

## Complaint Strategies Used by Female Algerian Arabic and American English Speakers

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### Abstract

The current piece of research reports the findings of a study on complaint strategies used by Algerian Arabic and American English female speakers. The present study included 50 female native speakers, 25 Algerians and 25 Americans, enrolled at the University of Science and Technology in Oran, Algeria, and Harvard University in Massachusetts, USA. To achieve the objective of the study, the researchers employed an Oral Discourse Completion Task (ODCT), including eight hypothetical scenarios representing four social distance dimensions (Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances, and Strangers). The findings revealed that female speakers of Algerian Arabic used more strategies of complaint than their American counterparts. It was also found that social distance had no significant differences in the choice of complaint strategies amongst Algerian and American female speakers. The overall data displayed that both speaking groups recorded a preference for the use of the direct strategy of explicit complaint.

**Keywords:** Algerian Arabic, American English, complaint strategies, social distance, speech act.

## استراتيجيات الشكوى المستخدمة في كلام الإناث في اللغة العربية الجزائرية والإنجليزية الأمريكية

### ملخص

يشير البحث الحالي إلى نتائج دراسة حول استراتيجيات الشكوى المستخدمة في كلام الإناث في اللغة العربية الجزائرية والإنجليزية الأمريكية. تضمنت الدراسة الحالية 50 أنثى متحدثة باللغة الأم، 25 جزائرية، و25 أمريكية، مسجلات في جامعة العلوم والتكنولوجيا في وهران، الجزائر، وجامعة هارفارد في ماساتشوستس، الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية. لتحقيق هدف الدراسة، استخدم الباحثون اختبار استكمال الخطاب الشفوي ويشمل ثمانية سيناريوهات افتراضية تمثل أربعة أبعاد المسافة الاجتماعية (الأصدقاء، والأقارب، والمعارف، والغرباء). كشفت نتائج البحث أن المتحدثات باللغة العربية الجزائرية يستخدمن استراتيجيات شكوى أكثر من نظيراتهن الأمريكيات. كما وجد أن المسافة الاجتماعية لم يكن لها فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في اختيار استراتيجيات الشكوى بين الناطقات باللغة العربية الجزائرية والإنجليزية الأمريكية. أظهرت البيانات الإجمالية أن كلتا المجموعتين سجلتا تفضيلاً لاستخدام الاستراتيجية المباشرة للشكوى الصريحة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** اللغة العربية الجزائرية، اللغة الإنجليزية الأمريكية، استراتيجيات الشكوى، المسافة الاجتماعية، فعل الكلام.

## Introduction

As Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) put forward, the fundamental concept of speech act is that language is used for performing actions. Austin (1962) argues that the use of necessary words under appropriate circumstances is required to perform communicative actions in everyday life. According to him, we routinely perform a speech act when we use words to say something. It is considered as the gist of all communications where the speaker and hearer are involved in an utterance exchange resulting in many diverse speech acts. Austin and Searle state that speech acts such as complaints, refusals, and agreements among others, are produced similarly in different languages i.e., their realization is universally ruled. Other researchers, however, see that the speech acts' linguistic realization varies regarding culture-specific social factors, given that each language and culture has its distinct way of speech act performance (Blum-Kulka, 1987; Wierzbicka, 1991).

Complaint as a speech act denotes the expression of dissatisfaction or disagreement about something or someone in an unsatisfactory situation. Olshtain & Weinbach (1987) describe complaining as the speaker's expression of annoyance or displeasure as a reaction to an ongoing or past action whose consequences unfavorably affect the speaker. The hearer is addressed with the complaint by the speaker, who holds him responsible for the offensive act. They maintain that in choosing a specific realization of the complaining speech act, the speaker has two main considerations: the first is about the situational context, and the second has to do with FACE, both the speaker's and the hearer's face. As Brown and Levinson (1987) posit, such speech acts are inherently Face Threatening Acts (FTA), in that they have the potential of threatening the hearer's face. The latter can be defined as "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself..." (Brown and Levinson 1987, Yule and Widdowson 1996). Face consists of two specific desires: "the desire to be approved (positive face) and the desire to be unimpeded in one's actions (negative face)" Brown and Levinson (1978, p. 13).

In 1987, Olshtain and Weinbach made a scale of the severity of the act, ranging from the most severe to the least severe case. The former leads to the speaker's sanctions against the hearer, and the latter results in not performing the complaint altogether. Interestingly, FACE consideration might be affected by the social parameters related to the interlocutors and/or situational factors, namely the level of frustration or annoyance of the speaker with respect to the perceived obligation of the hearer not to have done the offensive act. FTA is not restricted to speakers of the same language, in that learners of a second or foreign language may unwillingly threaten the interlocutor's face in the target language. Thus, speakers of any language need not only to familiarize themselves with the language's grammatical knowledge but also with the underlying pragmatic knowledge and the socio-cultural norms of the language of interaction, in order to avoid threatening the hearer's face. As such, politeness is essentially required whenever the complaint is made, for the caused offense to be minimized. Politeness defined by Yule and Widdowson (1996, p. 60), is

"the means employed to show awareness of another person's face. In this sense·politeness can be accomplished in situations of social distance or closeness". Brown & Levinson (1987) assert the strategy choice in the realization of a threatening act –here·complaints- may be determined by the social variables of the interlocutors' speech community i.e.·social status·social distance·and severity of the act among others·which determine the strategies' selection in performing the FTA.

The purpose of the study is to investigate how the speech act of complaint is realized in Algerian Arabic (AA) and American English (AE)·along with the similarities and differences between these two culturally distinct speaking groups. It also seeks to explore the impact of social distance (SD) (relatives·friends·acquaintances·and strangers) on the choice and use of complaint strategies (CS). The present research addresses specifically two research questions: 1) What are the similarities and differences in strategies of complaint employed by Algerian Arabic and American English female speakers? And 2) How are CS distributed by social distance among AA and AE female speakers?

## **Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

Previous research on complaints has long been conducted in social interaction and everyday conversations; however·contrastive studies on complaint strategies (CS) in Algerian Arabic (AA) and American English (AE) are lacking. Several studies have fallen under three main headings: cross-cultural studies investigating complaints across more than one language or cultural group; interlanguage studies focusing on language learners' complaints' realizations; and intralanguage studies examining the complaint behavior within a single language or cultural group.

### **Complaint Strategies as Used by Speakers of Languages Other than Arabic**

Amongst the earliest and most influential studies on complaints is Olshtain and Weinbach (1987)·who investigated the complaint speech act behavior amongst non-native and native speakers of Hebrew. The subjects included 35 natives and 35 non-natives. For data collection·the researchers designed a written DCT·consisting of 20 situations presenting detailed context descriptions between interlocutors·identifying social status·social distance·contract·and level of the speaker's frustration/expectation. Data analysis was based on a scale of 'the severity of the complaint' evaluation·developed by the researchers. The findings reveal that both participant groups use all the available strategies·with a significance of 45% for 'explicit complaints' and 3% for immediate threats. In addition to a difference between the native speakers whose complaints are severe·while nonnatives' ones are softer. As for 'warnings' and 'explicit complaints'·the results are almost identical. The scholars observed that 'explicit complaint' as a central strategy is preferred for all types of interaction·for

speakers with lower status hearers and vice versa. Moreover, a lower status speaker has the preference to use 'disapproval' and then 'below the level of reproach', which are softer. As for higher status speakers, 'warning' was present. Additionally, social distance in the data of native speakers of Hebrew is seen in the interlocutors' degree of formality, yet it did not make a significant difference in CS selection.

