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The American University in Cairo

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

**A Study of Compliment Responses among Male and Female Egyptian
Undergraduate Students**

By

Mariam Mostafa

A Thesis Submitted to

The Department of Applied Linguistics,
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Program

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts

Under the supervision of Dr. Lori Fredricks

2015

The American University in Cairo
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

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A Thesis Submitted by
Mariam Mostafa
to the Department of Applied Linguistics
May 2015

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to detect the variations in the compliment responses (CRs) between male and female Egyptian undergraduates, adding new dimensions to the study of CRs in the Egyptian context generally and among males and females specifically. The outcomes of the study will provide implications about the linguistic forms of compliment responses across males and females at the undergraduate level and also about the social decorum and value systems of Egyptian teenagers represented by university students. A similar study was piloted in the spring semester of 2013, with a small convenient sample (28 students from a private University in Cairo). The tools for collecting data, for the current study, were an eight-point discourse completion task (DCT) and field notes. The sample for the current study is composed of 120 DCT takers and 83 collected field notes, which make a total of 1042 compliment responses. The compliments were labeled and categorized into 25 micro categories and then grouped into four macro categories (accept-reject-evade and other). The analysis of the data showed that males and females preferred accepting compliments and that rejecting rarely happens. The findings based on the micro analysis also revealed how differently males and females utilize compliment responses in terms of politeness, meaning conveyed and language.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CR: Compliment Response

M: Male

F: Female

AUC: The American University in Cairo

GUC: The German University in Cairo

DCT: Discourse Completion Task

WDCT: Written Discourse Completion Task

S1 (2,3..): Situation number

A: Accept

R: Reject

E: Evade

O: Other

AT: Appreciation token

AG: Agreeing utterance

DG: Downgrading utterance

RET: Return Compliment

UPG: Praise Upgrade

PLE: Pleasure

DU: Disagreeing utterance

D/R: Dissatisfaction/Regrets

CHL: Challenging sincerity

SHC: Shift credit

IC: Informative comment

RR: Request reassurance

FF: Fault Finding

SAR: Sarcasm

J: Jokes

REL: Prayer (Religious Comment)

S/SM: Non-verbal

OFR: Offering

MOT: Motivational response

FLRT: Flirting

IG: Ignoring the Compliment

SUP: Superstitious comment

LAF: Laughter

XCOMP: Seeking more compliments

RE: Reassuring Comment

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You are my world and everything I do, I do it for you

I love you, Mama!

To my beloved dad

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You are the best inspiration and best man in the world

I love you, Papa!

And

To my sisters

Marwa Mostafa

Mona Mostafa

&

Mai Mostafa

Thank you for being great supportive sisters and friends

You rock my world!

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Complimenting is a speech act that occurs very often in our daily lives. It is defined, by Holmes (1988), as “a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for a “good” (possession, characteristic, skill, etc.)”. Therefore, a compliment may be regarded as a positive speech act; however, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), it may also be regarded as a face-threatening act (FTA). It is pointed out in their book that compliments may be significant FTAs in societies where envy is very strong. Holmes (1988) also stated that a compliment can be considered as face threatening and can even imply that the complimenter envies the addressee in some way or would like to have something that belongs to the addressee. Compliment response (CR), on the other hand, is the response given back by a complementee to a complimenter (Morales, 2012). Compliments and compliment responses coexist, functioning as an adjacency pair since whenever a compliment is given the interlocutor is expected to respond. CRs serve to establish and consolidate interpersonal relationships (Holmes, 1988). In spite of the fact that CRs, as well as compliments, are universal, they vary based on social and individual elements. That is to say, they vary from one society to another based on different cultural customs. They also vary in the one society based on communicative topics, gender and social power (Cai, 2012).

1.2 Purpose of the Study

Compliment response has been an area of exploration for more than five decades now. It has been extensively researched not only with varieties of English in

focus, for example Valdes and Pino (1981) for Mexican- American bilinguals, Wolfson (1983) for American English, Holmes (1988) for New Zealand English, Herbert and Straight (1989) for American and South African English and Creese (1991) for American and British English, but also for other languages like Chinese (Chang, 1988; Chen, 1993; Yang, 1987), Japanese (Barnlund & Araki, 1985; Daikuhara, 1986) and Korean (Yoon, 1991). In addition, research on compliment responses has been done in some Middle Eastern and African countries, such as Jordan (Farghal & Khatib, 2001) and Iran (Heidari, Rezazadeh & Rasekh, 2009; Heidari, Dastjerdi & Marvi, 2011). However, no research on compliment responses among Egyptians has been done, except for a cross cultural study that investigates the difference between Egyptian Arabic and American English compliments and not the responses (Nelson & El –Bakary, 1993). Therefore, as suggested by a number of scholars, (e.g., Manes, 1983; Herbert & Straight, 1989; Holmes, 1990; Herbert, 1997, among others), other language communities should be examined and analyzed and the reason for that, according to Herbert (1997), is the interesting information that compliments events (compliment + response) provide on socio-cultural values and organization. Also, compliment events can reveal the positively regarded values within the studied societies. Thus, the study at hand will contribute with analysis of the compliment responses used by Egyptians, in their own Egyptian Arabic.

Based on the literature reviewed, the researcher was able to conclude that compliment response is an understudied speech act in Middle Eastern Arabic; it can be claimed that the dialects that were studied are restricted, in terms of comprehension and use, to its speakers, (e.g., Jordanian). Also, the research on compliment responses among Egyptians has been done from a cross cultural perspective investigating the difference between Egyptian Arabic and American English compliments and not even

the responses (Nelson & El –Bakary, 1993). Hence, conducting such a study in the Egyptian context, focusing on the usage of Egyptian Arabic which is widely comprehended by a lot of Arabs from different Arabic speaking countries (Al-Tonis, 1980) will not only be interesting, but will also serve as an added value to research on the norms of some of the Egyptians’ culture and their usage of the compliment response speech act specifically. The results of the current study can be used, in comparison with other cultures, by researchers who are interested in the cross-cultural realization of the speech act of compliment responses. Also, the knowledge of the use of compliment responses across the different sexes would serve as an aspect of communicative competence.

The present study aims to detect the variations in the CRs between male and female Egyptian undergraduates, adding new dimensions to the study of CRs in the Egyptian context generally and among males and females specifically. The outcomes of the study will provide implications about the linguistic forms of compliment responses across males and females at the undergraduate level and also about the social decorum and value systems of some of the Egyptian teenagers represented by university students. A similar study was piloted in April and May, 2013, with a small convenient sample (28 students from the German University in Cairo).

1.3 Research Questions:

The current study addresses CR strategies used by male and female Egyptian undergraduate students by looking at the following research questions:

1. What are the CR strategies most commonly used by university students?
2. How do undergraduate male and female speakers of Egyptian Arabic use compliment response strategies at the micro level?

1.4 Definition of Terms

1.4.1 Theoretical definitions of constructs:

Compliment responses: an acknowledgment that the recipient of a compliment heard and reacted to a compliment (Nelson, Al-Batal & Echlos, 1996). In a way that A compliments B, B responds/acknowledges what A has said (Billmyer, 1990)

Macro pragmatics: the utterance is not the focus of macro pragmatics, but its focus is a series or sequence of utterances which form discourses/texts, which are considered as bearers of global intentionality of the speaker (Cap, 2011).

Micro Pragmatics: micro pragmatics is the study of illocutionary force at the utterance level (Cap, 2011).

1.4.2 Operational definitions of constructs:

Compliment responses: Compliment response is the core construct of this study. The whole study focuses on collecting the responses in the speech event complimenting, which is known to be structured as an adjacency pair, and analyzing them to answer the above research questions.

Micro pragmatics: The data analysis-coding scheme for the current study will include two phases; the first of which is the micro level of analysis which depends on a coding scheme referring to specific strategies that categorize the compliment response at the utterance level within each of the four broad categories mentioned below in the macro pragmatics.

Macro pragmatics: The second phase of data analysis, in the study at hand, will be based on the macro level of analysis. This phase in the coding scheme will classify the

data collected into the four general categories, representing the compliment response strategies (accept, reject, evade and others). (See Table 2).

1.5 Delimitation of the Study:

Only students from private universities will constitute the sample; no data will be collected from governmental universities, due to the difficulty of accessing and taking permissions to collect data from students attending the latter, in addition to the convenience of the chosen sample represented in the former type of universities. Only responses from undergraduates given in response to compliments from their undergraduate peers will be considered; those given in response to compliments given by adults, teachers, parents or anyone who is not an undergraduate will be discarded.

1.7 Acronyms and abbreviations

- CR: Compliment Response
- M: Male
- F: Female
- AUC: The American University in Cairo
- GUC: The German University in Cairo
- DCT: Discourse Completion Task
- WDCT: Written Discourse Completion Task

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In the last few decades, many studies have been directed to generally investigate speech act performance, and thus compliments and compliment response speech acts were explored as well. This mass of research had western languages as its main focus. Lately, however, more studies have investigated eastern languages, with only a few done on the various forms of Arabic. The core motivation behind studying speech acts is to shed light on the pragmatic rules that direct the use of different languages in different cultures and on the fact that these findings can be used to enable communication between people from different socio-cultural backgrounds (Nureddeen, 2007). The following section will be thematically classified to review the literature on language pragmatics, speech acts, compliments and compliment responses and compliment response strategies.

2.1 Language Pragmatics

Syntax, morphology and phonology used to be principal areas of focus for language studies; it was not until late 1970s when language pragmatics studies became prevalent. The study of pragmatics can be defined as how people comprehend and produce a speech act in a conversation. Pragmatics distinguishes two intents or meanings in each communicative act (speech act) of verbal communication. One is the sentence meaning (informative intent), and the other is the speaker's meaning (communicative intent) (Leech, 1983; Sperber and Wilson, 1986). Its definition is depicted in contrast to that of linguistic semantics, which is the study of "literal, decontextualized, grammatical meaning" (Frawley, 1992).

Differences in the use of compliments/compliment responses, according to Manes (1983), have been the focus of research especially as they are considered to be “mirrors of cultural values” (Furkó & Dudás, 2012), “an important speech act in a socio-cultural context” and to serve a “serious socio-cultural linguistic function” (Heidari et. al., 2009).

Pomerantz was the first researcher to study the topic of compliment response. She claimed that when responding to a compliment two general maxims of speech behavior conflict with each other (Pomerantz, 1978). These are "agree with the speaker" and "avoid self-praise." For that reason, recipients of compliments use various solutions, such as praise downgrade. However, the results given by Pomerantz did not give precise proportions of each type of response, as her studies were not quantitative. Examples of different types were provided though by Holmes (1988). Since then, many linguists have focused on and drawn insights into the phenomenon of CRs (e.g., Manes & Wolfson, 1981; Wolfson, 1983; Holmes & Brown, 1987; Holmes, 1990; Nelson, Batal & Echlos, 1996). Herbert (1986) provided analysis of compliment responses in American English using quantitative analysis to classify the various types of compliments within three categories (Agreement, Non-agreement and Other Interpretation). Each of the three categories was subdivided into other subcategories. A similar study was conducted in New Zealand by Holmes (1988); however, the taxonomy Holmes used was somehow different from Herbert's. The categories used were (Accept, reject and evade), and also had different subcategories under each of them. Holmes found that the most common compliment response type in New Zealand, which constituted 61% of the total responses, was *accept* and the second most frequent response type used was *shift credit*, which constituted 29% of the data collected. Only 10% were rejections of compliments.

Some of the studies found in the literature were done from a cross-cultural perspective, while a smaller number of studies were done to find differences between genders in the way they respond to compliments. In their studies, Holmes (1988) and Herbert (1990) assumed that women used compliments in order to keep solidarity, while men perceived them as potential face threatening acts (as cited in: Heidari, Reazazadeh & Rasekh, 2009). Other studies on CRs, such as Furko and Dudas (2012), showed that in Hungary, females agree more to compliments from females than those from males, while male respondents offered agreement to males and females both alike. Also, the study showed that Hungarian speakers of English, even those who are at the university level, misperceive the level of modesty and therefore use more non-agreement in their EFL language output. In another study, Davis (2008), indicated that non-intimate Australians use acceptance tokens in their responses more than other CRs. The findings of the study by Heidari et. al., (2011), in the Iranian context, showed that females used less accept and more evade than men did, for instance men used more downgrading utterances for possession compliment, while females used informative comment in the like situation.

