

## **Saudi and Jordanian Undergraduates' Complaining Strategies: A Comparative Intralanguage Educational Linguistic Study**

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### **Abstract**

The present study is an attempt to explore, investigate, and compare the complaint strategies among two groups of Arabic native speakers, Saudi and Jordanian undergraduate students. To achieve the goals of the study, a discourse completion test (DCT) was developed and distributed to 150 male participants randomly selected from the governorates of Irbid and Riyadh universities to participate in the study. The findings of the study showed that Saudi and Jordanian university male students do complain to others using a wide range of strategies. Their complaints fell into four categories: Calmness and Rationality, Offensive Act, Opting-out, and Direct Complaint respectively. It was also found that Saudi university students' complaint comes first, while Jordanian university students' complaint comes second. The findings further revealed that there were some statistically significant differences and similarities at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) among the Saudi and Jordanian university male students' complaint strategies to others due to the study variables. Conclusions, implications, and suggestions for further research are reported.

**Keywords:** comparative intralanguage studies, complaining strategies, complaints, educational linguistic studies, Saudi and Jordanian undergraduates, speech acts

## Introduction and Background

Speech acts have received much attention from researchers since their most prominent categorizations introduced by Austin (1962) and developed by Searle (1969,1975,1976). Searle (1969) claims that speaking a language is performing speech acts. By performing a speech act, people produce certain actions such as thanking, requesting, apologizing and complaining. Therefore, speech acts are important elements of communicative competence, and speakers of a language need to know how to carry out speech acts to function in communicatively appropriate ways. This significance of speech acts has generated interest in research in certain aspects of speech acts in both first language and second language learning.

In general, speakers employ a variety of speech acts, to achieve their communicative goals. One of these speech acts is complaining. Complaint, as a speech act, can be used to confront a problem with an intention to improve the situation (Brown & Levinson, 1978); to open and sustain conversations; to allow ourselves to vent/let off steam; to share a specific negative evaluation, obtain agreement, and establish a common bond between the speaker and addressee (Boxer, 1993); to express displeasure, disapproval, annoyance, censure, threats, or reprimand as a reaction to a perceived offense/ violation of social rules; to hold the hearer accountable for the offensive action and possibly suggest/request a repair (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993). Thus, when people interact, the expressions used are mostly satisfactory on behalf of the speaker on the one hand, whereas they are understood and explained in the way the hearer/addressee likes on the other.

According to Tanck (2002), the speech act of complaint occurs when a speaker reacts with displeasure or annoyance to an action that has affected him/her in an unfavorable manner. It is believed that complaint is a face-threatening act to the hearer; therefore, it should be made cautiously by the speaker in order not to hurt the hearer's feelings and hence impair the relationships between them (Moon, 2001). When making complaints, people often use indirect strategies in order not to offend the other party and to avoid being impolite, rude or disrespectful (Wannurk, 2005). Because of the lack of sufficient socio-pragmatic knowledge of the second language, complaining becomes even more difficult for the non-native speakers of a second language. Yamagashira (2001) states that if nonnative speakers do not know how to make complaints in a second language, it is assumed that they will use their own language strategies and, consequently, misunderstandings occur. Moreover, complaining has been an under-represented speech act in the-same-cultural pragmatics. Therefore, the focus of this study is on complaints. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, it is the first attempt to investigate the performance of complaints of two Arabic speaking groups, Saudis and Jordanians. In addition, language teachers can identify their learners' pragmalinguistic or sociolinguistic difficulties and teach them how to avoid miscommunications in real-life encounters when processing complaint strategies.

## Statement of the Problem

The present study is an attempt to explore, investigate, and compare the complaint strategies among two groups of Arabic native speakers, Saudi and Jordanian undergraduate students. The researcher notices that young Saudis and Jordanians lack the sociolinguistic competence to use the appropriate words in the appropriate contexts in relation to complaint because they have not been taught to use these expressions appropriately. Moreover, most researchers discuss complaint strategies in general. To the best of my knowledge, previous researchers have not compared these strategies among two groups of Arabic native speakers in a

separate research paper. This has empowered the researcher to try to identify the complaining strategies used in different educational contexts.

### Significance of the study

Complaining has been an under-represented speech act in cross-cultural pragmatics. Unlike the well-defined speech acts such as apologizing, requesting, and complimenting, complaining is comparatively more complex in that it has no pre-determined forms and the interpretations are often negotiable (Chen et.al, 2011 ). The aim of the present study is to investigate the Saudi and Jordanian University students' strategies of complaint. The speech act of complaining has had relatively less interest from researchers compared to the interest shown in the other speech acts such as apologizing, thanking, and refusing. Nevertheless, there have been a few studies carried out on complaining (e.g. Murphy & Neu, 1996; Boxer, 1993; Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993; Boxer & Pickering, 1995; Boxer, 1996). However, the speech act of complaint of Saudi and Jordanian University students has not been studied, which is the first reason why it has been chosen to investigate in this study. Therefore, it is hoped that:

1. It will help researchers involved in the educational process gain insights into speech act of complaints and seek to improve it over time.
2. It may encourage further research, which in turn, may lead to the enrichment of the field of speech act in general and speech act of complaints in particular.
3. It will help teachers to better understand the issue and integrate speech act of complaints into their classroom routine.
4. It is expected that this study will add a block stone to the effort that aim to construct a reasonable and flexible Speech act, which helps in developing learners' achievement in learning English.
5. It is also expected that this study will familiarize people, especially the young, with complaint strategies used in everyday life of the Saudi and Jordanian societies and how and when they are used.
6. The researcher believes that the significance of this study originates from the fact that it will help Saudis and Jordanians, as well as other Arabic learners, to be aware of the power of language in governing and maintaining the relationships among people.

### Objective of the study

It is essential for language learners to master not only grammar and text organization but also pragmatic aspects of the target language in order to be successful in communication (Backman, 1990). In fact, communicative action includes both speech acts as complaining, requesting, apologizing, refusing, inviting, etc., and the ability to use language forms in a wide range of situations, including the relationships between the speakers involved and the social and cultural context of the situation . Through speech acts such as requesting and complaining, speakers shape the utterances and with politeness make use of these utterances in the best way. This study is concerned with one of the aspects of communicative competence: the performance of the speech act of complaint. In particular, it aims at exploring, analyzing, and comparing the complaining strategies Saudi and Jordanian undergraduate male students use when they express their complaints in some educational situations. It also attempts to find out if there are any differences among the strategies which both groups implement when they complain to a fellow student, the person in charge, and the coordinator. In fact, it deals with complaint as a form of

language that affects the social relationships between people in the Jordanian and Saudi societies.

### Questions of the Study

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do Saudi and Jordanian University Male Students (hereafter SJUMS) complain to others?
2. Are there any statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) among the SJUMS' complaint strategies to others due to the study variable "the person students complain to"?