Boxer (1992) examined indirect complaints (IC) in social distance and speech behavior. The subjects were 426 spontaneous conversational sequences containing 533 exchanges, recorded through participant observation around and in a university in the USA. The collected data were analyzed and transcribed according to the themes of indirect complaints (*self-other-and situation*), social functions and distribution, and types of responses. As for the sampling of 'strangers' and 'intimates', it was in conversations taking place in public places such as airports, stores... etc., and spouses' dinner conversations. Findings revealed that in the social distance variable, both intimates and strangers display quite distinct behavior for both the IC theme and response. The theme *Situation* was the most frequent of the total; then, *other*, and *Self* ICs with the least frequency of the total. Boxer (1992, p. 124) highlights that "we tend to behave differently with intimates than we do with friends, acquaintances, and strangers. We are more likely to be agreeable with the latter than with those people close to us".

As part of a larger-scale project on complaints in French, German, and English, Geluykens and Kraft (2002) conducted a contrastive study on complaints between native and non-native speakers (NS and NNS) of French (German learners) discourse to determine the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 CS, gender differences, as well as L1 transfer. A total of 252 questionnaires were given out to university students aged 19-35 years old in Münster and Paris; 87 were filled out by German NS with French L2, 81 by French natives, and 84 by German speakers of L1. To elicit data, a DCT with six hypothetical scenarios evoking contexts to which the reaction is a complaint was used. The researchers used a modified classification of CS established by Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984). Results revealed no direct evidence of L1 pragmatic transfer, yet significant differences between the two groups were found. L2 complaints were longer and more direct than their L1 counterparts, with more solidarity and supportive moves compared to those of L1, along with downgrades, which are more likely to be used by natives. As for gender differences, men use less direct strategies than women, with no significant differences in the level of directness.

Laforest (2002), in turn, conducted a study on complaints and complaint responses between intimate people in everyday conversations. For collecting data, the study was based on the Montréal 1995 Corpus, where 50 hours of family conversation at home were recorded by four French-speaking Montréal Families. Only speaker-peer complaints were taken into consideration (a couple, siblings), resulting in a total of 50 occurrences. The researcher analyzed her data according to Olshtain and Weinbach (1987, 1993) and Hartley (1996).

in complaints and Newell & Stutman (1989/1990) in complaint responses. Her analysis of the recorded corpus revealed preferential realization patterns. The latter can be linked to intimacy in relationships between interactants, i.e., no special precautions associated with FTAs are found in utterances and often complainants reject the blame. Certain employed strategies to express dissatisfaction, along with avoidance, of a true verbal confrontation. Interactants also succeed in using various strategies for argument avoidance; the strategies used are seen as a form of verbal confrontation indicators in the Quebec community.

### **Complaint Strategies as Used by Speakers of Arabic**

The review of the literature also displays a number of complaint studies amongst speakers of Arabic, yet research on Algerian Arabic remains markedly scarce.

Migdadi et al. (2012) examined public complaining and its responses in call interactions in a Jordanian radio phone-in program between 120 callers and hosts. Their study tends to explore complaint patterns and functions and the response types they elicited. The findings reveal that Jordanian complainers promote solidarity, give praising remarks, and use informal address forms; while the respondents tend to exchange solidarity, employ empathic remarks, encourage the callers to speak freely, and promise to transfer their complaints to the authorities.

Al-Khawaldeh (2016) conducted a cross-cultural study on complaints between Jordan and England, with special reference to politeness strategies in expressing complaints. The researcher uses a DCT, and her results revealed 11 strategies by both speakers: direct complaint, opting out, irony, exclamation, etc. The strategies are manifested to save the hearer's face when performing the complaint, which is intrinsically an FTA. Frequencies were overall closer, yet statistical differences appeared in the type of linguistic expressions like prayer and opting out, hence results were discussed in terms of culture-specificity and universality.

Al-Shorman (2016) compared and explored CS between Saudi and Jordanian Undergraduates. His data were collected via a DCT administered to 150 randomly selected male participants from Irbid and Riyadh universities. The results revealed the use of a wide range of CS between the two groups, falling into four main categories: direct complaints, opting out, calmness and rationality, and offensive acts. The study also revealed statistically significant differences and similarities depending on many variables: region, financial status, values and beliefs of the society, and educational level, among others.

El-Dakhs and Ahmed (2021) investigated complaints in a variational pragmatic analysis in Najdi and Alexandrian Arabic. Data were collected through role-plays adopted version of Trosborg's (1995) complaints coding scheme, from 120 undergraduates. Findings revealed that the two groups had a preference to use directive acts followed by blame and disapproval expressions in their complaints, as for accusations and hints use was minimized. In addition, the two

groups are found to show concern for the negative face of the complainee in varying degrees. The research shows that Najdis employ less direct CS and exhibit more influence on gender-social dominance and distance than Alexandrians.

Remache and Altakhineh (2021) conducted their research on CS as used by Algerian Arabic speakers, examining male and female AA speakers' complaint pattern preferences. Subjects for this study were 50 Algerian undergraduate students in their final study year (25 males and 25 females). The data collection tool was a semi-structured individual phone interview DCT, and the determination of the complaint patterns' occurrence frequency was adopted from Murphy and Neu's taxonomy (1996). Their findings reveal that, in hypothetical situations, female and male AA speakers show dissimilar complaint pattern combinations' preferences (initiator, complaint, and request). Female AASs, for instance, did not make an attempt to get the hearer to redress the situation; males did. Results displayed that gender status influenced the complaints patterns' choice of the respondents.

All in all, plenty of research on the speech act of complaint has been conducted in several languages in general, and in various dialects of Arabic in specific, such as Jordanian, Egyptian, Saudi, among others. As a matter of fact, to the best knowledge of the researcher, complaints have not been explored in Algerian Arabic as compared to another language, specifically American English. It is worth mentioning that AA is altogether distinct from other dialects of Arabic dealt with in previous studies, due to the above-mentioned broad influence of the French language. Thus, the current study aims to fill this gap in the literature by examining the use of CS by AA and AE female speakers, as well as the effect of social distance (friends, relatives, acquaintances, and strangers) on this speech act of complaint realization.