2.1.1 Pragmatic competence. The concept of pragmatic competence and its emergence can be traced back to Hymes' (1972) notion of *communicative competence*, which requires grammatical knowledge as well as knowledge of appropriate sociocultural rules. Hymes proposed the said notion in response to Chomsky's (1965) notion of *linguistic competence*, due to the fact that the latter does not consider contextual appropriateness and is entirely linked with knowledge of grammar. The communicative concept was further developed, by researchers such as Bachman (1990), which led to the advent of the *pragmatic competence* term. Bachman presented a theoretical framework, consisting of three components:

language competence, strategic competence and psychophysical mechanisms, of communicative language ability. Language competence, the first of the three primary components, is divided into organizational competence and pragmatic competence. The latter encompasses illocutionary competence, which refers to knowledge of speech acts and language functions, and sociolinguistic competence, which refers to sensitivity to language. Bachman & Palmer (1996, 2010) introduced a more comprehensive model of language ability. One of the major achievements of this model over other previous ones is its emphasis on the central role of strategic competence, metacognitive strategies or higher-order processes which explain the interaction of knowledge and affective components of language use.

2.2 Speech Acts

A number of studies have been done on pragmatic competence related matters, particularly in speech acts. Austin (1962) is the originator of the theory of speech acts. He claims that every utterance can be classified under one of three acts. Below is a summary of the three categories as presented by Barron (2003).

-Locutionary act – the act of uttering (phonemes, morphemes, sentences)

-Illocutionary act – the intention of the speaker (S) as presented in an utterance, e.g., compliment, apology.

-Perlocutionary act – the effect an utterance has on the hearer (H), e.g., flatter H (in case of a compliment) or make H forgive S (in case of an apology).

The speech act theory presented by Austin (1962) was further developed by Searle (1976), who introduced a new taxonomy of illocutionary acts consisting of five

classes: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declaratives. Below is a summary of the five classes as presented by Barron (2003).

- *Representatives/Assertives*: S asserts that the proposed content of the utterance is true.

- *Directives*: S directs H to do something.

- *Commissives*: S commits him/herself to a certain future course of action given in the utterance.

- *Expressives*: S expresses a psychological attitude or an opinion towards a certain action or state of affair.

- *Declaratives*: S communicates a correspondence between the proposed content of the utterance and reality.

Expressives, among the five classes of illocutionary acts, is the most relevant to the study at hand, as “to compliment” is listed as an expressive along with “to apologize”, “to thank” and others (Searle & Vanderveken, 1985).

2.2.1 Compliments and their functions. There seems to be no such thing as a standard definition of compliment among researchers who studied compliments and compliment responses; however the most frequently cited definition is Holmes’ (1988:446):

“A compliment is a speech act, which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some ‘good’ (possession, characteristic, skill etc.), which is valued, by the speaker and the hearer.”

The nature and effect of compliments can vary depending on their contextual use. Kawaguchi, Kabaya, and Sakamoto (1996) present two types of compliments: genuine compliments, which occur when the speaker wants to express sincere admiration to the hearer, and ostensible compliments, which have the intention of maintaining a good relationship with the hearer; these fall in the same realm of what Ohno (2005) terms other intentions or complimenting with ulterior motives. The hearers compliment response (CR) may be influenced by the speaker's hidden intention. The current study will focus only on sincere compliments, in order to better examine the influence of other situational variables (e.g. compliment responses and gender variations).

The functions of compliments can also vary from one culture to another. According to Daikuhara (1986), showing deference or respect is one of the common functions of compliments in Japanese, which seems to create a barrier between the interlocutors. Consequently, this barrier created by the complimenter has to be denied by the complimentee as a way of emphasizing commonality and sustaining harmony. In contrast to what the results of Manes and Wolfson's (1981) study suggested about the Americans' usage of compliments and its function, which is to construct solidarity and assert commonality between interlocutors.

2.2.2 Compliments and compliment responses. Compliments and compliment responses, as with any linguistic utterance, are affected by the participants' assumptions and expectations about people, events and places in interaction. They play a noteworthy role in the performance and interpretation of linguistic utterances. Two aspects that govern the delivery of certain communicative intention, through choosing linguistic expressions, are social conventions and the individual's assessments of situations (Nureddeen, 2007). Swan (1990) elaborates on

the social conventions aspect by pointing out the importance of context for the interpretation of a communicative event; adding that what gives the communicative event its precise value is the interaction of the structural and lexical meaning of an utterance with the situation in which it occurred. Therefore, the communicative act's intended meaning should be interpreted in the light of the context in which it is uttered to insure accuracy.

In a socio-cultural context, compliments are recognized as an important speech act. Holmes (1988) states that compliments are “‘positively affective speech acts, the most obvious function they serve is to oil the social wheels, paying attention to positive face wants and thus increasing or consolidating solidarity between people’” (p.462). Nevertheless, compliments may also be regarded as a threat to negative face, even while paying attention to positive face.

A compliment response (CR) is a verbal acknowledgment that the recipient of the compliment heard and reacted to the compliment (Nelson, Al-Batal & Echlos, 1996) and it can be simply explained as a response to what has been defined earlier as a compliment. The speech acts of compliment and CR are conversational devices of interpersonal relationships in daily life that coexist functioning as an adjacency pair; whenever a compliment is given the interlocutor is expected to respond.

According to Farghal and Al-khatib (2001), researchers on compliment behavior observed that although compliments and compliment responses are universal, they differ from one society to another. Upon the examination of the literature it was noted that most of the previous work has focused on the American and European cultures (Coulmas, 1980; Norrick, 1980; Manes, 1983; Wolfson; 1983 Holmes, 1986; Herbert, 1987; Holmes & Brown, 1989, among others). On the other

hand, studies based on Eastern languages are scarce. Hence, it can be claimed that results of such studies are less generalizable than it is indicated in the literature. A number of scholars, (e.g., Manes, 1983; Herbert & Straight, 1989; Holmes, 1990; Herbert, 1997, among others), expressed the desire to analyze other language communities. Herbert (1997) mentioned that the reason to study other languages is that compliment events (compliment + response) provide interesting information on the values of a society and the topic of compliments reveals the values which are positively regarded within a particular society.

2.3 Compliment and Compliment Responses in Relation to Politeness Theories

Hereunder, compliments and CRs will be discussed in relation to politeness theories. Brown and Levinson's (1987) and Leech's (1983) add to the model of Egyptian politeness proposed by Mursy and Wilson (2001). Prior to discussing this relation, each theory will be presented briefly.

2.3.1 Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory. Brown and Levinson (1987) differentiated between positive politeness and negative politeness. According to them, on the one hand, "Positive politeness is redress directed to the addressee's positive face, his perennial desire that his wants (or the actions/acquisitions/values resulting from them) should be thought of as desirable" (p.101). On the other hand, "Negative politeness is redressive action addressed to the addressee's negative face: his want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded." (p.121). In other words, positive politeness strategies are, basically, used by the speaker to meet the hearer's positive face want, which is the desire to be liked and assimilated in a group; negative politeness strategies, in contrast, are used to meet the hearer's negative face want, which is the desire to keep distances and be left alone. Consequently, a face-threatening act (FTA) is when the speaker poses a threat to the hearer's face.

2.3.2 Leech's Politeness Principle. Leech's (1983) introduced the theory of the Politeness Principle (PP), which is formulated as follows: "Minimize the expression of impolite beliefs" and "Maximize the expression of polite beliefs." (p.81). It consists of six maxims: Tact Maxim, Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Modesty Maxim, Agreement Maxim and Sympathy Maxim. The most relevant to CRs from among the six maxims, and in turn to the study at hand, are the Modesty Maxim and Agreement Maxim. The Modesty Maxim aims at minimizing praise of self and maximizing dispraise of self, while Agreement Maxim aims at minimizing disagreement and maximizing agreement.

2.3.3 Egyptian Politeness. Mursy and Wilson (2001) proposed that compliments and compliment responses are culture-specific, especially when being related to politeness; they contend that western theories of politeness like Leech's and Brown and Levinson's are western ethnocentric. This becomes clear when these models are applied to eastern cultures, such as Egypt, where the group and society are favored over the individual. Therefore, models of politeness based on individual wants and desires cannot explain complimenting and responding to compliments in corporate or collective cultures.

In order to understand how concepts such as face and politeness operate within the Egyptian society, one should be briefly acquainted with the Egyptian culture. The Egyptian society is one that is corporate, meaning that sense that the Egyptian has for sacredness of his social groups, of their individual unity that have to be considered regardless of the constituent members (Rugh, 1985). This can be seen in contrast to the concept of individualism, which is reflected in known western politeness theories. Hence, the construct of 'negative face' has little positive value in the Egyptian

society, compared to its value in the Brown and Levinson's theory (Mursy & Wilson, 2001).

Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle (PP), may seem more appropriate for the Egyptian case. Therefore, the politeness theory suggested by Mursy and Wilson (2001), which they called Social Contract of Values (SCV), is mostly based on it, in addition to two maxims that are exclusive to the Egyptian culture. These are the *Address Maxim*, which is addressing interlocutors with an appropriate address form, and the *Self-denial Maxim*, which is sacrificing one's own benefits for the benefit of others.

Building on both additional maxims, they suggested a model of Egyptian politeness containing the following elements:

1. Positive Values:

- a. The value of /il-kubuul/ (code of correct behavior) which includes most of Leech's maxims, in addition to the two Egyptian maxims.
- b. /il-wagib/ : obligation
- c. /il-maaruuf/: favor
- d. /iz-zooq/: tact, manners
- e. /il-mugamla/: courtesy.

2. Negative values (which are a result of not fulfilling the positive values mentioned above):

- a. /ʕ eeb/ (shameful behavior) which results from not fulfilling the positive values of /il-kubuul/ and /il-wagib/
- b. /lamubalaah/ (apathy) if the values of /il-maaruuf/, /iz-zooq/ and /il-mugamla/ are breached.

- c. /qillit iz-zooq/ (lack of tact or manners) which results from not fulfilling /iz-zooq/ value.

The study at hand will relate compliment responses mostly to the Egyptian model of politeness rather than Brown and Levinson's and Leech's, as the researcher finds it more relevant. The Address Maxim however, will not be considered because the study is among undergraduates only (participants of the same age group).

2.3.4 Relevance of Politeness to Compliments and Compliment Responses.

In spite of the fact that compliment behavior is regarded as a positive politeness strategy Brown and Levinson (1987), they argue that compliments may be an FTA particularly in societies where envy is prevalent. For example, in Samoan culture a compliment for an object imposes an obligation on the owner/ complimentee to offer it to the complimenter. Hence, the compliment can be a threat to the addressee's negative face. On the other hand, Egyptian face is different. The word synonymous with 'face' in Egyptian Arabic is /wiʃʃ/ which reflects the reputable, respectable image claimed by individuals from the community. Thus, to maintain Egyptian face is to act in accordance with the norms and values held by the community. Unlike Brown and Levinson, Mursy & Wilson's (2001) notion of Egyptian face does not focus on the individual's 'wants' and 'desires', but on the evenness between the judgment of the community and the individual's behavior.

Studies in Arabic on compliments, compliment responses and other politeness speech acts are scarce. According to Emery (2000), Ferguson (1967, 1976, 1983) was the first to examine the phenomenon of compliment and compliment responses in relation to politeness in Syrian Arabic, Ferguson's study was also the first in any

Arabic dialect. Later, a number of studies in Arabic were done on politeness and politeness formulae related matters (e.g., Al – Khatib, 1994, 1997; Al –Nasser, 1993; Nelson & El –Bakary, 1993). Only Nelson and El- Bakary touched up compliment specifically in their cross-cultural work on Egyptian and American compliments.

American and Syrian compliment responses were studied, compared and contrasted, in Nelson et al. (1996). The data was categorized into acceptance, mitigation and rejections in light of existing schemes developed by Herebert (1989). The data resulted in 50% and 67% of acceptances for Americans and Syrians respectively.

Quantitatively, studies found in the literature on compliment responses show that compliment acceptances are relatively dominant in English speaking countries. According to Herbert (1989), the percentage is 66% and 88% for American and South Africans respectively, while Holmes (1988) reported 61% for New Zealanders and 58% for Americans. The remaining percentages in the previous studies represent deflection and rejections. Moreover, different strategies governing compliment behavior in English and Chinese have been pointed out in Chen's (2011) study. Rejections reached 96% for the Chinese informants in his study. Consequently, it has been noted that the Agreement Maxim seems to play a key role in English, while the Modesty Maxim is more relevant in the Chinese context (Mursy & Wilson, 2001).

2.4 Compliment Responses Strategies

Appreciation tokens, used by Pomerantz (1978), included terms such as *thanks, thank you, thank you so much*, they are the most explicit form appreciation token. Also in this context we can group explicit agreeing utterances. Even non-verbal indications of agreement can be grouped in this category. Utterances that downgrade

the compliment (e.g., that was nothing), indicate an implicit acceptance of the credit attributed, therefore are also classified in the acceptance category.

Utterances that indicate the respondent does not agree with the complimenter by any means are classified as a rejection of the compliment. The respondent can also reject explicitly or implicitly or even by questioning the validity of the compliment often imply disagreement and can be followed by an explicit disagreement utterance (Pomerantz, 1978). An example of that is:

Ex.1: Context: Friends meeting on the beach.