### Limitations of the study

Although the findings of this study may be sound and important to the field of speech acts in general and complaint speech act in particular, it has some limitations. The first limitation is that the study is restricted to two groups of Jordanians and Saudi undergraduate students. Another obvious limitation of the present study is the limited sample size. Therefore, generalizations must remain tentative. A third limitation is that the data of the study were collected from some parts of Jordan and Saudi Arabia, namely, Irbid (in the northern area of Jordan) and Riyadh (in the central area of Saudi Arabia); other areas were not involved in the study. A fourth limitation is female absence. All of the participants were males. If female students participated, the results might be different.

### Review of Related Literature

The review of the literature on the speech act of complaints reveals that most of the studies in this field were conducted in the western countries where English is a first or second language, whereas very few studies were conducted in countries where English is a foreign language. The researcher reviewed some of the most related studies to the topic of this study.

Bonikowska (1988) analyzes the 'opting out' complaints strategies of university native-speakers of English; which he defines as the speaker's decision not to perform a speech act when confronted with a situation that has the potential to evoke a face-threatening act of complaint. The analysis of the data gathered led to four categories explaining the reasons for opting out: (a) reasons related to conditions for the act of complaining, (b) reasons related to the relationship of the act to speaker's goals, (c) reasons related to the relationship of the act to the social goal, and (d) reasons related to contextual factors.

DeCapua (1989) compares how native speakers of German and American English would complain in certain service situations and tries to find out whether pragmatic transfer would occur. It was found that Germans are usually more direct than Americans when speaking German and English, which could cause pragmatic failure.

Olshtain and Weinbach (1993) investigate the factors that distinguish native from nonnative speakers' realizations of complaints in Hebrew. They also study how social distance affects the length and the severity of the respondents' utterances. It was found that nonnative speakers produced longer utterances to express the speech act of complaining than native speakers did. The nonnative speakers also used more intensifiers. It was also found that the length of utterance was higher for learners, but both native and nonnative speakers used more words with acquaintances. Moreover, the findings revealed that the social factor was significant for length of utterance and strategy selection on the severity scale for both native and nonnative

speakers. The researchers found that when the speaker was of higher status than the interlocutor was, nonnative speakers used longer sentences.

Du (1995) studies three face-threatening acts (complaining, giving bad news, and disagreeing) as produced by 30 male and female Chinese students from Beijing Normal University. The findings of the study showed that strategy choice varied according to the referential goal and the nature of the interlocutor relationship, but a general pattern could be noted is that face-threatening acts in Chinese tend to be performed "in a cooperative rather than confrontational manner.

Morrow (1995) investigates the pragmatic effects of instruction on ESL learners' production of complaint and refusal speech act. The findings of the study revealed improvements in subjects' levels of clarity and politeness. It was found that the analysis of propositions and modifiers in the complaint data revealed gains in pragmatic competence which were indicated by such changes as increased indirectness, more complete explanations, and fewer explicit statements of dissatisfaction. The findings suggested that speech act instruction helped the subjects to perform complaints and refusals which were clearer, more polite, and, to a limited extent, more native-like. The additional intra-task comparisons indicated that higher levels of pragmatic competence were achieved when the interlocutor's level of social distance was lower (i.e., friends as opposed to acquaintances).

Trenchs (1995) tries to find out how EFL Catalan speakers transfer pragmatic knowledge from their native language into English when performing the speech act of complaint. The study also tries to identify the semantic discourse components used by Catalan speakers and how they resemble and differ from American speakers. The findings of the study revealed that although both groups of native speakers made use of similar semantic formulas, learners still showed instances of pragmatic transfer. It was also found that differences between languages were more noticeable when participants chose to joke, preach, or curse as means of lodging a complaint and when they chose to opt out or use conventional non-verbal sounds.

Trosborg (1995) compares the complaints performed by native speakers of English and Danish. The Findings of the study showed that the strategies used by the two groups had very much in common, with annoyance occurring most often and hints, accusation, and blame less often. It was also found that when speaking to an authority figure, English speakers adjusted their strategies to a greater extent than did Danish speakers. Finally, the findings indicated that when addressing a person of higher standing, Danish learners of English varied their strategies frequently.

Boxer (1996) studies sex-based differences in the form of both complaining and responding to complaints produced by men and women. It was found that (1) more women participated in troubles-talk than men; and (2) women were recipients of more indirect complaints because they were seen as more supportive in general than men. It was also found that when dealing with responses to indirect complaints, men tend to offer advice while women tend to commiserate. In other words, it was found that women participated more in indirect complaining than men.

Murphy and Neu (1996) investigate the complaining strategies of American natives and Korean non-natives of English when expressing disapproval of their grade to a professor. The findings of the study revealed that Korean ESL speakers produced the speech act set of criticism while American native speakers of English produced the complaint speech act set. The findings also showed that American English native speakers perceived the criticism made by Koreans as aggressive, inappropriate and lacking respectfulness.



Nakabachi (1996) examines cross-linguistically the strategies of complaining in English and Japanese by Japanese EFL speakers. Nakabachi looks at whether Japanese EFL learners change their strategies of complaint when they speak in English, and if so, what the factors are affecting change. The findings of the study showed that almost half of the subjects changed their speech strategies in English. It was also found that over a quarter used more severe expressions than natives did. This was interpreted as over-accommodation to the target language norms, and seemed to suggest the risk involved with attempting to adapt to the local sociocultural norms.

Takano (1997) studies how Japanese students learning English and American speakers complain. The findings of the study showed that the Japanese students tended to request an immediate compensation while American speakers tended to expect hearers to suggest ways to improve the offensive situation.

Hartley (1998) explores the complaints made by 120 American university students. Her analysis showed that direct complaints occupied only 20% of the utterances, while 75%–80% of the elicitations were mitigated complaints, indirect complaints, and the choice of opting out.

Akinci (1999) studies complaint in Turkish. The researcher found that severity of the complaint differed depending on the situation, presence or absence of the person being complained about, and the formality degree of the person being interacted. Interestingly, unlike the male subjects, the female respondents of the study turned out not to be using any politeness strategies when they complained. Akinci also made a distinction between young (19-25) and adult (over 25) subjects in the study, and found that neither the young nor the adults complained using direct forms to the father, the director or the professor in the discourse completion task, who were considered to be formal.

Chang (2001) explores 300 elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, and college students' complaints in Taiwan. The findings of the study showed no difference in the use of these strategies across age groups. All the subjects preferred using explicit complaint, followed by threat. Accusation and warning and expression of annoyance or disapproval shared similar frequencies of occurrence, while below the level of reproach was least frequently used.

Moon (2001) studies the speech act of complaint of native speakers and nonnative speakers of English using DCT. The findings of the study revealed that nonnative speakers do not always make complaints following the appropriate ways of native speakers'; their utterances were more direct than native speakers'.

Park (2001) examines the speech act set of complaint of Korean EFL learners. It was found that participants' performance of this speech act reflects their interlanguage pragmatics, which is independent of their L1.

Geluyken and Kraft (2002) investigate complaints in English, French and German as L1, and German-French and German- English as interlanguage. It was found that there was no significant differences with regard to the use of different complaining strategies between the three L1s. However, the findings indicated that L2 complaints tended to be longer, which was caused by use of more than one strategy. The findings also revealed that male speakers had the tendency to employ slightly more confrontational strategies than female speakers.