## Methodology

### Subjects

The sample of the present study consists of a total of 50 participants, 25 female AA speakers aged 18-29 years, and 25 female AE speakers aged 18-30 years old. The former are university students at the University of Science and Technology in Oran, Algeria. The latter are students at Harvard University in Massachusetts, USA. It is worth noting that besides their native language, AA speakers are characterized by using French, due to French colonialism (1830-1962). Precisely, the latter was not merely political domination or economic exploitation, but more exactly a straightforward elimination of the Algerian culture. For 132 years, Algeria's real identity had been denied, in that France's colonial system manipulated business, government, education, and intellectual life as a whole, imposing punitive acculturation by exiling the local languages, Berber and Arabic, and positioning French as the dominant language in its colonies. French settlement went beyond to pass laws considering Arabic a foreign language, and its use was prohibited in schools and official documents. Herculean efforts were made to make room for Arabic, the prestige

and status of which were weakened, hitherto French remained the dominant language for decades (Maamri, 2009).

### **Data Collection and Procedures**

For the aim of the study to be achieved, carrying out this study used an Oral Discourse Completion Test (ODCT) for collecting data. The ODCT is a questionnaire consisting of hypothetical scenarios reflecting naturally occurring situations that respondents are asked to orally and naturally react to. ODCTs' main function is to present a sociolinguistic description of a given situation tracked by a discourse part meant to elicit a precise speech act. The elicited responses can be examined as realizations of speech acts of the type desired (Richards and Schmidt, 2010, p. 175). DCTs are believed to be a reliable data collection method in pragmatic research. The ODCT was chosen as the main data collection tool for more spontaneous and natural data elicitation. The questionnaire consisted of eight situations classified according to the social distance between interlocutors i.e. relatives, friends, acquaintances, and strangers (two for each). For research purposes, the researcher –being a native speaker of AA- formulated, adopted, and audiotaped the scripts of the scenarios. The English version's validity was tested by three professors of English at The University of Jordan and the Arabic version by three native speakers of AA. Their feedback was taken into consideration, and modifications were made accordingly. The data collection was through audiotaping each subject's responses to the scenarios individually by the researcher, after getting their consent and explaining the aim of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed through a mixed approach of quantitative and qualitative analysis using frequency tables, percentages, the Chi<sup>2</sup> test for correspondence, and observation and content analysis, according to the CS used by the two groups in each situation with regard to the social distance variable. The study uses Chi<sup>2</sup> tests to show the results. This test is selected for data analysis since it is the appropriate statistical test for measuring quantitative data. The replies in each item were classified according to the semantic formulas categorized in the taxonomy of the speech act of complaint by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987).

### **Results and Discussion**

This section presents the results of the study that targets comparing AAFS and AEFS' complaints. It also seeks to identify and discuss the similarities and differences in their use of CS with relatives, friends, acquaintances, and strangers, illustrated with examples from the data. As already mentioned, besides Arabic, Algerians use the French language; hence, the AA responses are translated into English by the researcher to ensure the understanding and clarity of the utterances. As both AA and AE female

speakers employed an array of strategies in each scenario, the findings are directed by the study's two research questions.

### The First Research Question

1) What are the similarities and differences in the strategies of complaint employed by Algerian Arabic and American English female speakers?

To answer this question, the findings are displayed in the tables, and the analysis is made accordingly. Table 1 below shows the results of the  $\chi^2$  test related to the frequency and percentages of CS use between AA and AE female speakers. Respondents in both groups tend to make use of several strategies to express their complaints.

**Table 1.** Results of  $\chi^2$  Test Showing the Frequency of CS between AAFS and AEFS (N=50).

|          | Frequency | (%)   | $\chi^2$ | Df | Sig.   |
|----------|-----------|-------|----------|----|--------|
| Algerian | 668       | 52.8  | 3.870    | 1  | 0.049* |
| American | 598       | 47.2  |          |    |        |
| Total    | 1266      | 100.0 |          |    |        |

\*: significant at the level of (0.05).

As the table exhibits, both AA and AE females make use of various CS, with statistically significant differences in rates; making AAFS' frequency (668 instances) (52.8%) and AEFS' (598 instances) (47.2%); resulting in a  $\chi^2$  value =3.870 that is significant at the level of (0.05).

Thus, the variance is in favor of the Algerian females, who had an overall higher frequency of complaint usage. This implies that, notwithstanding language differences, both Algerians and Americans made use of a variety of complaints in their speech, and cultural diversity and background generate an elevated use by Algerians. This could possibly be due to the obvious directness in expressing their dissatisfaction, and from the overall observation, they spoke more. An example from (Scenario 1: complaining to a relative employee who usually comes late): AAFS: هادي مشي خدمة، علاه جيت روطار؟ المرة الجاية ما تعاودش ديرها' (This is not a deed, why did you come late? Next time, do not do it again) AEFS: 'Why are you late?'

As can be seen in the examples, the Algerian respondent employed three strategies: a direct complaint, asking for justification, and accusation and warning, while the American settled for asking for justification. The complaint is then not a merely speech act, but a communicative one, especially in the Algerian society with its cultural diversity.

### Results of the $\chi^2$ Test Regarding the Similarities and Differences in the Use of CS between AAFS and AEFS

The comparison of AAFS and AEFS resulted in utilizing complaint strategies in response to daily situations in both speaking groups; this use comprises

resemblances and dissimilarities. Table 2 below demonstrates the detailed results of CS frequency as used by AAFS and AEFS.

**Table 2.** The Similarities and Differences in the Use of CS between AAFS and AEFS (N=50)

| No.                 | Complaint Strategies         | Algerian | American | Chi <sup>2</sup> | Df | Sig.   |
|---------------------|------------------------------|----------|----------|------------------|----|--------|
| Direct Strategies   |                              |          |          |                  |    |        |
| 1                   | Explicit Complaint           | 122      | 68       | 15.347           | 1  | 0.00*  |
| 2                   | Expression of Disapproval    | 30       | 40       | 1.429            | 1  | 0.232  |
| 3                   | Accusation and Warning       | 20       | 30       | 2.00             | 1  | 0.157  |
| 4                   | Immediate Threat             | 21       | 17       | 0.421            | 1  | 0.516  |
| 5                   | Criticism and Blame          | 133      | 75       | 16.173           | 1  | 0.00*  |
| 6                   | Demand                       | 55       | 57       | 0.036            | 1  | 0.850  |
| 7                   | Asking for Justification     | 56       | 34       | 5.378            | 1  | 0.020* |
| Indirect Strategies |                              |          |          |                  |    |        |
| 8                   | No Explicit Reproach         | 51       | 75       | 4.571            | 1  | 0.033* |
| 9                   | Excusing Self for Imposition | 3        | 8        | 2.273            | 1  | 0.132  |
| 10                  | Request                      | 54       | 84       | 6.522            | 1  | 0.011* |
| 11                  | Explanation of Purpose       | 90       | 90       | 0.000            | 1  | 1.000  |
| 12                  | Opting Out                   | 8        | 11       | 0.474            | 1  | 0.491  |
| 13                  | Irony                        | 25       | 9        | 7.529            | 1  | 0.006* |
| Total               |                              | 668      | 598      | 3.870            | 1  | 0.049* |

\*: significant at the level of (0.05).