C. You're looking very nice and you look thinner.

CR. Thinner? I think that's just the swimming suit.

Evading is when the respondent avoids accepting the attributed credit by providing semantically relevant responses that ignore the positive effect of the compliment (Holmes, 1993). This is usually done when the recipient does not want to accept out of modesty, but does not want to reject it outright and these provide a solution to the compliment recipient's problem of abiding by the modesty maxim, but still appear as a cooperative conversationalist (Holmes, 1993).

In the Egyptian context, compliment responses most likely indicate acceptance of the compliment to comply with the cultural values of *waagib*, *zooq* and *mugamla* (obligation, tact and courtesy, respectively). Evading the category sometimes takes place and is also seen through the conflicting maxims of agreement and modesty. However, rejecting the compliment is rarely done as it would be considered / *ʕ eeb*/ (shameful behavior) and contradicts with all positive cultural values mentioned above.

CRs in American English as studied by Pomerantz (1978) display an inclination to the two conflicting constraints (agreement and avoidance of self-praise) they face when receiving a compliment. The first constraint is due to the fact that compliments can be seen as assessments in which the speaker is (positively) evaluating some state of affairs, appearance, some object, or some action. The preferred response to an assessment is an agreement with it, which is usually performed as a second assessment (Pomerantz, 1984). Pomerantz (1978) added, based on her observations, that compliments may also function as “supportive” actions which makes them similar to offers, invitation, gifts, praises etc. In such a case, the acceptance of the compliment is the preferred response. However, there is a constraint on the speakers which conflicts with the first constraint and that is, they should not praise themselves. As can be seen in the following example, from Pomerantz (1978), self-praise gets criticized by co participants:

Ex.2: A: Just think of how many people would miss you. You would know who cared.

B: Sure. I have a lot of friends who would come to the funeral and say what an intelligent, bright, witty, interesting person I was.

A: They wouldn't say that you were humble

B: No. Humble, I'm not.

In this case when B uses self praise, A criticizes this behavior by teasing B. Teasing, cracking jokes, or otherwise critically assessing a speaker's self-praise are ways of responding back to those who do not enforce self-praise avoidance. If

speakers wish to praise themselves without being criticized, they often include disclaimers in their talk such as ‘I don’t like to brag’ (Pomerantz, 1978).

Speaking of compliment rejections, compliments are rejected by disagreeing with the compliment assertion. This can be seen in the following example.

Ex. 3: C: Gee, Hon, you look nice in that dress

CR: Do you really think so? It’s just a rag that my sister gave me.

As a response to the compliment, the wife first questions her husband’s claim and then gives a second assessment that is somewhat in disagreement with her husband’s, indicated by the negative evaluative expression ‘just a rag’.

In the study at hand the data contained more acceptances/agreements than rejections/disagreements, unlike what was found by Pomerantz (1978) in her study of compliment responses in American English, in accordance with Mursy and Wilson’s (2001) description of Egyptian Politeness.

Holmes (1986) and Herbert (1990) also investigated American English; they found more acceptances/agreements than rejections/disagreements in their corpora. It is believed that the reason for this difference is that these researchers categorized agreements differently than Pomerantz did (Golato, 2002). For example, Holmes (1986) counted appreciation tokens, agreement tokens, an agreeing utterance, a downgrade or qualification, and a compliment return as agreements, while Pomerantz views downgrade or qualification, and compliment return ‘in between categories’.

This is caused by the second constraint placed on the recipient of a compliment, namely avoiding self praise. There are several ways of dealing with the two constraints placed on a speaker. Pomerantz (1987) pointed out that speakers

regularly produce compliment responses that are somewhat 'in between' acceptances and rejections. In other words, they contain features of both acceptances/appreciations and rejections/disagreements, or convey a neutral stance.

Herbert and Straight (1989) observed compliment recipients giving a non-evaluative comment on the thing that was complimented. This can be seen in the following example.

Ex.4: C: I love that suit.

CR: I got it at Boscov's.

Herbert (1986; 1989) noted additional ways of responding to compliments in American English, such as reinterpreting the compliment. Usually compliments are reinterpreted as requests, with the next relevant action becoming an offer as is displayed in the next example.

Ex. 5: C: I like those pants

CR: You can borrow them any time.

The preceding paragraphs have discussed some of the "in-betweens" that have been observed and that are usually categorized as "evasive responses". The data have also shown that speakers of American English display reluctance when they are given a compliment of accepting and avoiding self praise.

2.5 Compliment Responses and Sex

One the most prominent approaches in language and sex research is conversation analysis (Bucholtz, 2003). The focus of this research is on the speech acts of compliment responses with regards to its use by the different sexes. The

literature of sex- differentiating language behavior proposes that females exhibit more personal focus in their compliments and responses, than males in many contexts (Herbert, 1990). To the best of my knowledge, based on the studies reviewed so far, compliments offered by males to female addressees are more likely accepted than those given by females. However, that does not necessarily mean that females tend to accept compliments more than men. Results in Herbert's (2003) study show that the acceptance rate in male-male interactions is approximately 50% higher than female-female interaction, in the American context, while the opposite is true in the Hungarian context. females agreeing more to compliments from females than those from males, while male respondents offered agreement to males and females both alike (Furko&Dudas, 2012). The findings in the study done by Heidari et. al. (2011) in the Iranian context confirm that males and females do not share the same expectations and nor do they follow the same linguistic and cultural protocols.

Difference in response strategies in most of the research reviewed are numerous and interesting. The great majority of the literature discussing compliment responses and sex is focusing on the notion of status and power relations. According to Herbert (2003), male compliments being accepted are common among status non-equals or those whose status is not being negotiated, indicating that the acceptance responses males get from females may yet be one of the linguistic consequences of status differences, which are apparent in cross-sex interactions. Holmes (1988) provided probable reasons for the findings of different researchers, such as Manes and Wolfson (1981), indicating that women give and receive compliments more frequently than do men; she suggested that since "compliments express social approval, one expects more of them to be addressed 'downwards' as socializing devices, or directed to the socially insecure to build their confidence. The fact that

women receive more compliments reflects women's socially subordinate status in the society" (Holmes, 1988:5). Moreover, she claims that women offer and receive more compliments as a form of expressing solidarity among each other (females). On the other hand, males do not make use of compliments as frequent as women do, nor do they consider them as the most appropriate way of expressing solidarity.

2.5.1 Males' and Females' Usage of Compliments Responses. As far as sex differences are concerned in western contexts, women perceive compliments as strategies of positive politeness, while men often perceive them as face threatening acts. Holmes (1988) conducted a study with a sample from New Zealand in which she stated that New Zealanders rarely reject compliments explicitly. This is evident in her results, which indicate that 62% of females and 64% of males use acceptance token. Holmes also found the following sex- based differences in the perception and production of compliment exchanges:

- women compliment each other more than they compliment men
- women compliment each other more than men compliment each other
- men evade the force of the compliment more often than women
- women compliment each other on appearance more than anything else

Additional research in complimenting behavior confirms that women receive more compliments than do men and that compliments between women occur frequently (Wolfson, 1983; Herbert, 1998). In addition, women use elaborate and personalized compliment forms, unlike men who prefer using neutral and impersonal forms (Herbert, 1998). Women also feel more pressured to acknowledge a compliment even if they cannot accept it. Men, however, often avoid CRs by ignoring the compliment or changing the subject. In her study, Bolton (1994), introduced the

concept of Lax Acknowledgement. These CRs are usually performed by men and they include non-verbal signs such as nodding or avoiding eye contact. Lax Acknowledgments can also include non-verbal vocal responses, for example, an embarrassed laugh or the use of a discourse marker as a complete CR.

2.5.2 Pilot Study. Having started the research by a pilot study on compliment responses used by male and female Egyptian undergraduates in 2013, a summary of the interpretation of the findings is going to be presented. The general pattern revealed that males tend to evade more compliments while females tend to accept them more, and very few rejections occur on both sides. This contradicts Holmes' (1986) findings in New Zealand, which show that males ignored and evaded compliments more than females did. However, the pilot study findings were similar to those in Iran (Heidari, et.al., 2009), which show that the general tendency for both groups is to follow the order of 'accept', 'evade' and 'reject' as preferred strategies. Females used less 'accept' and more 'evade' and 'reject' strategies than their male counterparts.

Appearance compliments were found to elicit mostly acceptance from males, though a lot of sarcasm was used in CRs because they found it slightly odd to be complimented on their clothes and how they dress. However men found it normal to be complimented on their body shape and they responded by offering further information about the gym they go to for example. Females however, responded to compliments using evasion strategies mostly; they requested reassurance or gave an informative comment. Responses to compliments related to the character showed a great deal of humility among the two groups, males and females, which indicate that accepting a compliment is not considered as self praise for Egyptians. Even when the response literally expresses self praise, it is usually in a sarcastic manner and gives different implications which still do not defy humility. Responses to compliments on

ability also followed the general pattern; as males used accepting strategies in such incidents and females used evasive strategies. Males used a lot of appreciation tokens with less sarcasm, in this situational setting, than they did in other situational settings. Finally, in responses to compliments on possessions, males and females were not that different, because females unlike the outcome of all other three situations and the general pattern they used more 'accept' strategies than evasive strategies and their responses reflected that they enjoyed being complimented for a possession and appreciated it. Males used 'accept' strategies, same as they did in the other situations, but they did not seem to appreciate it that much. Their responses were mostly sarcastic and sometimes offensive.

The results of the pilot study show that the CRs vary from males to females on the macro level, as males tend to use more acceptance CR strategies while females use more evasive strategies.

CHAPTER 3: METHEDOLOGY

3.1 Overview of the Chapter

This chapter will introduce the participants, the instruments used and the procedures followed by the researcher. Also, the taxonomy used by the researcher to categorize compliment responses on is also introduced in this chapter (table 2).

3.2 Participants

This study is targeting Egyptian undergraduate students, both males and females, accordingly the data needed to answer the four questions mentioned in the introduction chapter, was collected. Ages of the participants varied vary from 17 to 22.

3.2.1 WDCT participants. The total number of participants who filled the WDCT is 120. They were divided into two groups and were labeled Ms for males (n=60) and Fs for females (n=60). Participants from both groups were private university students, ages ranging from 17 to 22, the data was collected from students enrolled in the American University in Cairo (AUC) and others enrolled in the German University in Cairo (GUC).

3.2.2 Field observation participants. The researcher made field observations and gathered natural talk, compliment responses, from the same above named universities: AUC and GUC. The number of responses recorded was 83. The exact exchanges were recorded in addition to other contextual information (age, sex and university).

Table 1:*Summary of Actual Participants*

Sex	Male	Female	Total
Number of DCT participants (complimentees)	60	60	120
Number of Field notes participants (complimentees)	32	51	83
Total number of participants	92	111	203

3.3 Instruments

A combination of a WDCT and field observations were used as instruments for this study. The reason for using two different methods of data collection instead of one is that investigating a phenomenon related to talk-in-interaction, or a discourse feature, such as compliment responses, depends on analysis of data (Golato, 2003). Therefore, it is crucial to select the appropriate tool of data collection because the data needs to be as reliable as possible and to avoid basing the study upon data that do not illustrate actual language use. According to Galato (2003) “Due to inappropriate choice of data collection procedure, the claims of many published articles on compliment and compliment responses may need to be attenuated.”

DCTs generally (written or oral) are very commonly used in studies of pragmatics and sociolinguistics, because of their various advantages, such as:

- 1- Gathering a lot of data in a short time.
- 2- Indicating the strategies that are likely to be used in natural speech.
- 3- Shedding light on social and psychological factors that may have an impact on speech.
- 4- Studying what is perceived as a socially appropriate response.

(Beebe & Cumming, 1996)

On the other hand, DCTs have some limitations. The elicited data does not necessarily reflect all aspects of actual language use, for example:

1. Actual wording that would be used in real interactions.
2. The exact strategies may not be used; some tend to be left out, such as avoidance.
3. The length of the response or if the conversation would include turns to fulfill the function.
4. Emotions, which have an effect on qualitative data, may not be perceived.

(Beebe & Cumming, 1996)

These shortcomings of the DCT that may denote lack of naturalness of the data collected were avoided by using additional field observations. Many studies of compliment responses use field observation. Carefully taken field notes will allow for the collection of indispensable contextual information (Kasper, 2000). The limitation to this method however, is that it depends on the researchers memory and observational skills. Therefore, the data collected may be limited in quantity, which will make it a long collection process.

3.3.1 Data completion tasks. The DCT used for the purpose of this study was a WDCT. It was formed with regards to four situational settings (appearance, character, ability and possession); each situational setting contained two scenarios, which made a total of eight scenarios. It can be considered as a one-sided role-play in Arabic containing eight situational prompts (compliments) which the participants should read and write their responses to as naturally as they would if they were actually in the said situations; the DCT also contained two demographic questions about age and university. The participants were allowed to write actions (e.g., ‘smile’, ‘wink’, ‘nod’ or ‘silence’) instead of any actual wording if they thought a non-verbal response was most appropriate.