Rinnert and Iwai (2002) investigate variation in pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic strategies for making a complaint in three different English speaking regions (Japan, Singapore, and the U.S.). The findings of the study revealed some clear patterns of variation in strategy use among the three groups, most notably in terms of the choice of response segments (initiators, complaints, or requests); the length of responses; the use of softeners to mitigate the complaints; and the directness of the complaints produced. The findings of the study also indicated that a

three-way comparison is methodologically superior to a conventional two-way one, particularly from the perspective of teaching English as an international auxiliary language. They also implied the need for teachers to move beyond native speaker norms.

Tanck (2002) compares the pragmatic competence of ESL speakers to that of adult native English speakers when performing the speech act of complaints and refusals using DCT. The findings of the study indicated that while native and nonnative speakers often produce almost identical speech act set components, the quality of the components produced by nonnative speakers differ markedly from those made by the native speakers' sample in that they produced fewer components of the semantic formulae of complaint. The findings also showed that the nonnative speakers' responses, though generally linguistically correct, lack the pragmatic elements that allow these face-threatening acts to be well received by the hearer.

Deveci (2003) investigates the complaint speech act set used by Turkish EFL learners speaking to a commiserating and contradicting teacher. The findings of the study revealed that Turkish EFL learners produced a complaint speech act set when speaking to a commiserating and contradicting teacher. It was also found that the components of the complaint speech act set realized by the learners were 'complaint', 'justification', 'candidate solution: request', 'candidate solution: demand', and 'explanation of purpose'. Moreover, the findings indicated The students speaking to the contradicting teacher made positive transfer in their use of the components 'explanation of purpose', 'complaint' and 'justification'. The component 'demand' was subject to negative transfer.

Shea (2003) examines the complaining act of Japanese speakers of English living in America, Japanese speakers of Japanese living in Japan, and American speakers of English living in America. The findings of the study showed ten categories of complaint strategies: justification, problem, request for repair, request for explanation, disapproval, expression of empathy, warning, request for information, offering repair, and apology. It was also found that while American speakers of English living in America used more justification, disapproval, and expression of empathy, Japanese speakers of English living in America and Japanese speakers of Japanese living in Japan used more apologies to express complaint.

Eslami-Rasekh (2004) evaluates Persian speakers' use of face-keeping strategies in reaction to complaints with American English speakers' performance. It was found that Persian speakers are more sensitive to contextual factors and vary their face-keeping strategies accordingly whereas English speakers mostly use one apology strategy and intensify it based on contextual factors.

Kozlova (2004) examines the structure and cultural styles of indirect complaints in Russian and American English, and the politeness strategies used by native speakers of these languages when complaining. The findings of the study showed that the native speakers of Russian and American English used different styles in expressing indirect complaints: Americans subjects used humorous complaints while Russians used laments. It was also found that Russians preferred positive politeness, while Americans favored negative politeness in realization of indirect complaints.

Umar (2006) compares the pragmatic competence of advanced Sudanese learners of English to that of native speakers when performing the speech act of complaint. The findings of the study indicated that the quality of the components produced by the Sudanese learners of English differ significantly from those made by the native speakers. It was also found that the Sudanese subjects did not demonstrate sufficient linguistic or socio-pragmatic skills that qualify them to produce appropriate complaint in English.

Lin (2007) examines gender differences in 60 Chinese college students' complaints. The findings of the study revealed that females were more likely to respond to a complaint situation and produced longer utterances than males did. The findings indicated that females preferred the strategies of explicit complaint and opting out, while males used threat most often. Lin's findings are in agreement with previous research that women are more polite and considerate conversationalists than men.

Yue (2007) compares American and Chinese university students' choice of complaining strategies when stating their grievances to professors, intimates, friends and strangers. The findings showed that Chinese subjects and American ones are significantly different in the choice of complaining strategies. The Chinese showed greater respect to professors than Americans did. As to interlocutors with equal social status, Americans' complaining degree displayed a gradually descending tendency along social distance continuum, while the Chinese had intimates and strangers at both ends with friends in the middle.

Al Omari (2008) examines the linguistic realization and pragmatic strategies of complaint in Jordanian Arabic and American English. The findings of the study showed that Jordanian subjects used more complaint strategies than the American subjects did as the American subjects used only two strategies : joking and demanding justification. The findings also indicated that there was statistically significance difference in the strategies used by Jordanian and American subjects.

Prykarpatska (2008) studies the culture-specific differences in the way native speakers of American English and Ukrainian make a complaint to their friends. The findings of the study showed that Ukrainian friends apply the whole rank of complaint strategies from the least offensive to the most severe. Native speakers of American English use the most indirect and conventionally indirect strategies. The findings also indicated that Ukrainians are the ones who tend to aggravate their complaints with different kinds of intensifying particles and slang words, and make their complaints in a single move without any supportive reasons.

Ma'ayah (2009) compares and contrasts the responses to indirect complaints in Jordanian Arabic and American English and studies the extent to which the responses are governed by gender or social status. The findings of the study indicated that both Jordanian and American students used similar strategies with variation in the percentages. The findings also showed that the subjects employed a number of strategies to respond to indirect complaint such as proverbs, indifference, blaming, non-verbal response, future action, apologizing, and justifying other's behavior.

Ayu and Sukyadi (2011) investigate the differences in the speech act of complaint between men and women EFL learners. The findings of the study revealed that EFL learners realized speech act of complaining in eight complaint strategies: hints, consequences, indirect accusation, direct accusation, modified blame, explicit blame (behavior), annoyances, and explicit blame (person). Regarding gender, it was found that the use of complaining strategies was influenced by the gender of the complainer and Coordinator. The findings also showed that women tend to be more direct in complaining to men rather than to women.

Chen et al. (2011) study the complaining strategies of 40 American and Taiwanese university students. The findings of the study showed that the participants used six complaint strategies : opting out, interrogation, accusation, request for repair, and threat. Moreover, it was found that there were similarities in both overall and combined strategy use of the American and Chinese participants. For example, when faced with an offensive act, most competent adult members of both groups made complaints rather than opted out of the situation and both groups



preferred less-direct strategies when complaining. The findings finally revealed that there were also differences in the participants' choice of linguistic forms and expressions of semantic content. For instance, the Chinese complaints were found to be more sensitive to social power and they varied their complaints based on the interlocutor status more than the American complaints did.

AL Hammuri (2011) compares and contrasts the strategies used by Jordanian and American undergraduate university students for expressing and responding to indirect complaint and giving, soliciting and responding to advice. Concerning the complaint strategies, the findings of the study showed that American and Jordanian students employed a number of similar strategies when expressing indirect complaint. These strategies include: expressing annoyance, blaming, criticizing, demanding justification, suggesting alternatives, sentencing, threatening, regretting, mentioning the offensive act, future action, asking for advice, warning, proverbs, asking for help, opting out, request for a solution, irony, asking for opinion, and expressing justification. The findings also revealed that the subjects used a number of strategies to respond to indirect complaint. These strategies include: non-verbal response, request for explanation, teasing, contradiction, offering advice, commiseration, blaming, indifference, apology, proverbs, criticizing, threatening, urging, warning, offering help, and suggesting alternatives.