As appears in Table 2, the data reveal similarities and differences between AA and AE female speakers in terms of their CS frequency. The Chi<sup>2</sup> test displays a number of statistically significant differences between the two groups depending on the CS being used and by whom. Respondents in both groups have a tendency to make use of more than one strategy in their responses, along with the recurrence of most strategies. Differences in direct strategies include the most distinctive findings, which are the highest frequency of criticism and blame, explicit complaint, and asking for justification semantic formulas. The Algerians with (133, 122, and 56 instances respectively) and Americans with (75, 68, and 34 instances respectively). Resulting in statistically significant differences and making the Chi<sup>2</sup> value significant at the level of (0.05), with the variance in favor of Algerians with the highest frequency. This denotes that Algerians are more straightforward in expressing their complaints.

compared to their American counterparts. For example, *Criticism and blame* (scenario 7: the kid spoiling the surprise), AAs: 'علاه ما حكمتنيش ولدك علابالك بيا حاصلة مع ' (Why didn't you catch your son? You know I am busy with work, he spoiled the surprise), and in AEs: (scenario 8: the notes being messed up) 'you're not borrowing my notes anymore; you were not respectful enough to take care of them'. Explicit complaint as in AAs' (Scenario 1) 'سي محمد واش هادا راك (What's this man?! You took so long, don't we have a necessary meeting!?) As for the AEs' (scenario 7): 'Teach your kid to respect others' stuff'. Asking for justification is seen in AAs in (Scenario 3 asking the professor about the low grade): 'تعيش فهمني علاش حطيتي هاد لانوت؟' (Please explain to me why you gave me this mark?), AEs: 'I would like to know what specifically I did wrong?' AAFS and AEFS openly performed FTA towards their hearers, where they neglected the maintenance of the positive face of the interlocutor, as they used an offensive act instead. AAFS recorded a higher frequency with overt offensive strategies, due to a more sensitive interaction between several contextual and social factors.

As for the rest of the direct strategies, expression of disapproval AAFS: 'الجاست 'هداك تع كي حطيتي ليفو طو فالفيسبوك معجبنيش، تعرفيني ما نحطش لي فو طو تأوعي و رحتي بيلبيتها' AEFS: 'hey I didn't give you the permission to take a picture of me and post it', accusation and warning 'Algerians: 'هادي لمرة لخرة لي دير فيها روطارا!' (This is the last time you come late!). Americans, 'You can't keep being late! This is your last warning! immediate threat AA 'أ والله تردد كابنك و تروح للدار!' (I swear to God that you will take your suitcase and go home!), AE: 'I need you to come in earlier or you're fired!' and Demand (Scenario 2: a smoker in a non-smoking area) by AAs: 'روح بعيد و دخن' (Go away and smoke), and by AEs: 'Put it down and get out!' Demand implied a more direct and insistent request, whereby both speakers made use of orders to express their complaints. A demand can be considered as an FTA in the data. These CS overtly attack the hearer's face, in that the subjects convey a frank way of expressing their complaints. Both groups used a similar number of strategies, concluding non-significance in the  $\chi^2$  value, and presenting no statistically significant differences between AAFS and AEFS.

As for Indirect strategies, they mark statistically significant differences between AAFS and AEFS. Interestingly, Americans scored a higher use of IS than their Algerian counterparts. The highest frequency in IS includes requests as in (situation 2) AAs: 'خويا لا بغيت زعمة معيش طفي القارو' (Brother, if you want, please turn off the cigarette) and (situation 6 a neighbor listening to loud music) AEs: 'Can you please turn it down because I'm studying'. By employing this strategy, respondents express their complaints in an indirect way, attempting to reduce the severity of the illocutionary force of the speech act. AEFS are more susceptible to using politeness and caring for their interlocutors. Then, no explicit reproach whereby the subjects minimize the hearer's FTA by avoiding explicitly mentioning the offensive event. For example, AE in (Scenarios 1): 'You need to be a better employee and get yourself done on time' and AAs in (Scenario 5 posting pictures on social media without permission) 'كان لازم تخبروني ' (you should have informed me before posting the

pictures), implementing that even with the FTA of the complaint, subjects are still courteous and tactful. *Irony* on the other hand, scored high in the Algerian participants (25 instances) rather than the Americans (9 instances), e.g., AAFS (Situation 6) 'كلين عرس وما عرضتونييش؟ راه (Is there a wedding and you did not invite me?)', AEFS in (Scenario 1) 'Welcome!' Both groups tend to complain by making a joke or providing the opposite response to the offensive event. Algerians mostly, in an attempt to soothe, avoid offense and display empathy. The next less severe CS equally distributed in the data is *explanation of purpose*, where it scored identical frequencies in both groups (90 instances each), making the  $\chi^2$  value insignificant level of (0.05) e.g., AAFS (situation 6) 'غدوة عندي امتحان بزاف مهم (I have a very important exam tomorrow) AEFS (situation 2) 'The smoke bothers me and I have an allergy'. This implies that be it a FTA, both groups are more likely to justify their complaints by giving reason and justifying the act, along with maintaining a positive face when they deliver their complaint performance.

The strategies that scored the lowest frequency in the responses of both Algerian and American speakers with a non-significant value difference are excusing self for imposition as in AEs: (Scenario 3, the low exam grades) 'Excuse me Professor, I'd like to discuss my grades, um! Do you have time?' and AAs: 'استاذ اذا ما نديرونجيكيش تعاود تشوافي الورقة يعيشك' (Professor, if I do not bother you, could you recheck my paper please?). As observed, its use is restricted to addressing the professor for a grade re-check to mitigate and soften the illocutionary force and show more forms of respect and politeness due to the hierarchical situation. Opting out, as a CS is used here to as a polite way to avoid complaining about the offensive event, to save the interlocutor's face and avoid confrontation altogether in the situational events such as the smoking stranger (Situation 2) AEs: 'I don't say anything, I don't confront' and AAs 'نردد 'روحى ونروح نبدل بلاصنة (I move and go change the place)', respondents preferred to remain silent and leave without threatening the hearer's face. Categorically, comparing the total recurrence of CS as used by AAFS and AEFS resulted in statistically significant differences, with a frequency of AA=668 and AE=598, making  $\chi^2$  value =0.049 significant at the level of (0.05), with a variance in favor of AAFS with the highest frequency.

## 2) How are CS distributed by social distance among AA and AE female speakers?

As mentioned earlier, Algerian females are found to use more CS than their American counterparts. Table 3 exhibits details on the frequency of CS as used by AAFS and their distribution with regard to social distance (relatives, friends, acquaintances, and strangers).