Both male and female complimenters were included in the DCT, four male complimenters and four female complimenters; as a result participants had an equal chance to respond to complimenters of both sexes. The gathered data was core to the study and key to answering both questions. The researcher also did a very quick debriefing with randomly selected participants after they completed the DCTs to gather in-depth information concerning the motives behind providing these responses.

A similar study was piloted in the May- June, 2013, with a small sample (28 students from the German University in Cairo), and contained a similar DCT adapted from Heidari, et.al, (2011), containing four scenarios; it was translated into Arabic by the researcher. However, after it was translated, some of the scenarios were changed to suite the Egyptian context and the language was colloquialized to be in line with the natural language used by the participants of that age group and four extra scenarios were written by the researcher and added. The DCT used for the study at hand was the same as the one partially adapted from Heidari, et.al, (2009) and used in

the pilot study, which contained same situational settings, but different scenarios.

3.3.2 Field observation. The researcher partially followed a method pioneered by Wolfson and Manes (1980), which requires field workers to write down the next twenty compliment responses they observe in their daily lives, noting the exact exchange in addition to other contextual information (age, sex of speaker, location, etc.) right after the exchange has taken place. However, in the research at hand the researcher asked 50 field workers (volunteering colleagues) to write down only one compliment and compliment response exchange that they come across, and the researcher collected one to two field notes every day until the recorded corpus reached 83 responses.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

The above-mentioned DCT was distributed among 120 students from AUC and GUC. With each DCT containing eight scenarios, written with regards to four situational settings (appearance, character, ability and possession); the total number of collected responses was 960. Each situational setting will have a total of 240 responses. The sample from the GUC was recruited with the help of fellow instructors. The researcher had colleagues, who wished to volunteer, distribute the DCTs among their students. The instructors were also given the consent form, as only students who wished to participate were given the DCT.

At AUC, on the other hand, the researcher asked students randomly in the library building and in the plaza area to fill the DCTs, after agreeing and signing the consent form, to fill the DCT.

Twenty participants, ten from each university, were chosen randomly to give further oral information in the form of a short debriefing session. The purpose of this step was to investigate the motive behind writing theses responses and what is intended by them.

The researcher did the field observation, collecting field notes at AUC, by spending some time on a daily basis in the library or in the plaza area. The number collected was 43 from the AUC. On the other hand at the GUC, 50 language instructors in the English and Scientific Methods Department, who volunteered to be field workers, were asked to write down one compliment and its response. They provided 40 compliment situations. Therefore, at the end of the data collection phase 83 authentic compliment responses were noted. In reference to the instruments section, no data was audio recorded, the observers wrote down the compliments and the responses. After collecting the data the researcher interpreted the results and made the data analysis adopting a mixed methods approach: qualitative and quantitative.

3.5 Coding and Analysis of CR

Upon checking the previous CR studies (Pomerantz, 1978; Herbert, 1986; Holmes, 1988, Farghal, 2006, among others), it came to the researcher's notice that they categorized CRs into three macro level categories, namely positive, negative and either avoidance or evading. In spite of the fact that most researchers follow in the footsteps of Holmes (1988), none of them abide strictly by her categorizations. Researchers usually created semantic formulas suitable for the context of their studies.

In the present study, the analysis started by dividing the CRs into 25 micro categories, which are considered as subcategories grouped under the four-macro categories (i.e., Accept, reject, evade and other). The 'other' category was added by

the researcher after conducting the pilot study. The original three categories adapted from Holmes (1988) can only work on simple responses, those that feature one illocution (Farghal, 2006), but not for complex nor nonverbal responses. Complex responses are very common among Egyptians and that was supported by the results of the pilot study and nonverbal ones are very likely to occur, therefore the ‘other’ category was created.

Each of the 25 micro categories will be given an abbreviated code to facilitate the process of quantifying the data. The semantic formulas of the CRs are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2:

Micro and Macro Categories

Macro level CRs	Micro Level CRs	Examples
1. Accept (A)	1a. Appreciation token (AT)	“Thanks”; Thank you”;
	1 b. Agreeing utterance (AG)	“I know”; I am glad you think so”; “I did realize I did that well”
	1c. Downgrading utterance (DG)	“It’s nothing”; “It was no problem”; “I enjoyed doing it”; “I hope it was OK”;
	1d. Return compliment (RET)	“You’re not too bad yourself”; “I’m sure you will be great”; “Yours was good too.”
	1e. Praise upgrade/Addition (UPG)	“This is the best work I’ve ever done”
	1f. Pleasure/Appreciation (PLE)	“ I’m glad you like it”
2. Reject (R)	2a. Disagreeing utterance (DU)	“Nah, I don’t think so”; “I thought I did badly”; “Nah, it’s nothing special”; “It’s not”
	2b. Dissatisfaction/Regrets (D/R)	“I felt it could have been better” “I could have prepared more”
	2c. Challenging sincerity (CHL)	“Don’t lie”; “Don’t joke about it”; “You must be kidding”

3. Evade (E)	3a. Shift credit (SHC)	“That’s what friends are for”; “You’re polite”
	3b. Informative comment (IC)	“It wasn’t hard”; “You can get it from (store name)”; It’s really cheap.”
	3c. Request reassurance(RR)	“Seriously?”
	3d. Fault finding (FF)	A: You did well on your presentation. B: But I couldn’t present the attention getter well
4. Other (O) Combination between accept or evade macro categories +.....	4a. Sarcasm (SAR)	A. You’re room color is really nice” (Male). B. Mom chose it go sit with her (Male).
	4b. Joke (J)	“That’s the least I can do” (jokingly)
	4c. Prayer (REL)	“Thank God”
	4d. Non-verbal (S/SM)	Smile- nod
	4e. Offering (OFR)	You can have it
	4f. Motivation (MOT)	Thank you, you can do it better yourself, because you've worked hard.
	4g. Flirting (FLRT)	You're the one who's amazing. (Addressed at an opposite gender)
	4h. Ignoring the compliment (IG)	A. Your presentation was great. B. What do you think of the formal attire?
	4i. Superstitious comment (SUP)	/khamisa w khemesa/ (five and five, showing palm which is thought to push away the evil eye)
	4j. Laughter (LAF)	Hahaha
	4k. Seeking more compliments (XCOMP)	Does it look nice on me?
	4l. Reassuring comment (RE)	No, I did nothing, that's what friends normally do.
Combinations between Rejection +.....		

3.6 Treatment of Research Questions:

The first question was answered by grouping and quantifying the responses that were collected via the two methods of data collection using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) program. The second question used the same method of analysis as the one above, to figure out if different sexes, in the same context and of

the same age, used different response strategies. Also, qualitative analysis was used to show how males and females use responses at the utterance level and if there are any differences between their usages. Due to the fact that the responses are mostly in Arabic, the investigator provided transliteration as well as translation for selected responses; those that were added as examples in the body of the study.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Overview

The following chapter is to present the results of the following research questions:

1. What are the macro CR strategies most commonly used by university students?
2. How do undergraduate male and female speakers of Egyptian Arabic use compliment response strategies at the micro level?

4.2 General Strategies (Macro) Analysis:

One of the aims of this study of compliment responses between male and female Egyptian Arabic speakers was to identify the most common strategy used by undergraduates with ages varying from 18 to 22. The database comprises a total of 1042 compliment events, 960 from the DCTs and 83 collected via field notes. The 1042 compliment events in the corpus have the following sex-based distribution:

Table 3:

Corpus

	Tokens Collected from DCTs	Tokens Collected via field notes	Total
Males	480	32	512
Female	479	52	530
Total	959	83	1042

The frequencies of acceptances, rejections, evasions and combinations, i.e. macro analysis were counted. Table 4 indicates the frequency of these four categories from the data collected via 120 DCTs gathered from both males and females. Each DCT contains eight situations, with that the total corpus of responses collected from DCTs would be 960 responses. In six out of the eight situations the majority of

participants accept the compliment rather than reject, evade or use combinations. However, in situations four and seven, the most frequent strategy used was the 'other' or combinations strategy, where complimentees get to accept, evade or reject a compliment and combine it with an additional phrase or give the response with a certain attitude or sometimes give a non-verbal response.

Table 4:

Macro Frequencies in DCTs

			Frequency	Percent
Situation 1	Valid	Accept	83	69.2
		Evade	8	6.7
		Others	29	24.2
Situation 2	Valid	Accept	63	52.5
		Reject	4	3.3
		Evade	30	25
		Others	23	19.2
Situation 3	Valid	Accept	85	70.8
		Reject	1	0.8
		Evade	1	0.8
		Others	33	27.5
Situation 4	Valid	Accept	55	45.8
		Reject	3	2.5
		Evade	2	1.7
		Others	60	50
Situation 5	Valid	Accept	61	50.8
		Evade	30	25
		Others	29	24.2
Situation 6	Valid	Accept	58	48.3
		Evade	38	31.7
		Others	24	20
		Accept	39	32.5
Situation 7	Valid	Reject	1	0.8
		Evade	13	10.8
		Others	66	55
		System	1	0.8
Situation 8	Missing Valid	Accept	47	39.2
		Reject	2	1.7
		Evade	30	25
		Others	41	34.2

Figure 1 below shows the frequency of the usage of the four general patterns, by all 120 DCT participants, in all eight situations. It is clear that the preference of undergraduate students can be indicated in the order accept, use combinations, evade and reject. The frequency of accepting compliments in all eight situations, on the one hand, is as high as 491 responses. On the other hand, the frequency of rejecting compliments is as low as 11 responses. In between, participants gave 152 evasive responses and 305 combined responses. There was a total 958 responses out of the 960 with one missing response.

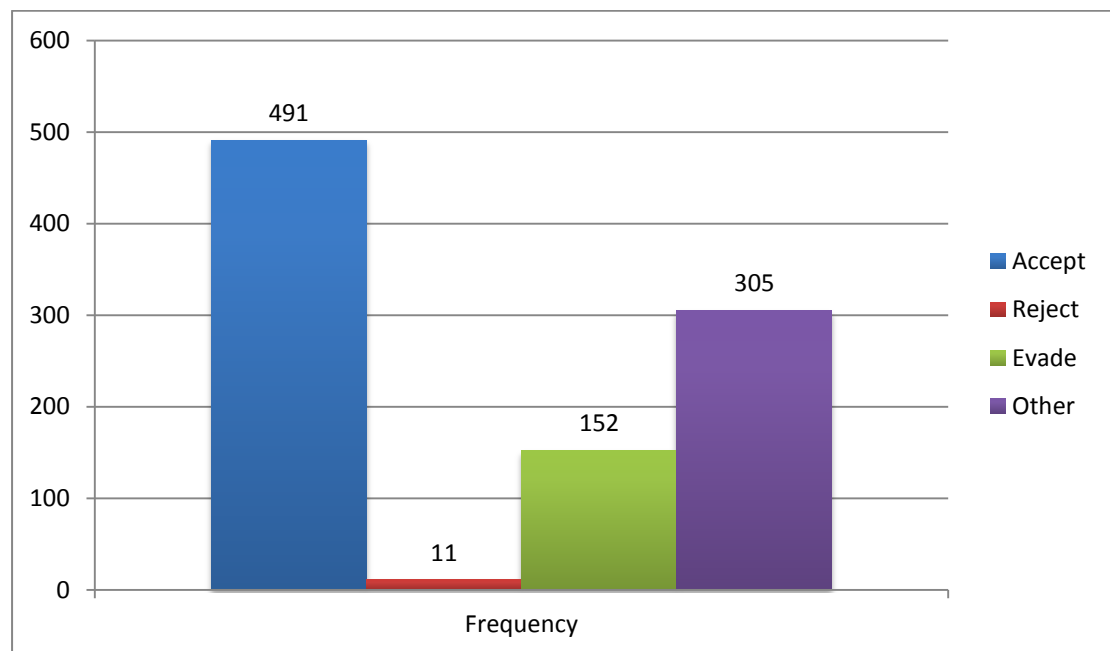


Figure 1: *Macro patterns of CRs (DCTs)*

Table 5 below indicates the frequency of usage of the four macro categories (accept, reject, evade and other) in the data collected from field notes. The data also suggests that the majority of the participants accepts, the minority rejects and in between combined and evasive responses are used respectively. Therefore, the results of the field notes comply with those of the DCTs.

Table 5:

Macro Frequencies in Field Notes.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Accept	50	59.5
	Reject	1	1.2
	Evade	9	10.7
	Others	23	27.4
	Total	83	98.8
Missing	System	1	1.2
Total		84	100.0

4.3 The CR Patterns Corresponding to the Four Specific Situations

The findings in this section will be presented with regard to the males' and females' usage of CRs in the four situational settings, each setting containing two situations, that the compliments fell under and these are: appearance, character, ability and possession, which will give an in-depth analysis of the data and will enable the researcher to see the detailed distribution of CRs.