Rhurakvit (2011) explores the characteristics of the interlanguage complaints of Thai learners of English who are in different contexts of studying. The elicited data revealed that the learners of English in Thailand tend to have similar complaint patterns to those of native Thai speakers. On the other hand, the complaint patterns uttered by the learners of English in the UK tend to be close to those of native English speakers. Nevertheless, it seemed that neither the learners of English in Thailand, nor in the UK use downgraders properly. The findings might be interpreted to conclude that the studying abroad context is one of the influential factors in language learners' improvement, although the divergence of learners' complaints still exists in some aspects.

Vásquez (2011) investigates complaints in CMC (computer mediated communication) to determine the extent to which CMC complaints display some of the defining characteristics of complaints as identified by previous research. The findings of the study showed that complaints tended to occur as a speech act set. It was also found that whereas previous studies have found that complaints tended to co-occur with speech acts such as warnings or threats, in this particular context, complaints tended to co-occur more frequently with advice and recommendations. Finally, the findings revealed that while the majority of the complaints can be considered indirect complaints, there were nevertheless some examples that blur the direct/indirect dichotomy.

Zhoumin (2011) compares the complaining strategies of Americans and Chinese university students. The findings of the study showed that Chinese and American university students are significantly different in the choice of complaining strategies produced to professors, intimates, friends, and strangers. It was also found that no significant difference has been revealed in the choice of complaining strategies to parents. Finally, the study showed that in private conversation, the variable of social distance carries more importance than the variable of social status.

Abdolrezaipoor et.al (2012) examine how Iranian EFL learners perceive complaining utterances produced by Americans in 4 asymmetrical situations. The findings of the study showed that more indirect complaints were perceived as more polite by EFL learners. The findings also revealed that the social variables of power and distance made a difference in the degree of politeness perceived; Iranians (irrespective of their genders) were more concerned

about the social power of the Coordinator than the social distance between the interlocutors. Finally, the findings of the study indicated that the subjects' gender did not have significant relationship with how the participants assessed the politeness degree of complaints.

Lee (2012) studies the realization of complaints in an oral-production task by young and teenage Cantonese learners of English in Hong Kong primary and secondary schools from childhood to their teens. It was found that the subjects' complaints were moderate in terms of directness and severity. There was a significant decreasing use of direct strategies but a growing sociopragmatic awareness and flexibility in the use of a direct single strategy towards less direct combined strategies according to age and level of study. It was also found that the learners used a similar range of intensifiers and softeners. The teenage groups are, however, better at increasing or mitigating the force of the act through the use of supportive moves, descriptions and requesting.

Mofidi & Shoushtari (2012) investigate the pragmatic transfer Iranian EFL and ESL learners of English showed when complaining in English. They also aim to find out if there exists any relationship between the amount of contact with English and pragmatic competence of both EFL and ESL groups as well as the relationship between the duration of stay in English-speaking countries and the pragmatic competence of complaining in the ESL group, living and studying abroad for some years. The findings of the study revealed no significant relationship between the amount of contact, the time spent abroad and the pragmatic competence of Iranian EFL and ESL learners.

Jui-chun (2013) investigates the complaint behavior of Hakka-speaking men and women, including average sentence length and frequency of various complaint strategies used by each gender. The findings of the study revealed that (a) female Hakka speakers are more polite than males who are found to be more aggressive; (b) Hakka speakers were more sensitive to the relative social status of the interlocutors than the social distance between them; and (c) female speakers are relatively sensitive and thoughtful communicators because they are more sensitive to the gender of the interlocutors. In general, the study showed several gender-based distinctions and some culture-specific features in Hakka complaint behaviors.

The present study differs from the reviewed studies that tackled the speech act of complaint. First of all, unlike other studies, this study compares the complaint strategies implemented by two groups of undergraduate students using their native language, that is Arabic. Furthermore, it investigates the speech act of complaining alone, unlike other studies which investigated this speech act alongside with one or more other speech acts, viz refusal, apology, request, etc.. Moreover, it uses a discourse completion test (DCT) with twelve educational situations devised by the researcher himself.

## Methodology and Procedures

### *Participants*

The population of the study consisted of all Saudi and Jordanian undergraduate students. The sample of the study consisted of two randomly selected groups of a hundred and fifty 18-24-year-old male Saudi and Jordanian undergraduate students from various areas of specialization in the undergraduate programs at the humanities faculties at King Saud University and Imam Mohammad Bin Saud Islamic University (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia); and Yarmouk University and Jordan University of Science and Technology (Jordan) in the first semester of the academic year 2015/2016. The Saudi participants were 75 from Riyadh (a city in the middle area of Saudi Arabia) and the Jordanian participants were 75 from Irbid (a city in the northern area of Jordan)

. The participants were made aware that the involvement in this study is completely voluntary. Moreover, they were assured that their responses will remain confidential.

#### *Instrument of the Study*

In order to collect the required data for the study. The researcher prepared a discourse completion test (DCT), written in Arabic. The DCT consisted of three main parts:

1. a short introduction of the study and instructions for answering the questions,
2. a short section aiming at collecting demographic information about the respondents, and
3. twelve scenarios each of which involves a situation which requires a complaint to a fellow student, the person in charge, and the coordinator about the academic advisor, the instructor, the classroom environment, and the exams.

To ensure the validity of the instrument, the DCT was given to a jury of nine professors (four at Yarmouk University and five at King Saud University), to elicit their views as to the accuracy, clarity, and appropriateness of it. Then the instrument was reviewed and modified according to their recommendations. Moreover, 30 participants (15 Saudis and 15 Jordanians) were piloted to establish the reliability of the instrument using Cronbach-Alph which was found to be 0.83.

#### *Data collection and statistical analysis*

The researcher personally visited classes and oversaw the data collection process. He distributed the questionnaire, offered explanations and answered questions, and collected the completed questionnaires in the course of one two-hour class session. The participants were asked to fill out the DCT according to their usual and frequent use of complaint expressions in their face-to-face communication during complaining situations. They were asked to fill out the questionnaire individually and independently in order to give them a space to identify their own choices without any influence from other participants. After that, the data were processed and statistically computed and analyzed using the statistical package SPSS, then the outcomes were compared.

#### *Complaint strategies classification*

Based on the current DCT corpus, the researcher divided complaints into four major categories, each composed of one to eight different strategies ( see Table 1, below); except for "Direct Complaint" which was taken as a category and a strategy at the same time. The classifications of the complaint data into various categories and strategies was decided by the researcher based on the literature and verified by three expert professors of sociolinguistics and pragmatics. The three raters independently verified the researcher's coding of the data in its entirety. On the whole, the coding of the raters coincided with the researcher's original classifications in nearly 97% of the analyzed data. In cases where discrepancies were noted, the researcher discussed each case with each rater till an agreement was attained.