**Table 3.** The Distribution of AAFS' CS use in social distance (n=25)

|                     | Complaint Strategies         | Relatives    | Friends      | Acquai-<br>ntances | Strangers    | Chi <sup>2</sup> | Df | Sig.  |
|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|------------------|----|-------|
|                     |                              | Freq (%)     | Freq (%)     | Freq (%)           | Freq (%)     |                  |    |       |
| Direct Strategies   |                              |              |              |                    |              |                  |    |       |
| 1                   | Explicit Complaint           | 36<br>(29.5) | 41<br>(33.6) | 35<br>(28.7)       | 10<br>(8.2)  | 19.049           | 3  | 0.00* |
| 2                   | Expression of Disapproval    | 7<br>(23.3)  | 10<br>(33.3) | 8<br>(26.7)        | 5<br>(16.7)  | 1.733            | 3  | 0.630 |
| 3                   | Accusation and Warning       | 14<br>(70.0) | 5<br>(25.0)  | 1<br>(5.0)         | 0<br>(0.0)   | 13.300           | 2  | 0.00* |
| 4                   | Immediate Threat             | 15<br>(71.4) | 6<br>(28.6)  | 0<br>(0.0)         | 0<br>(0.0)   | 3.857            | 1  | 0.00* |
| 5                   | Criticism and Blame          | 46<br>(34.6) | 40<br>(30.1) | 38<br>(28.6)       | 9<br>(6.8)   | 24.624           | 3  | 0.00* |
| 6                   | Demand                       | 15<br>(27.3) | 12<br>(21.8) | 18<br>(32.7)       | 10<br>(18.2) | 2.673            | 3  | 0.445 |
| 7                   | Asking for Justification     | 20<br>(35.7) | 22<br>(39.3) | 8<br>(14.3)        | 6<br>(10.7)  | 14.286           | 3  | 0.00* |
| Indirect Strategies |                              |              |              |                    |              |                  |    |       |
| 8                   | No Explicit Reproach         | 4<br>(7.8)   | 6<br>(11.8)  | 8<br>(15.7)        | 33<br>(64.7) | 43.510           | 3  | 0.00* |
| 9                   | Excusing Self for Imposition | 0<br>(0.0)   | 0<br>(0.0)   | 0<br>(0.0)         | 3<br>(100.0) | -                | -  | -     |
| 10                  | Request                      | 1<br>(1.9)   | 6<br>(11.1)  | 14<br>(25.9)       | 33<br>(61.1) | 43.926           | 3  | 0.00* |
| 11                  | Explanation of Purpose       | 15<br>(16.7) | 19<br>(21.1) | 22<br>(24.4)       | 34<br>(37.8) | 8.933            | 3  | 0.00* |
| 12                  | Opting Out                   | 5<br>(62.5)  | 2<br>(25.0)  | 0<br>(0.0)         | 1<br>(12.5)  | 3.250            | 2  | 0.197 |
| 13                  | Irony                        | 7<br>(28.0)  | 7<br>(28.0)  | 9<br>(36.0)        | 2<br>(8.0)   | 4.280            | 3  | 0.233 |

\*: significant at the level of (0.05).

The most noticeable feature of Table 3 is that the most frequently used strategies of complaint by AAFS are direct strategies, where they recorded statistically significant differences in employing a number of semantic formulas rather than others, regarding the four social distance classifications. Initially, the strategies of explicit complaint and criticism and blame recorded the highest frequencies in the data. The former appears mainly on the close distance side with the highest frequency in friends (33.6%) and the least one in strangers (9.9%), making the  $\chi^2$  value=19.684 significant at the level of (0.05) with the variance in favor of friends e.g. an Algerian female complaining to a friend about her destroyed notes (Scenario 8): 'علبلك ما نحبش على حوايجي مدينلك على اساس 'انتي كونفينونص ما هيش لقطة هادي (you know that I am careful about my stuff, I gave it to you based on trust, this is a bad act). The latter scored a higher frequency in relatives (34%) as well, with a lesser frequency in strangers (6.8%), yet with no significant statistical differences e.g. 'ولدك هذا طاير وفسلي لاطارت لي تعبت عليها' (your son is reckless and he destroyed the cake that I was tired to make). Algerian females are then straightforward with in-group addressees like friends and family, this is attributed to the impact of social ties between the Algerian society

members; the closer the distance the fewer boundaries. Asking for justification is the next frequent strategy with a higher frequency in friends (39.3%) and lesser in strangers (10.7%), making  $\chi^2$  value= 14.286 significant at the level of (0.05) as in the friends' (situations 8 and 6) 'علاه درتو هاکا؟' (Why did you do this?) 'علاه ما ستحفظيش عليه؟' (Why didn't you take care of it?) by using this strategy, AAFS reduce the complaints' illocutionary force and provide a context for the act mostly with intimates.

Another statistically significant difference in the Algerian data includes the use of accusation and warning and immediate threat which appear mainly on the close side of the continuum in relatives and friends (70%) and (71%) respectively, and they are clearly avoided in the distant end in strangers بزاف عليك الروطار كل يوم واليوم كان عندنا اجتماع مهم هادي حاجة ما تفوتكش بالساهل يا تعذل e.g. 'روحك يا نتحاسب أنا وياك (Every day late is too much, today we had an important meeting, this is not going to go unnoticed easily, either you get yourself together or I will hold you accountable)', 'المرة الجاية والله نخرجك مالخدمة (I swear to God that I will kick you out of work)' implying that AAFS are more susceptible to using direct strategies (DS) when complaining to an addressee closer to them namely a relative or friend, including expressing frustration and overtly threatening the hearer's face and avoiding them with distant interlocutors such as acquaintances and strangers since they recorded the lowest frequency.

As the table displays, expression of disapproval and demand recorded no statistically significant differences between the social distance categories in AAFS complaints, i.e. the distribution of these CS is similarly distributed in both ends of the continuum, relatives and strangers. Implying that when faced with an offensive act, Algerian females made these direct strategies rather than others, and they are less concerned about the interlocutor's distance. Expression of disapproval, for instance, 'مانيش حابة نبان فالتصاور', (I don't want to appear in pictures), it is openly expresses that the speaker is against the unpleasant act as shown in the utterance. As for demand, for example, 'طفى الدخان', 'ولا اخرج (turn off the cigarette or go out!) AAFS points out inappropriate act and overtly asks for compensation by the illocutionary act.