4.3.1 CRs for appearance.

Discourse Completion Tasks: Situations one and two (appearance).

In situation one, the recipient is being complimented by a friend of the opposite sex on how they are dressed. The recipients' responses were divided into Accept, Reject, Evade and Others. Table 6 below shows the macro pattern followed by male and females in responding to this situation.

Situation 1 (appearance): Your friends have organized a party to celebrate the end of semester. You've dressed up for the party. As you arrive, one of your male friends says: "hey, you look great! Honestly, you look outstanding"

Table 6 shows that the macro level pattern in situation one, falling under the appearance setting, is in accordance with the overall macro patterns presented in table 3. Both groups, males and females, opted more for accept strategies than the other three strategies. In fact, none of them resorted to rejecting the compliment. Females resorted to the evade strategy second and other strategies third, while males resorted to the usage of other strategies second and evading strategies third. The results indicate that the number of males who accepted is 31 and the number of females is 52, but these figures do not necessarily mean that females accept more, as combinations or the 'other category' can be a combination of acceptance and something else.

Table 6:

The Macro Pattern of Situation 1 (Appearance)

		Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
Q1MacroCRs	Accept	31	52	83
	Evade	3	5	8
	Others	26	3	29
Total		60	60	120

Situation two, which also falls under the appearance situational setting, is another situation where the recipient is being complemented by a friend, however from the same sex, on how they look in terms of their body structure and how it got better, having lost weight.

Situations 2 (appearance): You have been going to the gym regularly in the last couple of months. On your way to the university, you meet a friend and she says: “Oh, what’s that you lost weight and you look like a model now!.” (From the females' version)

The data represented in table 7 show that again the majority of responses were accepting the compliment. There were some rejections but this was the least used strategy. Similar to situation one, females resorted to the evade strategy second, the other strategy third and the reject came last, while males resorted to the usage of other strategies second, evading strategies third and the reject came last as well.

Table 7:

The Macro Pattern of Situation 2 (Appearance)

		Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
Q2MacroCRS	Accept	33	30	63
	Reject	3	1	4
	Evade	8	22	30
	Others	16	7	23
Total		60	60	120

Field notes (appearance):

As for field notes, the results indicated that 45 out of the 83 situations were categorized as appearance. Eight of the situations were directed at males and the remaining 37 were directed at females. Four out of the eight males responded with acceptance, while the remaining four used the 'other' strategy. While 22 out of the 37 females accepted, five evaded and ten used the 'other' strategy. None used the 'reject' strategy. The mentioned results are displayed in Figure 2 below.

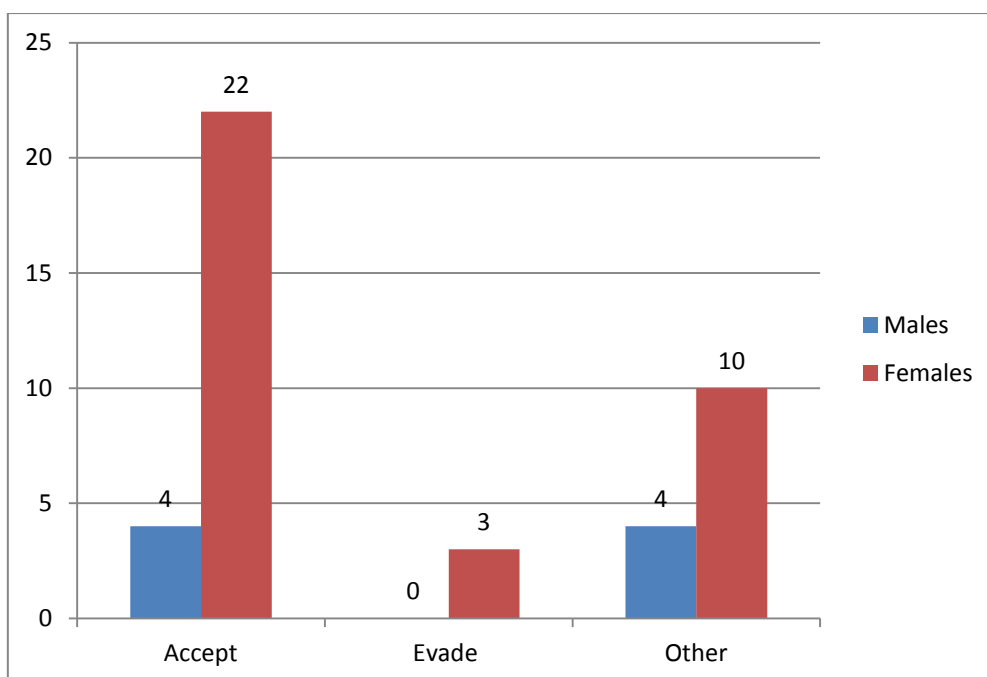


Figure 2: *Macro pattern of field notes (Appearance)*

4.3.2 CRs for character.

Discourse Completion Tasks: Situations three and four (character).

In situation three, the recipient is being complimented by a friend of the same sex on being a very helpful person, having helped in moving in.

Situation 3 (character): One of your friends together with her family has recently moved into a new apartment. She asks you to help her arrange the things. It takes you several hours to put all the things away. As you are about to say goodbye, your friend says: “Thank you, I don’t know what I would have done without you, you are very helpful”.

Table 8 shows the macro level pattern in situation three falling under the character setting. Both groups, again, used accept strategies more than the other three

strategies. Females gave compliments that fell under only two out of the four macro strategies these are the accept strategy with higher frequency and the 'other' strategy was the second. While males, on the other hand, used all four strategies. They accepted the most, then they used combinations indicated by the other strategy next and they evaded and rejected the least, with equal frequency.

Table 8:

The Macro Pattern of Situation 3 (Character)

		Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
Q3MacroCRS	Accept	39	46	85
	Reject	1	0	1
	Evade	1	0	1
	Others	19	14	33
Total		60	60	120

Situation four also falls under the character situational setting since the situation depicts the recipient being complemented by a friend of the opposite sex, on again helpfulness and generosity with knowledge as they provided assistance on how to prepare for the English test.

Situation 4 (character): After asking for advice about English language exams, your male friend says to you: “Thank you for your great help! You saved me with your help in English; I, for one, know nothing about it!”

The results represented in the below table (9) indicate that the majority of females only responded with accepting the compliment, while the majority of men used combinations or the 'other' strategy. So, females accepted with the highest frequency, used combinations with the second highest frequency and used evasions

and rejections with equal, very low, frequencies. Males' usage of other strategies was most frequent. However, acceptance was the second highest and then rejection was higher than evasion, with very slight differences.

Table 9:
The Macro Pattern of Situation 4 (Character)

		Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
Q4MacroCRS	Accept	16	39	55
	Reject	2	1	3
	Evade	1	1	2
	Others	41	19	60
Total		60	60	120

Field Notes (character):

The noted compliment situations recorded contained 13 situations related to character out of the 83 situations. Nine of which were directed at males and the remaining four were directed at females. Six out of the nine males responded with acceptance, while two used the 'other' strategy and the remaining participant rejected, no males resorted to the evasion strategy. On the other hand, out of the four females three accepted and one evaded, none rejected nor used combined forms (See figure 3).

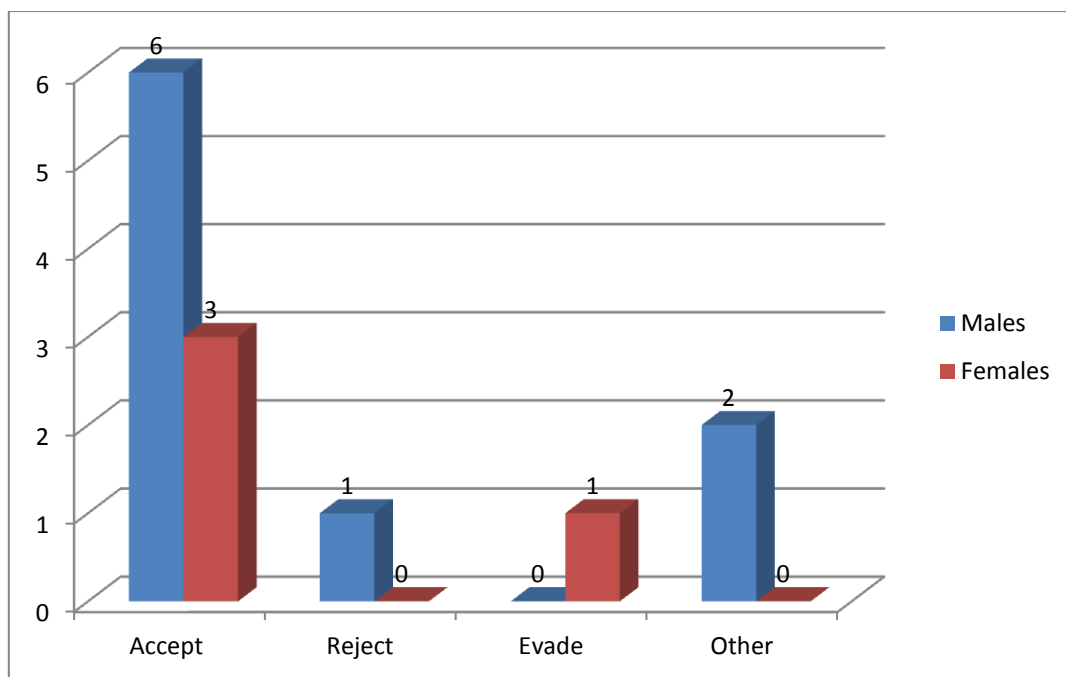


Figure 3: *Macro pattern of field notes (Character)*

4.3.3 CRs for ability/skill.

Discourse Completion Tasks: Situations five and six (ability).

Situation five is a compliment to the recipient on his excellent presentation/ presentation skills. The complimenter is of the opposite sex.

Situation 5 (ability): After you have finished a presentation, your classmate says: “Wow that was brilliant! It was very good and you were confident and convincing!”

The frequencies presented in table 10 give the same general results indicated in table four and in most of the previous situations. The frequencies indicate that both groups, used the accept strategy more than the other three strategies. Females responded to compliments by accepting, evading and combining respectively. While

males responded by accepting, combing and then evading, respectively. Both groups did not use rejections.

Table 10:

The Macro Pattern of Situation 5 (Ability)

		Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
Q5MacroCRS	Accept	27	34	61
	Evade	13	17	30
	Others	20	9	29
Total		60	60	120

Table 10: *The Macro Pattern of Situation 5 (Ability)*

Situation six, also falls under the ‘ability’ situational setting. In this situation the complimentees are being complemented, by the presentation partner (same presentation mentioned above) who is of the same sex, on their great ideas and effort (good work).

Situation 6 (ability): At the end of the same presentation your female partner (who presented with you) says to you: “But for your creativity and clever ideas, our presentation would not have been so successful.”

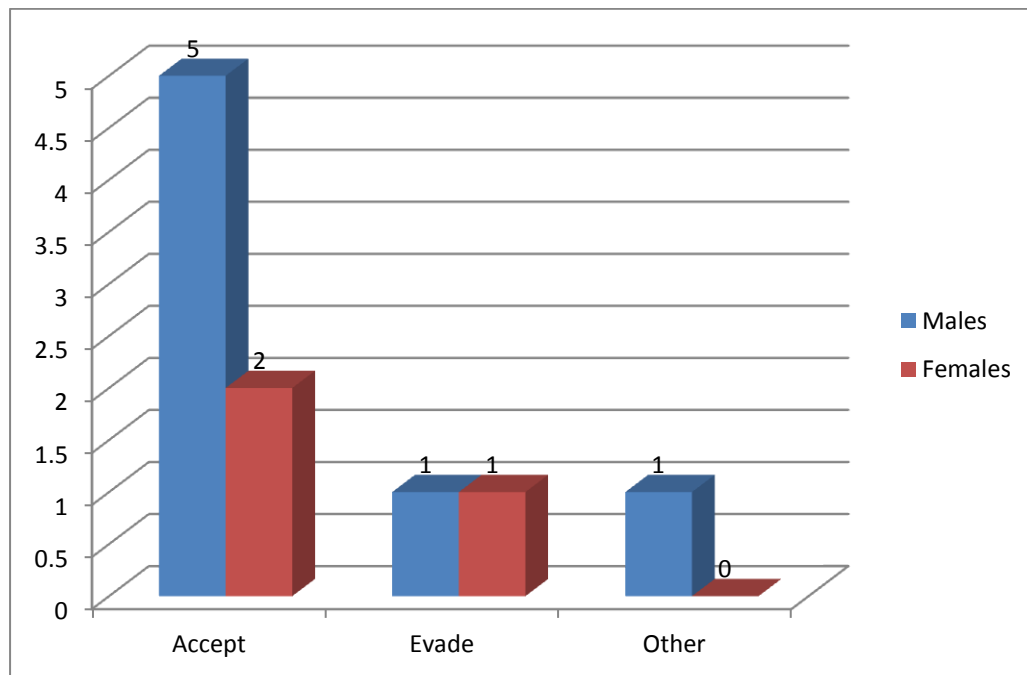
The results of this situation do not show much difference from those of other previous situations. However, males and females used the three categories in the same order of frequency. Males and females both used the accept strategy with the highest frequency, then they used the evade strategy as the second highest and the 'other' strategy was used the least. No rejections occurred with either sex.

