ANALYZING THE SPEECH ACT OF DISAGREEMENT PRODUCED BY IRAQI EFL LEARNERS: A GENDER STUDY

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Purpose of study: This is a pragmatic study dealing with the speech act of disagreement at the production level. The aim of the study is to investigate whether gender (the independent variable) affects the production of disagreement strategies (dependent variables) used by Iraqi EFL learners. The study is meant to help educators through diagnosing the learners’ pragmatic abilities which were reported by Iraqi scholars as weak and underdeveloped. The study also intends to enrich the speech act literature which lacks gender consideration in the Iraqi context.

Methodology: The study is limited to the analysis of the pragmatic strategies of disagreement within the theory of speech act in relation to gender. The study adopts a descriptive quantitative approach using a Written Discourse Completion Task (WDCT) as a tool for collecting data. The tool consists of 10 open-ended situations to elicit data from 80 fourth-year Iraqi English as a foreign language (EFL) learners who equally were split into 40 males and 40 females. The study utilized MS Excel 2016 for statistical analyses of directness strategies with their dependent explicitness strategies.

Results: It was revealed that both males and females employed similar amounts of explicit disagreement strategies but as far as the indirect strategies are concerned, females significantly used more indirect disagreement strategies than their male counterparts.

Novelty/Originality: The current study is gender-based dealing with the speech act of disagreement at the directness and explicitness levels at the Iraqi EFL learners context. It revealed the learners’ current state of affair in terms of their pragmatic ability in the production of disagreements. It acted as a call for educators and syllabus designers to consider the teachability of the indirect aspect inherent in the act under study.

References