As can be noticed, Algerian respondents are more likely to use indirect strategies (IS) and avoid direct ones when complaining to distant individuals as strangers or acquaintances, resulting in significant statistical differences in the CS distribution within social distance. The IS the most frequently used by Algerian females with strangers are no explicit reproach (64.7%) as in (I doubt that this is the grade of my work) 'راني شاكة أني هادي مشي لانوت تاع الخدمة تاعي', and request (61.1%) as in (Please, it is already written that it is forbidden to smoke in this side). These CS are overtly avoided by AAFS with closely distant interlocutors such as relatives or friends, where the frequency is relatively low, as revealed by the  $\chi^2$  value being significant at the level (0.05). Inferring that AAFS are more polite to the people they do not know and less direct in complaining, being tactful and courteous to strangers is an Algerian mentality that binds social interactions. Furthermore, unlike the previous IS which are least used on the right side of the

social distance scale-explanation of purpose has registered a variant frequency ranging from the highest with strangers (37.8%) to the lowest with relatives (16.7%) for example (I 'عندی حساسیة' 'أنا حضرت روحي مليح لهاد') or (I 'الامتحان وعلالي بلي بذلت فيه جهد') (I prepared myself very well for this exam and I know that I made an effort in it) AAFS, then, provide explanations for their complaint and try to compensate the FTA by giving a valid reason for their reaction. Regarding excusing self for imposition, it is used by AAFS as a soft CS merely in strangers, as it is non-existent in the rest of the social distance categories, i.e. when complaining to the teacher about the mark or to the stranger about smoking, for instance, AAFS start their complaint with this strategy to mitigate and reduce its FTA, entailing that the farther the distance, the lesser the direct offensive strategy. Additionally, IS with no marked statistically significant frequency is opting out and irony. AAFS use opting out to avoid confrontation altogether by ignoring the interlocutor and remaining silent, indicating that the social distance does not affect the use of this CS by AAFS, in that their responses ranged from (I 'ما نقول والو') (I don't say anything) to (I 'بدل بلاصة') (I change the place). As for irony, it is the least severe strategy regardless of the interlocutors' social distance. Algerian respondents made jokes or gave a contrasting interaction to soothe the FTA and reduce its threat maintaining a positive attitude even by complaining e.g. (I 'درتني ضابعة') (I look ugly) (What is this DJ?).

### Results of the Chi<sup>2</sup> Test Regarding AEFS Complaint Strategies

As aforementioned, American females utilize a variety of complaint strategies in their responses to the situations, Table 4. Below displays details on the frequency of CS as used by American English female Speakers and their distribution with regard to social distance.

**Table 4.** The Distribution of AEFS' CS use in social distance (N=25)

|                     | Complaint Strategies         | Relatives | Friends   | Acquaintances | Strangers | Chi <sup>2</sup> | Df | Sig.   |
|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|-----------|------------------|----|--------|
|                     |                              | Freq (%)  | Freq (%)  | Freq (%)      | Freq (%)  |                  |    |        |
| Direct Strategies   |                              |           |           |               |           |                  |    |        |
| 1                   | Explicit Complaint           | 30 (44.1) | 18 (26.5) | 15 (22.1)     | 5 (7.4)   | 18.706           | 3  | 0.00*  |
| 2                   | Expression of Disapproval    | 5 (12.5)  | 21 (52.5) | 8 (20.0)      | 6 (15.0)  | 16.600           | 3  | 0.001* |
| 3                   | Accusation and Warning       | 17 (56.7) | 10 (33.3) | 3 (10.0)      | 0 (0.0)   | 9.800            | 2  | 0.007* |
| 4                   | Immediate Threat             | 8 (47.1)  | 3 (17.6)  | 6 (35.3)      | 0 (0.0)   | 2.235            | 2  | 0.327  |
| 5                   | Criticism and Blame          | 33 (44.0) | 18 (24.0) | 19 (25.3)     | 5 (6.7)   | 20.947           | 3  | 0.00*  |
| 6                   | Demand                       | 7 (12.3)  | 19 (33.3) | 14 (24.6)     | 17 (29.8) | 5.807            | 3  | 0.121  |
| 7                   | Asking for Justification     | 12 (35.3) | 10 (29.4) | 8 (23.5)      | 4 (11.8)  | 4.118            | 3  | 0.249  |
| Indirect Strategies |                              |           |           |               |           |                  |    |        |
| 8                   | No Explicit Reproach         | 6 (8.0)   | 11 (14.7) | 25 (33.3)     | 33 (44.0) | 24.787           | 3  | 0.00*  |
| 9                   | Excusing Self for Imposition | 0 (0.0)   | 0 (0.0)   | 0 (0.0)       | 8 (100.0) | -                | -  | -      |
| 10                  | Request                      | 8 (9.5)   | 17 (20.2) | 22 (26.2)     | 37 (44.0) | 21.048           | 3  | 0.00*  |
| 11                  | Explanation of Purpose       | 18 (20.0) | 13 (14.4) | 28 (31.1)     | 31 (34.4) | 9.467            | 3  | 0.024* |
| 12                  | Opting Out                   | 3 (27.3)  | 5 (45.5)  | 1 (9.1)       | 2 (18.2)  | 3.182            | 3  | 0.364  |
| 13                  | Irony                        | 4 (44.4)  | 3 (33.3)  | 1 (11.1)      | 1 (11.1)  | 3.000            | 3  | 0.392  |

\*: significant at the level of (0.05).

The most significant result of Table 4 is that AEFS are more likely to use indirect CS than direct ones in the four groupings of social distance, recording the highest frequency in the distant end of the social distance continuum strangers and acquaintances with a statistically significant distribution. As tabulated above, the indirect strategies of complaint recording a higher frequency among AEFS are request and no explicit reproach with (44%) each in strangers as in 'can you please move to another seat?' and 'this is a non-smoking area' followed by (26.2%) and (33.3%) in acquaintances respectively. These strategies scored a lower recurrence in relatives and friends, making the Chi<sup>2</sup> value significant at the level of (0.05), with the variance in favor of strangers with the highest frequencies. Inferring that American females employ severe strategies with intimates compared to the rest of the addressees and are then more susceptible to using softer strategies with interlocutors of a distant relation, in that IS are perceived as less aggressive and more appropriate, resulting in a face-keeping interaction. The next most used complaint by AEFS is Explanation of purpose, marking a statistically significant difference in social distance classifications, making Chi<sup>2</sup> value=9.467 significant

at the level of (0.05) with the variance in favor of strangers with the highest frequency e.g. 'This is a family spot·you saw the sign·you should respect that and the people around you'. This indicates that American subjects have a preference to express their complaints to interlocutors they are not close to by providing a valid reason for the situation without threatening their face and prevailing a mitigated ground for the complaint interaction. Moreover·excusing self for imposition is nonexistent in friends·relatives·and acquaintances with null frequency·in that American females are found to use this strategy as an indirect way to reduce the FTA nature of the complaint simply with strangers (8 instances)·especially when complaining to the professor about a low mark·they tend to show the highest forms for respectfulness and watch their language being more polite e.g. 'excuse me·professor do you mind just like going over my exam paper?' and 'excuse me·sir can you go somewhere else?'. Moreover·Opting out and irony as the least frequent IS are merely used by AEFS to avoid confronting others and reducing the illocutionary force of the complaint·they recorded no statistically significant recurrence at the level of (0.05) regarding their distribution in social distance. Having a preference to be non-confrontational·AEFS make use of opting out 'nothing·I don't like confrontation' and irony 'I look ugly (laughing)' as a soft and indirect way to express their complaints with both close and distant interlocutors·as they have closely related frequencies in the data·they can be seen in respondents remaining silent and not reacting or making jokes and soothing the act.