Table 11:*The Macro Pattern of Situation 6 (Ability)*

		Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
Q6MacroCRS	Accept	28	30	58
	Evade	17	21	38
	Others	15	9	24
Total		60	60	120

Field Notes (ability):

Only nine of the recorded compliment situations contained ability related incidents out of the 83 situations. With seven directed at males and only two directed at females. Five out of the seven males responded with acceptance of the compliment, one used the 'other' strategy and one evaded. On the other hand, out of the two females, one accepted and one evaded. None of the participants rejected nor used combined forms (See figure 5).

**Figure 4:** *Macro pattern of field notes (Ability)*

4.3.4 CRs for possessions.

Discourse Completion Tasks: Situations seven and eight (possessions).

Situation seven is a compliment to the recipient on his newly bought smart phone. The complimenter is of the opposite sex.

Situation 7 (possessions): You have bought a new mobile phone. When you receive a call, your friend notices that your phone is a different one. Having looked at it and tried some functions, s/he says: “‘what’s with all the technology, you became very advanced and you have a smart phone now, it’s really nice!’”

The frequencies displayed below are slightly different from the results of the other situations. In this case, both groups used the 'other' strategy more than the other three strategies. Females responded to the compliment by providing combinations, acceptance, evasion and rejection respectively. Males also responded by using combinations, acceptance, and evasions but did not resort to rejections.

Table 12:

The Macro Pattern of Situation 7 (Possession)

		Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
Q7MacroCRS	Accept	17	22	39
	Reject	0	1	1
	Evade	7	6	13
	Others	35	31	66
Total		59	60	119

Situation eight also falls under the possessions situational setting. In this situation the complimentees are being complemented, by a friend of theirs of the same sex on their room, which has nice colors and feels cozy.

Situation 8 (possessions): Some friends are over at your house. One of them goes to your room and says: “I love the color of this room, excellent choice; it’s pleasing on the eye!”

Lastly, this situation has females accepting the most while males use combinations the most which was categorized as other. Accepting comes in second place in preferred responses for males, while for females, evasion is the second most prevalent strategy. Third in frequency, comes evading for males and ‘other’ for females. Only males resorted to rejecting the compliment and as usual it is the least used strategy.

Table 13:

The Macro Pattern of Situation 8 (Possession)

		Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
Q8MacroCRS	Accept	14	33	47
	Reject	2	0	2
	Evade	12	18	30
	Others	32	9	41
Total		60	60	120

Field Notes (possessions):

Sixteen recorded participants provided compliments on a certain possession. Seven directed at males and the remaining nine directed at females. Unlike other cases, males used the other strategy in five of the seven situations, while they accepted in the remaining two. However, five out of the nine females accepted, two evaded, and two used combined forms. No one rejected in both groups (See figure 5).

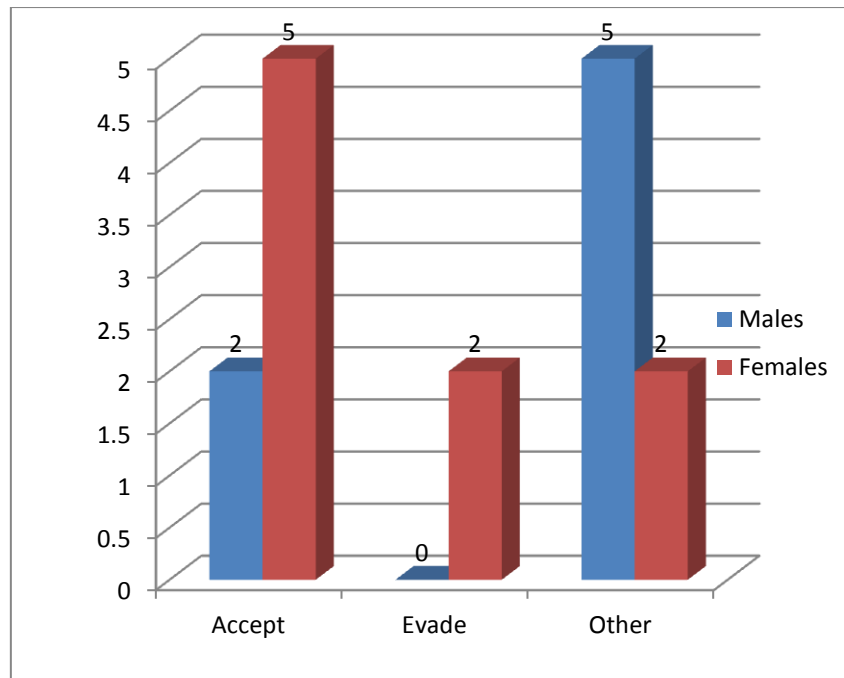


Figure 5: *Macro pattern of field notes (Possessions)*

4.4 Micro Analysis:

This section will include tables indicating the results of responses categorized in the 25 micro categories, indicating the frequency of usage, these tables indicate the usage of each micro category by males and females. Males are indicated by the letter M and females are indicated by the letter F and the total will be indicated by the letter T. The micro categories are also given abbreviations, please refer to table 1 for the full labels. Other tables displaying examples from eight randomly picked DCTs; four for males and four for females. Each example will be labeled with P(number) P=participant and the number is the one that was used in coding, for example: P46. All of the below tables of results comply with the results presented earlier in table four in terms of macro category distribution.

4.4.1 CRs for Appearance:

Situation 1 (appearance):

Table 14 below is a representation of the exact number of participants who resorted to each of the 25 micro categories in the first situation (appearance). Not all of the categories can be seen here due to the fact that some of the categories were neither chosen by any of the males nor by any females. Starting from AT until PLE are micro categories under the acceptance macro category, while SHC and RR both fall under the evading category. The remaining categories starting from SAR until XCOMP all fall under the other macro category.

Table 14:

The Micro Pattern of Situation 1(Appearance)

	AT	AG	RET	UPG	PLE	SHC	RR	SAR	J	REL	S/SM	FLRT	XCOMP
M	12	1	13	5	0	3	0	1	4	7	3	11	0
F	43	0	5	1	3	3	2	0	2	0	0	0	1
T	55	1	18	6	3	6	2	1	6	7	3	11	1

Refer to Fig.6(Appendix D) for the bar chart

Table 15 displays examples of responses to the said situation from the DCT that were given by males. In this situation (appendix A) the compliment was addressed by the opposite sex, meaning in this case that the response is from a male to a female.

Table 15:

Examples of males' response to situation 1

Males	Example	Macro/Micro
P58	/shukran/ Thanks	A (AT)
P60	/ahla mesa aaleky/ Literal translation: Best night to you Intended meaning: Thanks	A (AT)
P13	/begd shukran/ Seriously, thank you	A(AT)
P24	/shukran, enty el helwa, we amar w maadeya, aaool eah tani bas?/ Thanks, you're the one who's beautiful and outstanding, what else should I say?	O(FLRT) AT+FLRT

Table 16 displays examples- from females to situation 1; similarly, the compliment in the DCT was given by a member of the opposite sex. Therefore these are responses from males to females.

Table 16:

Examples of females' responses to situation 1

Females	Example	Macro/Micro
P86	/eh dah begad,wala mush awi/ Seriously or # isn't it very good?	O(XCOMP)
P70	Merci	A (AT)
P116	/Enta Kaman shaklak helw/ You too look good	A(RET)
P95	/eah da shukran, ana mabsota en shakly agabak/ Thank you, I'm glad you liked how I look	A(PLE)

Situation 2 (appearance):

Table 17 contains the number of times each of the micro categories was used. This situation also falls under the appearance situational setting. All situations between AT and PLE are categorized under acceptance, while D/R and CHL are both categorized under rejection, from SHC until FF are categorized as evasive and all the remaining situations fall under the 'other' category.

Table 17:

The Micro Pattern of Situation 2(Appearance)

	A T	A G	D G	R ET	UP G	PL E	D/ R	C HL	S H C	IC	RR	F F	SA R	J	R EL	S/S M	OF R	SU P	R E	IG N
M	7	5	5	3	10	3	0	3	0	6	2	0	2	2	5	2	1	2	1	1
F	10	2	0	3	0	15	1	0	2	5	14	1	1	0	4	2	0	0	0	0
T	17	7	5	6	10	18	1	3	2	11	16	1	3	2	9	4	1	2	1	1

Refer to Fig.7(Appendix D) for the bar chart

Tables 18 and 19 contain examples. Examples in the first table are all responses from males to other males, as this situation was of a compliment given by a member of the same sex, while table 19 contains responses from females to females.

Table 18:

Examples of males' responses to situation 2

Males	Example	Macro/Micro
P58	/haygli soll men el arr/ I will get tuberculosis from being jinxed.	O (SUP)
P60	/habibi/ Literal meaning: My love. Intended meaning: Thanks!	A (AT)
P13	Really?	E(RR)
P24	/ah mana baroh el gym/ Yes, I go to the gym	A(AG)

Table 19:

Examples of females' responses to situation 2

Females	Example	Macro/Micro
P86	/ begad/?	E(RR)
P70	/Eah da begad wallahy bayen?/ Really does it show?	O(XCOMP)
P116	/Dab egad wala habal?/ Is it true or are you bluffing?	E(RR)
P95	Ooooh, thank you!	A(AT)

4.4.2 CRs for ability:

Situation 3 (character):

Table 20 displays the frequencies of the micro categories in situation 3. This situation falls under the ‘character’ situational setting where the participants are being complimented on one of their characteristics i.e., something related to their character.

From AT to PLE are categorized as acceptance, DU is a micro category under rejection, IC is a category under evasion and from SAR until the end are combinations falling under the 'other' category.

Table 20:

The Micro Pattern of Situation 3(Character)

	AT	AG	DG	RET	UPG	PLE	DU	IC	SAR	J	REL	S/SM	OFR	RE
M	1	0	36	0	1	1	1	1	1	8	0	0	7	3
F	0	1	42	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	8	3
T	1	1	78	2	1	2	1	1	1	9	1	1	15	6

Refer to Fig.8(Appendix D) for the bar chart

The below examples are responses from males (table 21) and responses from females (table 22). In the DCT, the compliment was given by a member of the same sex, therefore the responses in table 21 are from a male to another male and in table 22, the responses are from a female to another female.

Table 21:

Examples of males' responses to situation 3

Males	Example	Macro/Micro
P58	/elsohab l baadeeha, hataakelny eh enaharda?/ This is what friends are for, what are you going to offer me for lunch?	O (J)
P60	/mashy/ Okay!	A (DG)
P13	/wala gadaa wala haga da wageb/ This is normal, it is my duty.	A(DG)
P24	/toamornny ya sheeo/ All you have to do is give the word, dude.	A(DG)

Table 22:*Examples of females' responses to situation 3*

Females	Example	Macro/Micro
P86	/ eah ya benty el habal da, this is what friends are for/ what is it that you're saying, this is what friends are for.	A(DG)
P70	/ this is the least I should do/	A(DG)
P116	/ehna ekhwat/ we are like sisters	A(DG)
P95	It was nothing and if you need anything else call me.	O(OFR)

Situation 4 (character):

Table 23 displays the frequencies of the micro categories in situation 4, which also falls under the character situational setting. From AT to PLE are categorized as acceptance, DU is a micro category under rejection, IC is a category under evasion and from SAR to the end are combinations or fall under the 'other' category.

Table 23:*The Micro Pattern of Situation 4(Character)*

	A T	D G	UP G	PL E	D U	I C	SA R	J	RE L	S/S M	OF R	MO T	FLR T	R E	IG N	LA F
M	3	11	2	0	2	1	2	10	1	3	13	8	2	1	1	0
F	0	38	0	1	0	1	1	5	2	1	6	1	0	3	0	1
T	3	49	2	1	2	2	3	15	3	4	19	9	2	4	1	1

Refer to Fig.9(Appendix D) for the bar chart

The below examples are responses from males (table 24) and responses from females (table 25). In the DCT, this compliment was given by someone from the opposite sex, therefore the responses in table 24 are from a male to a female and in table 25 depict responses from a female to a male.