**Table 1: Complaint Categories and Strategies**

Complaint Category	Complaint Strategies
Direct Complaint	Direct Complaint
Offensive Act	Blaming, Criticism, Obscenity, Accusation, Threat, Sarcasm, Protest, and Challenge

Calmness & Rationality	Inquiry, Request, Justification, Suggestion, Self-blaming, and Warning
Opting-out	Irony, Dissatisfaction, Proverb, Appeal to religion, Regret, and Surrender

### Findings and Discussion

The present study aims at investigating Saudi and Jordanian University Male Students' complaints to others. It also attempts to find out if there are any differences among the strategies which both groups implement when they complain to a fellow student, the person in charge, and the coordinator. This section represents the findings as guided by the hypotheses of the study.

#### The First Question:

The first question investigates the extent to which Saudi and Jordanian university male students (hereafter SJUMS) complain to others.

To answer the first question, the SJUMS complaints were analyzed according to the steps of scientific analysis in qualitative research as a category to analyze content using observation checklist as a unit to the content analysis. Then the frequencies and percentages of the SJUMS' complaint strategies; its expected frequencies and residual; Chi-square for correlation ; and standardized residual were calculated according to the different levels of the study variables ( country, complaint strategy, the person students complain to, and the person students complain from) to find out which complaint strategy was used most and which one was used least as a statistical indication to the SJUMS' complaint to others ( in other words to what extent SJUMS complain to others) taking into consideration that the SJUMS' complaint strategies included under the levels of the study variables ( country, complaint strategy, the person students complain to, and the person students complain from) were ordered descendingly in accordance with the values of their standardized residual. Table 2 shows the findings of Chi-square test for the correlation of the SJUMS complaints to others in a descending order according to the values of standardized residual to each of the study variables.

**Table 2: Chi-Square test for the correlation of the SJUMS' complaints to others**

IV	IV levels	Observed N	%	Expected N	Residual	Std. Residual	$\chi^2$	df	Sig.
Country	KSA	633	76.3	415.0	218.00	10.70	229.031	1	0.000
	HKJ	197	23.7	415.0	-218.00	-10.70			
	Total	830	100.0	830.0	0.00	0.00			
Category	Calmness & Rationality	522	62.9	207.5	314.50	21.83	710.752	3	0.000
	Offensive Act	202	24.3	207.5	-5.50	-0.38			
	Opting-Out	73	8.8	207.5	-134.50	-9.34			
	Direct Complaint	33	4.0	207.5	-174.50	-12.11			
	Total	830	100.0	830.0	0.00	0.00			
Source	Advisor	244	29.4	207.5	36.50	2.53	26.646	3	0.000
	Instructor	244	29.4	207.5	36.50	2.53			
	Classroom Environment	181	21.8	207.5	-26.50	-1.84			
	Exams	161	19.4	207.5	-46.50	-3.23			
	Total	830	100.0	830.0	0.00	0.00			
To Whom?	A fellow student	296	35.7	276.7	19.33	1.16	2.901	2	0.234
	Person in charge	278	33.5	276.7	1.33	0.08			
	Coordinator	256	30.8	276.7	-20.67	-1.24			
	Total	830	100.0	830.0	0.00	0.00			

Table 2 shows that the SJUMS' complaints to others according to the variables of the study were as the following:

1. With regard to the study variable "country", the findings were as following:

- a. Saudi University students' complaint comes first, constituting (76.3%) of the overall SJUMS' complaints. This percentage is significantly higher than the expected frequency according to the standardized residual.
- b. Jordanian University students' complaint comes second, constituting (23.7%) of the overall SJUMS' complaints. This percentage is significantly lesser than the expected frequency according to the standardized residual.
2. With regard to the study variable "complaint strategy", the findings were as following:
  - a. "Calmness & Rationality" strategy comes first, constituting (62.9%) of the overall SJUMS' complaints. This percentage is significantly higher than the expected frequency according to the standardized residual.
  - b. "Offensive Act" strategy comes second, constituting (24.3%) of the overall SJUMS' complaints. This percentage is equal to its expected frequency according to the standardized residual.
  - c. "Opting-out" strategy comes third, constituting (8.8%) of the overall SJUMS' complaints. This percentage is significantly lesser than the expected frequency according to the standardized residual.
  - d. "Direct Complaint" strategy comes fourth, constituting (4.0%) of the overall SJUMS' complaints. This percentage is significantly lesser than the expected frequency according to the standardized residual.
3. With regard to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from", the findings were as following:
  - a. Complaining from the "advisor" and the "instructor" comes first. Each of them constitute (29.4%) of the overall SJUMS' complaints. This percentage is significantly higher than the expected frequency according to the standardized residual.
  - b. Complaining from the "classroom environment" comes second, constituting (21.8%) of the overall SJUMS' complaints. This percentage is equal to its expected frequency according to the standardized residual.
  - c. Complaining from the "exams" comes third, constituting (19.4%) of the overall SJUMS' complaints. This percentage is significantly lesser than the expected frequency according to the standardized residual.
4. With regard to the study variable "the person students complain to", the findings were as following:
  - a. Complaining to a "fellow student" comes first, constituting (35.7%) of the overall SJUMS' complaints. This percentage is equal to its expected frequency according to the standardized residual.
  - b. Complaining to the "person in charge" comes second, constituting (35.5%) of the overall SJUMS' complaints. This percentage is equal to its expected frequency according to the standardized residual.
  - c. Complaining to the "coordinator" comes third, constituting (30.8%) of the overall SJUMS' complaints. This percentage is equal to its expected frequency according to the standardized residual.

The findings of this part show that both Saudi and Jordanian participants complain (but in different percentages) using different complaining strategies. Saudis' complaint comes first and Jordanians' complaint comes second. This could be because Saudi participants are less satisfied with the teaching /learning process than the Jordanian ones are. The findings further reveal that both Saudi and Jordanian participants employ four categories of complaint :



"Calmness & Rationality", "Offensive Act", "Opting-out", and "Direct Complaint" respectively. The fact that the "calmness & rationality" strategy comes first and the "direct complaint" comes last, could be because the Saudis and Jordanians are polite and decent people, so they try to save their own faces as well as others' faces by using less threatening and indirect strategies when complaining to others. Furthermore, no one can deny the obvious impact of religious values, norms, and beliefs on the social life of the Saudis and Jordanians. They feel that religious values must be observed in such situations. Moreover, the findings show that both Saudi and Jordanian participants do complain from "their advisors and instructors", "the classroom environment", and "the exams" respectively. Complaining from "the advisors and instructors" comes first because participants could not always find them to solve their problems on time. This may be because the advisors and instructors are always busy with their teaching load and other administrative duties, which prevent them from being available all the time for their students. "Classroom environment" comes second. This could be due to some inconveniences inside the classrooms such as the bad ventilation, the large number of students, the bad lighting system, and other equipment including chairs, boards, tables, etc. . Complaining from "the exam" comes third. This could be because the exams' timing, content, procedures, environment, arrangements, etc., are almost satisfactory to most of the students; therefore, their complaint about them are less than other variables. Finally, the findings of this part indicate that the participants complain to their "fellow students" most, then "the persons in charge", and finally to "the coordinator". This could be because of the social status of the complainees. They have the same social status as their fellow students, so they complain to them most, but the others, "the person in charge and the coordinator", have higher status; therefore, they resort to them less when they want to complain.

### The Second Question

The second question investigates if there are any statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the percentages of the SJUMS' complaint strategies to others due to the study variable "the person students complain to".