Considering direct strategies in AEFS complaints·their distribution varies with regard to the interlocutors' social distance·in that the highest frequencies are scored on the closest side of the continuum. The highly utilized DS are criticizing and blaming as in 'at least have the respect to ask me or take my permission to post anything about me' and explicit complaints as in 'you're 30 minutes late·you have to show up after the meeting to discuss things further' their distribution along the social distance continuum had a descending tendency. This implies that these strategies are realized by AEFS when faced with an offensive act based on distance·in that the frequency is gradually overt from relatives to strangers·where they feel free to directly express the FTA to close interlocutors and are more moderate at the distant side.

The next direct strategy that scored a relatively high frequency in the American data is accusation and warning·ranging from the highest percentage in relatives (56.7%) then a lower score in friends and acquaintances·to a nonoccurrence in strangers·making the  $\chi^2$  value significant at the level of (0.05) e.g. 'um! Early is on time and on time is late·that's not acceptable in a professional meeting to show up late·this is your last warning'. Entailing the closer the distance·the higher the direct offensive strategy·AEFS are more susceptible to be straightforward with their relatives than others using less respectfulness and neglecting the face threat. As for expressing disapproval·it is utilized mainly with friends (52.5%) and the rest is distributed similarly on the rest of the SD classes·resulting in the  $\chi^2$  value statistically significant at the level of (0.05) e.g. 'I don't like to have my pictures put on social media or myself tagged

without my permission' denoting that American females are more likely to express their dissatisfaction overtly to intimates with no boundaries rather than to outsiders.

As tabulated above·direct CS employed with no noticeable variance are exists in the AE data. Demand counted a non-statistical significance Chi<sup>2</sup> value=5.807 at the level of (0.05)·leading to the absence of distinct differences in complaining by demand when directed by social distance e.g. 'get me a new cake or make me one!' AEFS tend to express their complaint by ordering their interlocutors and demanding certain redressive actions regardless of the distance. Furthermore·asking for a justification as employed by AE speakers had·in turn·no broad distribution variance in social distance e.g. 'is there a reason you didn't have time to do them? Do I need to get someone else to do them?' AEFS used this CS less than others·indicating that they expect the addressees to elaborate more on the reason behind the unsatisfactory act and elicit more about the contextual factors before taking any further steps. As for immediate threat e.g. 'turn down the music or I'll call the cops' it is not used with strangers·and its recurrence in the data is rather low·recording no statistical significance at the level of (0.05) in social distance·AEFS hold the complainee responsible of their irritation and overtly threaten their face in a way that is aggressive and lacking respectfulness. Inferring that social distance does not impact the use of these strategies by AEFS·as the offense in these DS is explicitly expressed in their complaints.

### Results of the Chi<sup>2</sup> Test Regarding the Similarities and Differences in the Distribution of CS in Social Distance between AAFS and AEFS

As formerly mentioned·the study displayed that the interlocutor's social distance does not significantly impact the choice or use of a number of complaint strategies. Table 5. Below presents the results of the Chi<sup>2</sup> test with regard to the similarities and differences in the use of complaints according to SD between Algerian and American participants.

**Table 5.** The Similarities and Differences in the Distribution of CS in Social Distance between AAFS and AEFS (N=50)

|          | Relative | Chi <sup>2</sup><br>(sig.) | Friends | Chi <sup>2</sup><br>(sig.) | Acquaintances | Chi <sup>2</sup><br>(sig.) | Strangers | Chi <sup>2</sup><br>(sig.) |
|----------|----------|----------------------------|---------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Algerian | 185      | 3.440<br>(0.064)           | 176     | 2.420<br>(0.120)           | 161           | 0.389<br>(0.533)           | 146       | 0.031<br>(0.861)           |
| American | 151      |                            | 148     |                            | 150           |                            | 149       |                            |
| Total    | 336      |                            | 324     |                            | 311           |                            | 295       |                            |

Table 5. Brings to light the comparison rate of CS distribution in social distance amongst AAFS and AEFS. Results reveal no statistically significant differences between the two speaking groups·in that the recurrence is closely related in the four categories of social distance in all eight (8) situations. As can be seen from the table·the distribution of complaints records a gradually descending movement along the social distance continuum as Algerians and Americans equally use more strategies on the right end of relatives with (336

instances), next friends (324 instances), then acquaintances (311 instances) and finally, the lowest frequency is recorded in strangers with (295 instances); while AAFS used more strategies in relatives, friends, and acquaintances, AEFS used them in strangers. By and large, the results in both AA and AE recorded no statistically significant differences between the two groups in the use of CS based on social distance classes (relatives, friends, acquaintances, and strangers) since the  $\chi^2$  value is insignificant at the level of (0.05) vis-à-vis the CS' closely related distribution by both AAFS and AEFS. Convincingly, this implies that the complaint strategy choice is not influenced by the social distance variable i.e. when complaining; Algerian and American subjects are more likely to behave spontaneously regardless of the interlocutor's SD.

In light of the classification scheme of complaints set by Olshtain & Weinbach (1987), the present study adopted and analyzed the strategies used by AA and AE female speakers in complaining given social distance. With regard to the first research question 1) what are the similarities and differences in strategies of complaint employed by Algerian Arabic and American English female speakers? The current piece of research revealed responses that females in both AA and AE made use of a selection of CS, rated from the most severe immediate threat to the softest irony. All in all, it is observed that the most frequently used of all strategies is explicit complaint, being direct and of a relatively severe degree, it has a tendency of the respondents to threaten the positive face of the interlocutor, by being offensive, this claim is in line with (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1987) who state that explicit complaint is a central strategy in all types of interaction, as well as (Dakhs and Ahmed, 2021) who recorded a preference to directive acts by speakers of Alexandrian and Najdi Arabic. The data analysis revealed that AAFS use more CS in most situations, with a higher statistically significant difference in their frequency than their AE counterparts. Regarding the second research question 2) how are CS distributed by social distance among AA and AE female speakers? Findings revealed no statistical significance in the relationship between social distance and the choice or use of CS, in that the complaint frequency between the two groups is relatively similar. AAFS and AEFS both make use of various strategies with relatives, friends, acquaintances, and strangers. To this end, the results of the study are in line with Olshtain and Weinbach (1987), who stated that "social distance is a weak predictor of strategy choices..." (p. 205).

## Conclusion

Results indicate cross-cultural distinctions between speakers of the two languages under examination, pertaining to complaint expressions' conveying. The dissimilarities were scrutinized vis-à-vis the interaction between social, contextual, and cultural variables. AAES uses more CS compared to their AEFS counterparts. AAES, on the one hand, tend to use more direct strategies, namely explicit complaint, expression of disapproval, criticism and blame, and asking for justification, denoting the absence of reducing the illocutionary force of their complaints in responding to most situations, and resulting in the threatening of the interlocutors' positive face and offending them. AEFS on the other hand are found to use indirect strategies mostly: no explicit reproach and requests, characterized by minimizing the offense in the FTA. Moreover, the indirect strategy highly employed by Algerians was irony, though it existed in the American data, its frequency in AAs was markedly higher; irony is used as a mitigation of the complaint's illocutionary force. It is noteworthy that social distance did not significantly impact the distribution of participants' CS choice in female speakers of both languages under investigation i.e. when complaining to relatives, friends, acquaintances, and strangers, AA and AE respondents employed a convergent frequency of complaint strategies; however, the recurrence is closely related. Thus, reflecting the speakers' ignorance of the social distance when performing the complaint in both groups.