Table 24:*Examples of males' responses to situation 4*

Males	Example	Macro/Micro
P58	/aala eah di aa'aal haga/ For nothing. That's the least I could do.	A(DG)
P60	Thank you very much. However, he wrote it (Sank you ferry much)	O(J)
P13	I did nothing, you're English is good, you just need to practice and yours would be better than mine.	O(MOT)
P24	/maamaltesh haga , law ayza mosaada tany kalemeeni/ I did nothing, if you need help with anything else call me.	O(OFR)

Table 25:*Examples of females' responses to situation 4*

Females	Example	Macro/Micro
P86	/ay khedma/ Literal meaning: any help. Intended meaning: Anytime.	A(DG)
P70	/Mataolsh keda, hayeegy yom tesaadni/ don't say so	A(DG)
P116	/Hahaha, manta mesh nafeaa fe haga, hatenfaa' fel English/ You're not good at anything/ are you going be good at anything?	O(RE)
P95	/sa'aeda eni edert asa'aed/ I'm glad I could help.	A(PLE)

4.4.3 CRs for ability:

Situation 5 (ability):

Table 26 shows the micro distribution of the results. The results shown comply with the general macro distribution represented in table four. From AT to PLE are the micro categories that fall under the 'accept' macro category, SHC to FF are the categories that would be grouped under evasion and from SAR to XCOMP constitute the 'other' category.

Table 26:*The micro pattern of situation 5(ability)*

	A T	A G	D G	RE T	UP G	PL E	SH C	I C	R R	FF	SA R	J	RE L	S/S M	MO T	IG N	XCO MP
M	13	2	2	2	5	2	4	4	4	1	0	2	13	2	3	1	0
F	26	2	1	2	0	3	0	3	14	0	1	2	3	0	1	1	1
T	39	4	3	4	5	5	4	7	18	1	1	4	16	2	4	2	1

Refer to Fig.10(Appendix D) for the bar chart

Tables 27 and 28 both contain examples of compliment responses. Table 27 provides examples of responses from males to females as this compliment in the DCT was given from a member of the opposite sex. Table 28 contains examples of compliment responses from females to males.

Table 27:*Examples of males' responses to situation 5*

Males	Example	Macro/Micro
P58	/El hamd lellah, ya Rab enti kaman taamely helw/ Thank God, I hope you too do well.	O(REL)
P60	/el abd lellah mesek el hadeed tanah/ Literal meaning: God's worshiper (I) held iron and bent it. Intended meaning. I can do anything	O(J)
P13	/Begad?/ Really?	E(RR)
P24	/shukran/ Thank you!	A(AT)

Table 28:*Examples of females' responses to situation 5*

Females	Example	Macro/Micro
P86	/eah dah begad?/ Really?	E (RR)
P70	Thanks.	A (AT)
P116	/ana a'arfa aslan, bahazar. Rabena ykhalik/ I already know, just kidding, God bless you.	O(J)
P95	/Begad/ Really?	E (RR)

Situation 6 (ability):

Table 29 shows the micro distribution of the results of situation 6. From AT to PLE are the micro categories that fall under the 'accept' macro category, SHC is the only category that falls under evasion, and from SAR to XCOMP constitute the 'other' category.

Table 29:

The Micro Pattern of Situation 6(Ability)

	AT	DG	RET	UPG	PLE	SHC	J	REL	S/SM	OFR	MOT	RE
M	4	20	3	0	1	17	3	2	1	4	1	4
F	0	26	2	2	0	21	3	0	2	2	1	1
	4	46	5	2	1	38	6	2	3	6	2	5

Refer to Fig.11 (Appendix D) for the bar chart

Tables 30 and 31 both contain examples of compliment responses. Table 30 provides examples of responses from males to females as this compliment in the DCT was given from a member of the opposite sex. Table 31 contains examples of compliment responses from females to males.

Table 30:

Examples of males' responses to situation 6

Males	Example	Macro/Micro
P58	/habibi, wala haga wallahi/ My love(dude) I swear it's nothing	A(DG)
P60	/aady belhob/ Literal meaning: It's ok, with love. Intended meaning: I did nothing, it just seems so.	A(DG)
P13	/ehna aamalna helw, da team work/ We both did a great job, it's team work.	E(SHC)
P24	/el afw, ana maamaltesh haga/ You're welcome, I didn't do anything?	A(DG)

Table 31:*Examples of females' responses to situation 6*

Females	Example	Macro/Micro
P86	/a'ala eah?/ For what?	A(DG)
P70	Thank you so much, you had great ideas too.	A(RET)
P116	/kolena a'amalna helw we tea'abna/ We all exerted effort and did well.	E(SCH)
P95	You too did a good job sweetie.	A (RET)

4.4.4 CRs for possession:**Situation 7 (possessions):**

The numerical results of situation 7 when grouped in the micro categories are represented in table 32 below. From AT to PLE are the micro categories grouped under acceptance, only DU falls under rejection and only IC under evasion. From SAR to XCOMP are grouped under the 'other' macro category.

Table 32:*The Micro Pattern of Situation 7(Possession)*

	A T	A G	D G	UP G	PL E	D U	IC	S A R	J	RE L	S/S M	OF R	FLR T	SU P	LA F	XCO MP
M	3	5	2	6	1	0	6	9	11	3	5	7	1	0	0	0
F	5	10	3	4	0	1	6	1	18	0	1	2	0	6	2	1
T	8	15	5	10	1	1	12	10	29	3	6	9	1	6	2	1

Refer to Fig.12(Appendix D) for the bar chart

The two tables below, tables 33 and 34, contain examples of compliment responses. Table 33 provides examples of responses from males to females as this

compliment in the DCT was given from a member of the opposite sex. Table 34 contains examples of compliment responses from females to males.

Table 33:

Examples of males' responses to situation 7

Males	Example	Macro/Micro
P58	/di aa'aal haga andi ya benty/ this is the least I have, my child (my daughter).	O (J)
P60	/etfadaly/ You can have it.	O(OFR)
P13	/ah helw awi sah?/ Yes, it's really nice, right?	A(AG)
P24	/enti lessa shofti haga?/ you've seen nothing yet.	A(UPG)

Table 34:

Examples of females' responses to situation 7

Females	Example	Macro/Micro
P86	Hahaha	O(LAF)
P70	/lsa gaybah gedeed/ I just got it	E(IC)
P116	/da a'atebro arr wala eah/ Should I consider that as an attempt to jinx me?	O(SUP)
P95	Thanks	A(AT)

Situation 8 (possessions):

The table below (35) shows the distribution of the data related to situation eight, according to the micro categories. The first four, from AT to UPG fall under the 'accept' category, CHL is a sub-category of the 'reject' macro category and from SHC to RR are sub-categories of the 'evade' macro category. The remaining categories are all sub-categories of the 'other' macro category.

Table 35:*The Micro Pattern of Situation 8(Possession)*

	AT	AG	RET	UPG	CHL	SHC	IC	RR	SAR	J	REL	S/SM	OFR	FLRT	SUP
M	8	2	0	3	2	3	9	0	16	5	4	3	3	1	1
F	23	6	3	1	0	6	10	2	0	0	1	1	7	0	0
T	31	8	3	4	2	9	19	2	16	5	5	4	10	1	1

Refer to Fig.13 (Appendix D) for the bar chart

Below are the two tables that illustrate examples (tables 36 and 37). Table 36 displays examples of compliment responses given by males to other males, as it is indicated in the DCT that the compliment is given by a member of the same sex. Table 37 displays responses given by females to females.

Table 36:*Examples of males' responses to situation 8*

Males	Example	Macro/Micro
P58	/mahadesh saa'lak a'ala fekra/ No one asked you by the way.	O (SAR)
P60	/enshaf showaia/ Literal meaning: You need to harden up Intended meaning: Man up!	O(SAR)
P13	/men zoaak/ This is because you're well mannered	E(SHC)
P24	/mesh harod alek/ I won't respond to that.	O(SAR)

Table 37:*Examples of females' responses to situation 8*

Females	Example	Macro/Micro
P86	/rabena yekhaliki/ God bless you	O(REL)
P70	/ah di alwany el mufadala/ These are my favorite colours.	A(AG)
P116	/Aiwa ana baheb el alwan di awi/ Yes, I love these colors so much.	A(AG)
P95	It's my mom's touch, and effort.	E(SHC)

4.4.5 Field Notes (possessions)

This section includes five tables, all of which are related to the field notes.

Table 38 shows the frequencies of the usage of each micro category in all 83 recorded field notes. From AT to PLE are sub-categories under the 'accept' macro category, CHL is the only subcategory under the 'reject' macro category, IC and RR are both subcategories of the 'evade' category. Finally, the remaining eight subcategories (SAR to XCOMP) are grouped under the 'other' macro category. Table 39, 40, 41 and 42 are all tables showing examples. Table 39 displays examples of responses given by males to compliments that were uttered by females. Table 40 shows examples of responses given by females to compliments by males. Table 41 contains responses from males to compliments given by males, and finally table 42 contains responses given by females to compliments uttered by females.

Table 38:

The Micro Pattern of Field Notes Responses

	A T	A G	D G	RE T	UP G	PL E	CH L	I C	R R	SA R	J	RE L	S/S M	OF R	IG N	SU P	XCO MP
M	9	3	2	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	1	1
F	17	2	1	10	0	2	0	5	3	3	1	1	5	1	0	0	1
T	26	5	3	11	1	4	1	6	3	3	1	4	7	3	2	1	2

Table 39:*Examples of males' responses to females (field notes)*

Male-Female	Compliments	Compliment Response	Macro/Micro
Appearance	Female: "You looked very nice in this picture?"	Male: Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder, may God bless you	O(REL)
Character	Female: You're going be a very cool dad Female: /eah hmmm di?/ what's Hmmm?	Male: Hmmm Male: It means duh! I know.	A(AG)
Ability	Female: /khatak gameel mashaa Allah/ You have nice hand writing, masha'a Allah.	Male: /Rabena yekhaleeky/ God bless you	O(REL)
Possession	/helwa el selsela/ Nice necklace!	Thank you!	A (AT)

Table 40:*Examples of females' responses to males (field notes)*

Female- Male	Compliments	Compliment Responses	Macro/Micro
Appearance	/shaklek ahla men el fananat"/ you look better than the movie stars.	Female: I know	A(AG)
Character	You're kind and cute	Female: Giggling /shukran/	A(AT)
Ability	/enty ahsan bent betelaab tarneeb fe saydala/ You are the best card player in pharmacy (major).	/enta brens we Rabena/ Literal meaning: I swear you're a prince. Indented meaning: You're amazing.	A(PLE)
Possession	Wow, beautiful name. The name is Karaz	Thanks	A(AT)

Table 41:*Examples of males' responses to males (field notes)*

Male – Male	Compliments	Compliment Responses	Macro/Micro
Appearance	/wakhed bali enak metshayek/ I've noticed that you're dressed to the nines.	Male: /ool kalam gher da/ Say something other than that.	R(DU)
Character	/mesh aaref a'aolak eah, low makontesh estagda3t w wasalteny kont hatsawah fashkh/ I don't know what to tell you. I don't know what I would have done, if you hadn't offer a ride	/ya aam aeb ehna wahed/ It's ok, we're one.	A(DG)
Ability	/mazboota lafet el segara di/ The cigarette is perfectly rolled	/hatbooz/ It will get ruined	O(SUP)
Possession	/helwa el nadara di/ Nice sunglasses (shades)	/mateghlash aalek/ Literal meaning: It wouldn't be much for you to take. Intended meaning: You can have it.	O(OFR)

Table 42:*Examples of females' responses to females (field notes)*

Female-Female	Compliment	Compliment Response	Macro/Micro
Appearance	/helwa el aasa/ Nice haircut.	/shokran, enty Kaman shaarek helw el naharda/ Thank you, your hair looks nice too today.	A(RET)
Character	/shakhsyetek kawya ana 3ayza ab2a keda/ Your personality is strong, I want to be like you	/merci, keteer wallahy/ Thank you so much, seriously.	A (AT)
Ability	You are very clever.	Thank you, you are clever too.	A(RET)
Possession	/helw el perfume/ Nice smelling perfume you're wearing	/Ah, lessa gaiely men bara/ Yeah, I just received it from abroad	E(IC)

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the analysis and interpretations of the collected field notes and the data collected from the DCT. Practical implications based on the analyzed data are also presented. Finally, a conclusion with which summarizes the aim and the findings and mentions the limitations of the research, and further research directions will be presented.

The results of a corpus encompassing 1042 CRs were presented in the previous chapter. The responses were very difficult to categorize in the three original categories from Holmes' (1988) taxonomy, namely accept, reject and evade, due to the fact that responses collected were not all of a simple structure. A number of responses featured one illocution, however, some of them were complex with two or even three illocutions featured (i.e., shifting credit + offering). Therefore, the 'other' category was added. An investigator in such a field has to have deep understanding of the Egyptian language filled with newly coined words in order to be able to understand the illocutionary force/ intended meaning of the responses and hence, categorize them.