To answer the second question, the observed and expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints were calculated. The Chi-square test of independence was also conducted according to the study variable "the person students complain to" to find out any significant differences between the observed and expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints. Moreover, the adjusted standardized residual was calculated to explain the spread, distribution, and balance of the SJUMS' complaint strategies according to the study variable "the person students complain to". Table 3 shows the findings of Chi-square test of independence of the observed frequencies from the expected frequencies according to the study variable "the person students complain to".

**Table 3: Chi-Square test of SJUMS' complaints according to the study variable "the person students complain to"**

Source	Statistic	To Whom?			Total
		A fellow student	Person in charge	Coordinator	
Advisor	Count	85	85	74	244
	Expected Count	87.0	81.7	75.3	244.0
	% within Source	34.8	34.8	30.3	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-0.32	0.53	-0.21	
Instructor	Count	84	75	85	244
	Expected Count	87.0	81.7	75.3	244.0
	% within Source	34.4	30.7	34.8	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-0.48	-1.09	1.61	

Classroom Environment	Count	69	66	46	181
	Expected Count	64.5	60.6	55.8	181.0
	% within Source	38.1	36.5	25.4	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	0.78	0.96	-1.79	
Exams	Count	58	52	51	161
	Expected Count	57.4	53.9	49.7	161.0
	% within Source	36.0	32.3	31.7	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	0.11	-0.36	0.26	
Total	Count	296	278	256	830
	Expected Count	296.0	278.0	256.0	830.0
	% within Source	35.7	33.5	30.8	100.0
$\chi^2$		df		Sig.	
4.742		6		0.577	

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \left( \sum_{j=1}^k \frac{(o_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}} \right)$$

$$^1 \text{ Adjusted standardized Residual} = \frac{o_{ij} - e_{ij}}{\sqrt{e_{ij} \times (1 - \frac{r_i}{n}) \times (1 - \frac{c_j}{n})}}$$

Table 3 shows there was no statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others "the person students complain to" according to the chi-square test of independence due to "the person students complain to" variable. This shows that there is a balance in the distribution of the spread of the observed frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to "the person students complain to" variable.

The observed frequencies of Jordanian university male students' (hereafter JUMS) complaints to others were also collected, then their expected frequencies were calculated. Furthermore, Chi-square test of independence was conducted according to "the person/thing students complain from" variable to find out any significant differences between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of JUMS' complaints to others. Moreover, the adjusted standardized residual was calculated to explain the spread, distribution, and balance of the JUMS' complaint strategies according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from". Table 4 shows the findings of Chi-square test of the independence of the observed frequencies from the expected frequencies according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from".

**Table 4: Chi-Square test of JUMS' complaints according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from"**

Source/HKJ	Statistic	To Whom?			Total
		A fellow student	Person in charge	Coordinator	
Advisor	Count	27	22	22	71
	Expected Count	32.8	21.3	16.9	71.0
	% within Source	38.0	31.0	31.0	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-1.7	0.2	1.8	
Instructor	Count	28	19	25	72
	Expected Count	33.3	21.6	17.2	72.0
	% within Source	38.9	26.4	34.7	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-1.6	-0.8	2.7	
Classroom Environment	Count	20	12	0	32
	Expected Count	14.8	9.6	7.6	32.0
	% within Source	62.5	37.5	0.0	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	2.0	1.0	-3.5	
Exams	Count	16	6	0	22
	Expected Count	10.2	6.6	5.2	22.0
	% within Source	72.7	27.3	0.0	100.0

	Adjusted Residual	2.6	-0.3	-2.8	
Total	Count	91	59	47	197
	Expected Count	91.0	59.0	47.0	197.0
	% within Source	46.2	29.9	23.9	100.0
$\chi^2$		df		Sig.	
26.001		6		0.000	

Table 4 shows there was a statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of JUMS' complaints to others "the person/thing students complain from" according to the Chi-square test of independence due to "the person/thing students complain from" variable. This shows that there is no balance in the distribution of the observed frequencies of JUMS' complaints to others according to "the person/thing students complain from" variable; that the JUMS' complaint strategies to others (to whom students complain) played an important role later on in this relationship according to the "the person/thing students complain from" variable and their level of distribution as follows:

- Spread significantly more than expected: when JUMS complain about "instructor" to the "coordinator"; when JUMS complain about "exams" to "a fellow student"; and when JUMS complain about "classroom environment" to "a fellow student" respectively.
- Spread significantly less than expected: when JUMS complain about "classroom environment" to the "coordinator"; and when JUMS complain about "exams" to the "coordinator" respectively.

The other aspects of JUMS' complaint strategies to others did not play any role in this relationship due to the existence of a balance in the distribution of the spread of the observed frequencies of JUMS' complaint to others according to the "the person/thing students complain from" variable.

The observed frequencies of Saudi university male students' (hereafter SUMS) complaints to others were also collected, then their expected frequencies were calculated. Furthermore, Chi-square test of independence was conducted according to "the person/thing students complain from" variable to find out any significant differences between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of SUMS' complaints to others. Moreover, the adjusted standardized residual was calculated to explain the spread, distribution, and balance of the SUMS' complaint strategies according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from". Table 5 shows the findings of Chi-square test of the independence of the observed frequencies from the expected frequencies according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from".

**Table 5: Chi-Square test of SUMS' complaints according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from"**

Source/KSA	Statistic	To Whom?			Total
		A fellow student	Person in charge	Coordinator	
Advisor	Count	58	63	52	173
	Expected Count	56.0	59.9	57.1	173.0
	% within Source	33.5	36.4	30.1	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	0.4	0.6	-1.0	
Instructor	Count	56	56	60	172
	Expected Count	55.7	59.5	56.8	172.0
	% within Source	32.6	32.6	34.9	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	0.1	-0.7	0.6	
Classroom Environment	Count	49	54	46	149
	Expected Count	48.3	51.5	49.2	149.0
	% within Source	32.9	36.2	30.9	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	0.1	0.5	-0.6	

Exams	Count	42	46	51	139
	Expected Count	45.0	48.1	45.9	139.0
	% within Source	30.2	33.1	36.7	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-0.6	-0.4	1.0	
Total	Count	205	219	209	633
	Expected Count	205.0	219.0	209.0	633.0
	% within Source	32.4	34.6	33.0	100.0
$\chi^2$		df		Sig.	
2.280		6		0.892	

Table 5 shows there was no statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of SUMS' complaints to others "the person/thing students complain from" according to the Chi- square test of independence due to "the person/thing students complain from" variable. This shows that there is a balance in the distribution of the spread of the observed frequencies of SUS' complaints to others according to "the person/thing students complain from" variable.

In addition to what mentioned above, the observed frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others were also collected, then their expected frequencies were calculated. Furthermore, Chi-square test of independence was conducted according to "the person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Direct Complaint", to find out any significant differences between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others. Moreover, the adjusted standardized residual was calculated to explain the spread, distribution, and balance of the SJUMS' complaint strategies according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from ", when the complaint strategy used is "Direct Complaint". Table 6 shows the findings of chi-square test of the independence of the observed frequencies from the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from ", when the complaint strategy used is "Direct Complaint" .