### Recommendations

Since the present study is the first to investigate CS between Algerian Arabic and American English, researchers beyond doubt need to conduct more investigations in future studies. It would be of marked interest for further research to address the effect of more variables on the realization of CS in Algerian Arabic, namely (gender, social status, age, degree of formality... etc.). Furthermore, with regard to cross-cultural studies, further contrastive research works need to be conducted on complaints as performed by native speakers of Algerian Arabic compared to natives of other languages and cultural groups, such as British English/French; examining the CS' realization in terms of similarities and differences. To conclude, the study having exclusively examined Algerian Arabic speakers –compared to AEs–, the results cannot be conclusively generalized to the entire Arabic dialects or standard Arabic. Nevertheless, distinctive conclusions could be drawn from further intralanguage scrutiny on complaints, without forgetting intralanguage readings that could be resulted from future studies on pragmatic transfer in producing complaint expressions. Eventually, in order for these findings to be generalized, this research paper can obviously be replicated on a larger sample along with comparatively different situations. As the data exposes, performing the complaint speech act involves an array of semantic formulas, varying in the severity degree on the complainee's face, as being an FTA is undoubtedly the nature of a complaint.

### Limitations

The study bears four limitations. First, it is gender specific i.e. restricted to females, if males were included, results might be divergent. Second, the study examined two specific groups of Algerian and American students, the findings could be different with more heterogeneous groups of diverse backgrounds and ages. Third, the sample size is limited to 100 participants, a larger sample may generate wider findings. Fourth, since the respondents of Arabic were only Algerian speakers, the findings cannot be generalized to all other dialects of Arabic.

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## Appendices

### Transcript of the Oral English DCT

Dear participants-as part of our research on the use of complaints between Algerian and American speakers-please complete the following questionnaire orally-i.e. the researcher is going to record your responses to the given situations. Being in a similar case-what would your reply be? Do not hesitate to complain as accurately as possible. The answers are sought for research purposes and will remain confidential. Thank you for your participation.

#### General Information

Age:

Gender:

male

female

#### Formal Situations

1 You are the manager of a company-you have a relative employee who usually comes late. You have an important meeting today at 9 o'clock-yet he appears at 09:30. What would you tell him?

2 You are having a coffee in a non-smoking area of your favorite cafe-someone sat in front of you and lit a cigarette. You wanted to talk to him/her and express your annoyance-what would you say?

3 The professor handed you the exam grades in the lecture-yours were low-even though you are sure you studied hard and did well for this exam. How would you approach the professor to express your dissatisfaction?

4 You are a team leader-you gave a team member co-worker to work on some documents urgently-and he/she came back after some time with the same folder not done yet. What would you tell him/her expressing your annoyance?

#### Informal Situations

5 In a Party-you took pictures with your friends and they posted them on social media without your permission. This behavior annoyed you-how would you express your displeasure to them?

6 You have an important exam tomorrow and you are busy revising. Your next-door neighbor is listening to loud music that disturbed you. What would you say expressing your irritation?

7 You prepared a cake for your friend's birthday-but your little nephew/cousin destroyed it and spoiled the surprise. This bothered you and you lost your temper. How would you complain to his mother?

8 A friend borrowed your previous lecture's notes since she/he was absent; when handing it back-coffee was spilled on it and it was messed up. This bothered you and you decided to complain about it-what would you say?

اختبار استكمال الخطاب للغة العربية الجزائرية  
طلبتنا الكرام، رسالة الدكتوراه تاعي على الشكاوى بين لي يهدرو بالعربية الجزائرية والإنجليزية الأمريكية، عندي مجموعة مواقف قادرة تصرًا في حياتنا اليومية كون تصرالك وحدة من هاد العفایس شا تقول؟ ولا واش راح يكون الرد تاعك؟ ريكلامي على حساب الحالة وغادي نسجل اجاباتك وطريقتك فالشكوى خاطش هوما لي غادي ندرسهم فالبحث وغادي نحافظ على خصوصيتهم.  
صحيتو على التعاون تاعكم

#### معلومات عامة

شحال عندك من عام؟  ذكر  أنثى الجنس:

#### المواقف الرسمية

**الموقف 1** نتني مديرة شركة، عندك فاميلتك خدام دايمن يجي روطار، عندكم اجتماع بزاف مهم على 9 هو طول حتى 9.30 باش جا، هاد العفسة نارفاتك؟ شا هي الحاجة اللولة لي تقوليهالها كي تشوفها؟

**الموقف 2** راكى قاعدة في كافيتيريا لي تعجبك في جهة من نوع فيها الدخان، يجي واحد يقعد حداك ويشعل قارو، بغيتي تهدري معاه وتبيئله بلي ديرونجاك، شا تقوليله؟

**الموقف 3** عطلكم الأستاذ نقاط تع الامتحان فالقسم، نتني ما ديتتش غاية وما عجباتكش لا نوت خاطرش راكى متأكدة بلي وجدتي روحك غاية وخدمتي مليح. شا تقولي للبروف كي تهدري معاه؟

**الموقف 4** نتني مشرفة على فريق في الشركة، عطيتي لوحدة من الفريق ملف به تخدمه وقاتليها تخف خاطش تتحققه ايرجو، راحت وولات موراها بوقت ومازال ما دارتني الخدمة لي عطيتهالها، شا تقوليلها باه تعبري على ديرونجمو تاعك؟

#### المواقف الغير رسمية

**الموقف 5** تصورتي مع صحاباتك في حفلة، ايا حطوهם فالفيسبوك/انستجرام بلا ما يقولولك، هاد الجاست ما عجبكش، شا تقوليلهم باه تبيئلهم بلي ز عفتي؟

**الموقف 6** عندك امتحان بزاف مهم غدوة وراكى لاهية بالمراجعة، جارتاك فالدار لي حداك طالقة الموسيقى آفون ضجائنك وما خلائنكش كامل تراجعى، شا تقوليلها باه تايكسبريمى ز عافك؟

**الموقف 7** وجدتي طارت للانيفارسار تع صحبتك، ايا فبليتك صغير (ولد ختك، ولد عمك...) طيحها وخسرلكم المفاجأة، ز عفتي وبيجي تشكي لمه، شا تقولي لها؟

**الموقف 8** صحبتك تقرأ معاك تسلفت عليك كايي باش تكتب الدرس لي فات خاطش كانت غاية، كي رداههلك، كانت مدفعقة عليه القهوة وتخسر، هاد الحاجة ز عفانك كيش تعبريلها وشا تقوليلها؟