaching- Eastern Mediterranean University.

Thankfully I would like to have your permission for using your DCT that used at the study of "Gender differences in complimenting strategies with special reference to the compliment response patterns of Hungarian undergraduate students". my aim is to use the DCT for collecting data for my master thesis study titled: "Gender Differences in compliment speech act behavior: A case study".

Thanks in advanced  
Mohammad R. A. ALMALLAH

## APPENDIX D: CERTIFICATION OF DCT TRANSLATION

### Certification of Translation

**Study Title:** Questionnaire of Furkó, B. P., & Dudás, É. (2012).

**Name of Original Document:** Questionnaire of Furkó, B. P., & Dudás, É. (2012). . - "English Questionnaire"

**Original Language of Document:** English

**Document translated to the language of:** Arabic

**Full Legal Name of Translator:** Fuad Salem Al-Zyoud

	Highest Qualification	Institution
1	Translation M.A.	Yarmouk University
2	English for Specific Purposes B.A.	Jordan Univ. of Science and Tech.

I hereby certify that I have translated the above-mentioned document from (Gender differences in complimenting strategies with special reference to the compliment response patterns of Hungarian undergraduate students - "English Questioner") and to the best of my ability, the translation is true and accurate. I further certify that I am competent in both languages mentioned above.

Foad S. AL-Zyoud

2017

Translator Signature  
Signature

6th of April

Date of

## APPENDIX E: STUDENT DISCOURSE COMPLETION TEST

### PART 1- Background Information

**Gender:**    Male             Female

**Age:** .....

**Nationality:** .....

**Department:** .....

**Academic year:** .....

**English Speaking:**    Native             Non-native

**If you are a non-native speaker of English, is your level in English:**

Excellent             Good             Not too good

### Part II: (DCT) Information

**Directions:** How would you respond to speakers in these 10 situations?

1. After asking for advice about English language exams, your friend says to you: "Thank you for your help! You are very talented and your ideas have helped me a lot!" Your response to:

A female friend: \_\_\_\_\_

A male friend: \_\_\_\_\_

2. You have recently changed your hairstyle. On your way to the university, you meet a friend of yours and he/she says: "This hairstyle is very trendy and makes you look great." Your response to:

A female friend: \_\_\_\_\_

A male friend: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Some friends are over at your house. One of them goes to your room and says: "I love the colour of this room, excellent choice!" Your response to:

A female friend: \_\_\_\_\_

A male friend: \_\_\_\_\_

4. You're wearing a new dress/outfit at your friend's birthday party. He/she looks at you and says: "That outfit is really cool and trendy! You really look great!" Your response to:

A female friend: \_\_\_\_\_

A male friend: \_\_\_\_\_

5. You and one of your classmates have recently finished and successfully presented an extracurricular activity in your class. At the end of the presentation your partner says to you: "But for your help and clever ideas, our presentation would not have been so successful." Your response to:

A female friend: \_\_\_\_\_

A male friend: \_\_\_\_\_

6. You have bought a brand new cell phone. Your friend, who also wants to buy a new one, says to you: "Wow, your new phone is smashing; it is one of the latest models. Did you know that? You have a good taste in choosing cell phones." Your response to:

A female friend: \_\_\_\_\_

A male friend: \_\_\_\_\_

7. You and your friends are talking about the latest training, health and wellness tips. During the discussion, one of your friends tells you: "I wonder how you can maintain your figure? I would be very happy if I were as fit as you." Your response to:

A female friend: \_\_\_\_\_

A male friend: \_\_\_\_\_

8. You have just finished presenting your research paper. After the class (just as you are about to leave the classroom), one of your classmates says: "You did an excellent job! I really enjoyed your presentation." Your response to:

A female friend: \_\_\_\_\_

A male friend: \_\_\_\_\_

9. After a meal at your house, your friend says to you: "Excellent food, you are such a good cook." Your response to:

A female friend: \_\_\_\_\_

A male friend: \_\_\_\_\_

10. You and one of your old friends have decided to meet for a coffee. When you arrive, your friend says to you: “Hi...what’s up? You are looking good. Is that a new suit?” Your response to:

A female friend: \_\_\_\_\_

A male friend: \_\_\_\_\_