**Table 6: Chi-Square test of SJUMS' complaints according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from ", when using "Direct Complaint" strategy**

Source/Direct Complaint	Statistic	To Whom?			Total
		A fellow student	Person in charge	Coordinator	
Advisor	Count	1	13	2	16
	Expected Count	1.5	9.2	5.3	16.0
	% within Source	6.3	81.3	12.5	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-0.55	2.67	-2.46	
Instructor	Count	1	2	3	6
	Expected Count	0.5	3.5	2.0	6.0
	% within Source	16.7	33.3	50.0	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	0.71	-1.33	0.96	
Classroom Environment	Count	0	2	5	7
	Expected Count	0.6	4.0	2.3	7.0
	% within Source	0.0	28.6	71.4	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-0.94	-1.75	2.41	
Exams	Count	1	2	1	4
	Expected Count	0.4	2.3	1.3	4.0
	% within Source	25.0	50.0	25.0	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	1.18	-0.33	-0.38	
Total	Count	3	19	11	33
	Expected Count	3.0	19.0	11.0	33.0
	% within Source	9.1	57.6	33.3	100.0
$\chi^2$		df		Sig.	

11.218	6	0.082
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Table 6 shows there was no statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to the Chi-square test of independence due to "the person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Direct Complaint". This shows that there is a balance in the distribution of the spread of the observed frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to "the person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Direct Complaint".

Moreover, the observed frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others were also collected, then their expected frequencies were calculated. Furthermore, chi-square test of independence was conducted according to "the person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Offensive Act", to find out any significant differences between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others. Moreover, the adjusted standardized residual was calculated to explain the spread, distribution, and balance of the SJUMS' complaint strategies according to the study variable "the person students complain from", when the complaint strategy used is "Offensive Act". Table 7 shows the findings of Chi-square test of the independence of the observed frequencies from the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from", when the complaint strategy used is "Offensive Act".

**Table 7: Chi-Square test of SJUMS' complaints according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from", when using "Offensive Act" strategy**

Source/Offensive Act	Statistic	To Whom?			Total
		A fellow friend	Person in charge	Coordinator	
Advisor	Count	40	22	21	83
	Expected Count	50.1	17.7	15.2	83.0
	% within Source	48.2	26.5	25.3	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-2.96	1.51	2.14	
Instructor	Count	28	11	9	48
	Expected Count	29.0	10.2	8.8	48.0
	% within Source	58.3	22.9	18.8	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-0.33	0.32	0.09	
Classroom Environment	Count	32	6	2	40
	Expected Count	24.2	8.5	7.3	40.0
	% within Source	80.0	15.0	5.0	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	2.83	-1.08	-2.43	
Exams	Count	22	4	5	31
	Expected Count	18.7	6.6	5.7	31.0
	% within Source	71.0	12.9	16.1	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	1.31	-1.24	-0.34	
Total	Count	122	43	37	202
	Expected Count	122.0	43.0	37.0	202.0
	% within Source	60.4	21.3	18.3	100.0
$\chi^2$		df			Sig.
14.257		6			0.027

Table 7 shows there was a statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to the Chi-square test of independence due to "the person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Offensive Act". This shows that there is no balance in the distribution of the observed frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to "the



person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Offensive Act", that the SJUMS' complaint strategies to others (to whom students complain) played an important role later on in this relationship according to the "the person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Offensive Act", and their level of distribution as follows:

- Spread significantly more than expected: when SJUMS complain about "classroom environment" to a "fellow student"; and when SJUMS complain about the "advisor" to "the coordinator" respectively.
- Spread significantly less than expected: when SJUMS complain about "the advisor" to the a "fellow student"; and when SJUMS complain about "classroom environment" to the "coordinator" respectively.

The other aspects of SJUMS' complaint strategies to others did not play a role in this relationship due to the existence of a balance in the distribution of the spread of the observed frequencies of SJUMS' complaint to others (to whom students complain) according to the "the person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Offensive Act".

Furthermore, The observed frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others were also collected, then their expected frequencies were calculated. Chi-square test of independence was also conducted according to "the person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Calmness & Rationality", to find out any significant differences between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others. Moreover, the adjusted standardized residual was calculated to explain the spread, distribution, and balance of the SJUS' complaint strategies according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from", when the complaint strategy used is "Calmness & Rationality". Table 8 shows the findings of Chi-square test of the independence of the observed frequencies from the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from", when the complaint strategy used is "Calmness & Rationality".

**Table 8: Chi-Square test of SJUMS' complaints according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from", when using "Calmness & Rationality" strategy**

Source/Calmness & Rationality	Statistic	To Whom?			Total
		A fellow student	Person in charge	Coordinator	
Advisor	Count	32	47	49	128
	Expected Count	31.1	48.6	48.3	128.0
	% within Source	25.0	36.7	38.3	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	0.20	-0.33	0.15	
Instructor	Count	45	58	68	171
	Expected Count	41.6	64.9	64.5	171.0
	% within Source	26.3	33.9	39.8	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	0.74	-1.32	0.67	
Classroom Environment	Count	27	54	39	120
	Expected Count	29.2	45.5	45.3	120.0
	% within Source	22.5	45.0	32.5	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-0.53	1.82	-1.35	
Exams	Count	23	39	41	103
	Expected Count	25.1	39.1	38.9	103.0
	% within Source	22.3	37.9	39.8	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-0.53	-0.02	0.48	
Total	Count	127	198	197	522

	Expected Count	127.0	198.0	197.0	522.0
	% within Source	24.3	37.9	37.7	100.0
	$\chi^2$	df			Sig.
	4.177	6			0.653

Table 8 shows there was no statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to the Chi-square test of independence due to "from whom students complain" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Calmness & Rationality". This shows that there is a balance in the distribution of the spread of the observed frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to "the person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Calmness & Rationality".

In addition, the observed frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others were also collected, then their expected frequencies were calculated. Furthermore, chi-square test of independence was conducted according to "the person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Opting-out", to find out any significant differences between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others. Moreover, the adjusted standardized residual was calculated to explain the spread, distribution, and balance of the SJUMS' complaint strategies according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from", when the complaint strategy used is "Opting-out". Table 9 shows the findings of Chi-square test of the independence of the observed frequencies from the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from", when the complaint strategy used is "Opting-out".

**Table 9: Chi-Square test of SJUMS' complaints according to the study variable "the person/thing students complain from", when using "Opting-out" strategy**

Source/Opting-Out	Statistic	To Whom?			Total
		A fellow student	Person in charge	Coordinator	
Advisor	Count	12	3	2	17
	Expected Count	10.2	4.2	2.6	17.0
	% within Source	70.6	17.6	11.8	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	0.99	-0.77	-0.43	
Instructor	Count	10	4	5	19
	Expected Count	11.5	4.7	2.9	19.0
	% within Source	52.6	21.1	26.3	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-0.79	-0.42	1.59	
Classroom Environment	Count	10	4	0	14
	Expected Count	8.4	3.5	2.1	14.0
	% within Source	71.4	28.6	0.0	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	0.95	0.38	-1.75	
Exams	Count	12	7	4	23
	Expected Count	13.9	5.7	3.5	23.0
	% within Source	52.2	30.4	17.4	100.0
	Adjusted Residual	-0.96	0.78	0.38	
Total	Count	44	18	11	73
	Expected Count	44.0	18.0	11.0	73.0
	% within Source	60.3	24.7	15.1	100.0
	$\chi^2$	df			Sig.
	5.771	6			0.449

Table 9 shows there was no statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to

the Chi-square test of independence due to "the person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Opting-out". This shows that there is a balance in the distribution of the spread of the observed frequencies of SJUMS' complaints to others according to "the person/thing students complain from" variable, when the complaint strategy used is "Opting-out".

The findings of this part show that there are no statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the percentages of the SJUMS' complaint strategies to others due to the study variable "the person students complain to". This means that both Saudi and Jordanian participants equally complain to their fellow students, the person in charge, and the coordinator about the advisor, the instructor, the classroom environment, and the exams. This shows that the social status of the complainees does not play an essential role in the SJUMS' complaint strategies. They faced a problem and they wanted someone to complain to regardless of his social status. Moreover, when analyzing the responses of the respondents separately, it was found that unlike the findings of the SUMS' responses which show that there are no statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the percentages of the complaint strategies to others due to "the person/thing students complain from" variable, the findings of the JUMS' responses show that there are statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) when JUMS complain about "instructor" to the "coordinator"; "exams" to "a fellow student"; and "classroom environment" to "a fellow student" respectively. Finally, concerning the findings of the complaint categories, it was found that (a) there are no statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the percentages of the students' complaints to others due to the person/thing students complain from" variable when the complaint categories used are "Direct Complaint", "Calmness & Rationality", and "Opting-out"; and (b) there are statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the percentages of the students' complaints to others due to the person/thing students complain from" variable when the complaint category used is "Offensive Act"; particularly when they complain about "classroom environment" to "a fellow student", and "the advisor" to "the coordinator" respectively.

The study of speech acts can provide us with a better understanding and new insight into the correlation between linguistic forms and sociocultural context (Olshtain & Cohen, 1983). The research on speech acts is also essential in that it can provide us with the most appropriate sociocultural norms and rules surrounding the utterance of the native speakers (Murphy & Neu, 1996). In fact, this is the most crucial source for the sociopragmatic rules governing the speech acts in a language (Moon, 2001). The researcher believes that this study supports the following arguments: (1) most subjects used more than one complaint strategy in each situation. It is clear that most Saudi and Jordanian speakers used elaborated examples because they wanted to make sure that they get the message across to the hearer without any ambiguity; (2) most subjects decided to complain in the given situation, rather than choosing to remain silent; (3) more complaining strategies were employed by Saudi respondents; (4) both groups employed relatively similar expressions that donate the same semantic content; and (5) differences in complaining strategies may be culture-specific while similarities may reflect the universality of complaining as a speech act. Although the two groups belong to the same culture; yet there are some differences. For example the Saudi society is far more conservative than the Jordanian society.

## Conclusion

This study represents a preliminary effort to empirically examine, explore and compare the complaining strategies the Saudi and Jordanian undergraduate male students use when they express their complaints in some educational situations. It also attempts to find out if there are any differences among the strategies which both groups implement when they complain to a fellow student, the person in charge, and the coordinator. The findings of the study show that Saudi and Jordanian university male students do complain to others using a wide range of strategies. These strategies are: direct complaint, blaming, criticism, obscenity, accusation, threat, sarcasm, protest, challenge, inquiry, request, justification, suggestion, self-blaming, warning, irony, dissatisfaction, proverb, appeal to religion, regret, and surrender. These strategies fall into four categories: Calmness & Rationality, Offensive Act, Opting-out, and Direct Complaint. The use of a wide variety of strategies to complain refers to the nature of Arabic language which allows the possibility of using the same expression to express more than one speech act. The findings also show that Saudi university students complain more often than Jordanian university students do. Although both groups of participants belong to the same culture, they differ in the frequency of the complaint strategies they use. In addition, the findings indicate that complaints from the advisor and the instructor comes first, complaints from the classroom environment comes second, and complaints from the exams comes third. Moreover, the findings show that complaints to a fellow student comes first, complaints to the person in charge comes second, and complaints to the coordinator comes third. This highlights and stresses the role that the social status of the complainees plays in the complaining process. It shows that people tend to complain to those who are of the same or equal social status than those who are not. The findings further reveal that when they complain, Saudi and Jordanian university male students similarly use "Calmness & Rationality", "Direct Complaint", and "Opting-out" complaint strategies, while they differ in using "Offensive Act" strategy. Saudi participants tend to use this strategy more than Jordanians do. This may be because of the harsh nature of the region where Saudi participants live, which affects their personality and behavior. From this difference, we can conclude that people of the same culture may vary in their language use. This difference may be due to many factors. The region/place of residence, the financial status, the educational level, and the values and beliefs of the society, are some of them. Our role as researchers is to investigate and highlight these differences in language use among people of the same culture as these areas are not capitalized on by many researchers.

Regarding the implications of this study, it can be mentioned that the most important contribution of this study will be its classroom applications as well as its importance and contribution to second/foreign language teaching and learning process. If learners are exposed to authentic learning situations, their motivation for learning would increase, anxiety and stress would decrease, and their attitudes towards learning a language will be positive. In one study, ESL students showed improvement in their performance of complaints in and refusal in a posttest given six months after the instruction (Morrow, 1995). The findings of this study can be useful for material designers as well. If they consider the significance of speech acts in classrooms, they can provide books with these kinds of materials to create more relaxing process of language learning. In fact, to be able to teach communicative competence, we need materials that would make learners aware of the communication norms of the native culture. The findings also give implications to language educators, particularly in Saudi Arabia and Jordan, in that textbooks and pedagogical models provided for learners should be supplied with real-language in

use and also other supplements regarding the sociopragmatic rules of the target language in order to enhance the learner's pragmatic ability.

Although the results achieved in this study are sound and significant, the researcher found many areas of further inquiry within the framework of this study. Further research is needed for a thorough understanding of the Arabic native speakers' complaining strategies and for the confirmation of its findings. This is especially true when conducting research with more variables than those in the present study. It is also recommended that this study be replicated with a larger number of participants. In addition, it would be interesting to compare results across levels of proficiency as well as social status and age of the interlocutor. Researchers are further recommended to study the complaint strategies of school students. Future researchers should conduct other studies where they adopt procedures to better control the amount of time that the respondents spend completing the DCT. Another possible enhancement maybe to produce an oral version of the DCT, where the respondents respond orally to the given prompts. Moreover, there is a need to investigate whether and what theories of learning with speech acts could teachers adopt. In addition, further studies might describe what teachers should do with speech acts in their own classrooms. Research in this area should identify the needs of both language learners and instructors as well as the role that effective speech act education and integration can play to meet learners' needs. Finally, universities, ministry of education and other educational institutes are recommended to make use and benefit from the findings of this study as well as similar ones when designing their curricula.

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