5.1 What Are the Macro CR Strategies Most Commonly Used by University Students?

As per the results provided in table 4 in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the targeted population tends to accept compliments more than evading, combining forms of responses or rejecting. The total of acceptances is 541 out of the 1042 responses. The second most frequently used category is the 'other'

category, which represents the usage of combined illocutions; three hundred and twenty eight responses were given using this strategy. While evasion was used less than the two previously mentioned categories, with only 201 responses considered evasive, rejecting compliments was very rare, as only 12 responses out of the entire corpus were categorized under this strategy.

In table 4 again, it has been observed that with regards to the case of compliments on appearance (situations 1 and 2) and compliments on ability (situations 5 and 6) the striking majority accepted the compliment. Eighty three acceptances were depicted in situation one and sixty three in situation two, both figures are out of 120. However, with regards to compliments on ~~the~~ character, in one situation (situation 3) the majority accepted, but in situation 4 the majority used combinations and was counted as 'other'. In situation 3 the number of acceptance was 85 while it was reduced to 55 in situation four. The 'other' category contained 33 responses in situation 3, compared to 60 in situation 4. Concerning compliments related to possessions, the general majority in the two situations 7 and 8 used what is labeled as the 'other' strategy. This brought to the investigator's attention that topics and the situational setting is one of the variables that can impact responses.

Results in Farghal and Al-Khatib's (2001) study in the Jordanian setting, show speech acts involving compliments were perceived as acts of a positive nature, which make perfect sense, since one of the primary functions of compliments is to make individuals feel good (Holmes, 1988). Studies found in the literature on compliment responses show that compliment acceptances are relatively dominant in many English speaking countries. According to Herbert (1989), the percentage is 66% and 88% for American and South Africans respectively, while Holmes (1988) reported 61% for New Zealanders and 58% for Americans. However, rejections

reached 96% for the Chinese informants in his study. Consequently, it has been noted that the Agreement Maxim seems to play a key role in English, while the Modesty Maxim is more relevant in the Chinese context. This brings us back to the point of politeness, Egyptian compliment responses' acceptances can be explained as abiding by *waagib* (obligation), *zooq* (tact) and *mugamla* (courtesy), which can be summarized as Agreement Maxim again. Using evasive responses and sometimes, not in all cases, the use of combined forms is seen through the conflicting maxims of agreement and modesty, as is the case in most studies in the literature and the very common agony of avoiding self praise. According to the results, overtly rejecting a compliment is rarely used as it is considered a shameful behavior / ʕ eeb/ in contrast to the set of values held sacred by Egyptians (Musry & Wilson, 2001).

5.2 How Do Male and Female Egyptian Speakers Use Compliment Response Strategies at the Micro Level?

5.2.1 Accepting Compliments:

In spite of the fact that both sex groups had acceptance as their most frequent strategy of responding to compliments, there are noticeable differences in their usage of the different sub/micro categories that belong to the 'accept' category. The differences, presented below, are not only in terms of frequency of use, but also in terms of conveyed meanings and level of sincerity.

The investigation of 1042 compliment responses in the corpus reveals that there are significant differences in responses depending on the sex of participants; they may seem as very slight differences according to the macro level analysis which

have already been discussed in the previous question. However, looking more deeply into the sub-categories under each strategy, the differences will become clearer.

Appreciation tokens as way of accepting the compliment are very common among males and females, in fact, it is considered as the easiest way to respond to a compliment, and it gets compliments off males' backs; "I say thank you, and that is it /w khalas/, when I'm unable or not bothered to think of a response", according to one of the male participants in a debriefing session after filling the DCT. However, how females used 'thank you' is different; they usually showed exaggerated happiness and accompanied it with terms such as 'dear' and 'sweety' and also expressions such as: OMG, Awww, /begad/ really, not in the form of a question, but rather to intensify the thank you. This is also shown in literature of sex- differentiating language behavior, where it is proposed that females exhibit more personal focus in their compliments and responses than males in many contexts (Herbert, 1990). Consequently, it can be noticed that females use 'thank you' in a more sincere manner than males.

Agreeing utterances can sometimes be considered arrogant, as illustrated in the following example:

Ex.6: C(Female): You're going to be a very cool dad.

CR(Male): Hmmm

Female: /eah hmmm di?/ what's Hmmm?

CR (Male): It means duh! I know.

Or sometimes agreeing utterances can be considered as a way of deflecting an unwelcomed attitude or more technically speaking a face threatening act, such as flirting, which is used frequently by males.

Ex. 7: C (Male): /shaklek ahla men el fananat/ you look better than the movie stars.

CR (Female): I know.

It can also be used in a sincere manner and again it depends on the situation, and definitely the sex.

Ex.8: C (Female): I love the color of this room, excellent choice; it's pleasing on the eyes!

CR (Female): I know, right?! It's my favorite color.

Downgrading utterances are basically accepting in a way that mitigates the directness of the acceptance and as a way of avoiding self praise. It was encountered frequently by the investigator in the DCT, situations three, four and six, which are related to character and ability; that is evident from the results indicated in tables 20, 23 and 29. The frequencies are: 78 participants responded with downgrading utterance in situation 3, 49 in situation 4 and 46 in situation six. It was also the case with field notes recorded in situational settings related to ability or character.

Ex.10: C (Male): /mesh aaref a'aolak eah, low makontesh estagda3t w wasalteny kont hatsawah fashkh/"I don't know what to tell you. I don't know what I would have done if you hadn't offered me a ride?"

CR (Male): /ya aam aeb ehna wahed/ It's ok, we're one.

The reason for the high percentage of occurrence of this category in the above mentioned situations can be explained in large by Egyptians belief that character and abilities are granted to us and they are nothing to brag about because this might hurt other people who do not have. Another interpretation is that Egyptians tend to be humbled when being complimented on these two things. This becomes apparent by an

utterance mentioned by one of the female participants who blatantly explained her beliefs when she said "I'm afraid that if I acknowledge my good characteristics, I lose it."

Returning Compliments is a strategy used more by females than males, in most of the cases. This is in accordance with the tables provided in chapter 4, representing the results of the eight situations and the field notes. It is not something we commonly see in our community to find a male returning a compliment to a friend; also very few examples can be found in the corpus. A male participant said something that supports this observation, he said "I'm not obliged to tell him you look nice too." On the other hand, we noted from the results of situation one, in which a compliment about clothes and looks is addressed by a member of the opposite sex, that there can be exceptions. The responses indicate that the number of males who returned the compliment is more than double the number of females who did. This situation in the DCT contained a compliment that was given on appearance by a female; in such situations men feel obliged to return the compliment. According to the same participant, "If she complimented me on how I dress, while in fact I don't care, shouldn't I return the compliment, as females do care much about their looks (...)? I will only return it, though, if I think she's hot."

On the other hand, females do not return compliments much to males, however they do to females.

Ex.10: C (Female): But for your creativity and clever ideas, our presentation would not have been so successful.

CR (Female): You too did a good job, sweetie.

That is probably justified by the awareness of the female needs of being complimented and it is done as a form of solidarity, which is one of the main functions of compliments (Heidari, et. al., 2011). According to Nariman, one of the students who filled the DCT and sat for a debriefing session, "It's good to be complimented every once in a while even if it is not true"

Praise upgrades are not a very common method of accepting a compliment. Egyptians generally, whether males or females, do not expect the use of praise upgrades and would consider it to be arrogant. However, one of the response to compliments the investigator came across in the DCT and recorded in the process of collecting field notes is , /di a'al haga aandi/ that is the least of my possessions or abilities. The implied meaning is 'if you think that's good, that is the least I have or the least I can do', however the intended meaning or its illocutionary force is to joke about it. The only reason the investigator can find for using such a response, is that it is one of the phrases that went viral and is very commonly used among teenagers and young adults.

In some cases the complimentee intends to reply with a praise upgrade, but still it would not be counted as arrogant, such as in the following case:

Ex.11: C (Female): What's with all the technology, you became very advanced and you have a smart phone now, it's really nice!

CR (Male): /enti lessa shofti haga? /

Wait, you've seen nothing yet.

In such a case, the boy was complimented on a new gadget he bought and enthusiastically wants to show his friend how advanced and how good this cell phone is. So when complimented by being told that the phone is nice, he wanted to take nice to a further level.

From the results displayed in chapter 4 for all situations and field notes, it can be concluded that females use praise upgrade rarely and less than men. In most of the situations the frequency of using it was down to zero while, the highest number of times it was used was only four times. For males, it varied between zero and ten responses.

Expressing pleasure is the last of the acceptance subcategories. It is a way by which you accept by expressing gratitude or happiness that there was a reason to be complimented. For example:

Ex.12: CR (Female): sa'aeda eni edert asa'aed/ I'm glad I could help?

Numbers shown in the tables from chapter 4 indicate a significant difference between the frequency of males' usage and females' usage of expressing pleasure. This can be related again to the point that females like to express themselves more and take compliments and compliment responses more seriously than males. However, this does not mean that males do not express pleasure when being complimented; they just do not do so in all situations. One of the participants told the investigator in the debriefing session "I would express my pleasure for being complimented when the complimenter is my teacher or my boss, complimenting me on a job well done."

5.2.2 Rejecting Compliments

The number of compliment rejections, as indicated in the previous section, is as low as 12 compliments out of the entire pool of data. Nine of the rejections were given by males, while the remaining three were by females. There are three micro categories under this strategy, and the three of them are equally avoided, in compliance with the politeness values prevalent in Egypt. One of the 12 incidents was even related to a third person who was not present at the time.

Ex.13: C (Female): Perihane is a very cute girl.

CR (Male): /la khales enty akid azdek aala had tani/

No! You probably mean someone else.

According to the results, males reject more than females, but due to the scarcity of this category no clear interpretations can be reached. However, out of the three micro categories, challenging sincerity was the one used most frequently; an example of that is:

Ex.14: CR (Female): /eah el kedb da?/ What's with the lying?

5.3.3 Evading Compliments

Shifting credit is a method used by males and females alike to give credit to someone else other than themselves; sometimes they even shift it to the complimenter. An example of how females use it is:

Ex.15: C (Female): I love the color of this room, excellent choice; it's pleasing on the eyes!

CR (Female): It's my mom's artistic touch and effort.

Usually, recipients shift credit when they think that they do not deserve the credit and that it is worthy to give credit to the person who deserves it. Similarly, when people were not expecting a certain thing to happen, they shift credit to God mentioning that it was only because of God's, will that this thing came to be. However, this can be confusing as Egyptians mention God's name with almost everything they do. An example of this micro strategy is:

Ex.16: C (Female): Wow, that was brilliant, it was very good and you were confident and convincing!

CR (Male): /da men tawfeq Rabena wallahy, ana kont motawakea aamel wehesh/ That is because of God's support, I expected to do bad.

Another way of shifting compliments is by shifting the credit to the complimenter himself, by for example saying something like:

Ex.17: CR (Male): /men zoaak/ this is because you are tactful.

Informative comment

In example 18 the girl was being evasive by giving an informative comment on where she got the perfume from rather than accepting the compliment and this is a common strategy for responding to compliments in general. Sometimes females do that because they think this is appropriate assuming that the recipient would want to know more about the thing that resulted in the compliment.

Ex.18: C (Female): /helw el perfume/ nice smelling perfume you're wearing

CR (Female): / lessa gaiely men bara/ I just received it from abroad

The below response in example (19) offers an informative comment; however, in this case it serves an entirely different purpose. The complimentee was trying to resist the compliment in a way; "I don't feel comfortable when being complimented on how I look (...)".

Ex.19: C (Female): Hey, you look great! Honestly, you look outstanding

CR (Male): I've had this shirt since I was in high school.

"I believe girls do (appreciate being complimented on how they look), but us boys do not have this as a concern" That is what Mohamed who is the same person who gave the above response said when being asked about his answer. While going back to the female's example (18) above, she was offering the informative comment for the sake of being informative and not for any other reasons. The numbers in the results show very slight difference in the frequency of using this strategy by males and females.

Request reassurance: It is noteworthy to start by highlighting the point that the majority of the female participants use the word /begad/ "really" as a crutch. They use it before, after, and in between many of their statements and in the case at hand they do the same with responding to compliments. However, that does not necessarily mean "really?" with the sake of asking for reassurance, it can serve other purposes, such as intensifying the meaning, for example:

Ex.20: CR (female) / begad thank you/ Thank you, really.

Ex. 21: CR (female)/ enty begad shaklek ahla/ you really look better.

Ex.22: CR (female)/basateeny awi begad/ you really made me happy.

The numbers indicated in the tables of results show that females use this strategy more than males. Females use it in appearance compliments because they

care about how they look and would like to know if they do look good or is it just being said out of nicety. Such a strategy was not used with character compliments by either males or females. On the other hand, in a situational setting where ability compliments are related to the performance in a presentation, both males and females requested reassurance. Yet again, females used it approximately three times as much with the ratio being (4:14) males – females.

"I ask for reassurance when I am worried about something." According to this male participant, that is the reason why he would ask "Really?" A female participant, on the other hand, said "I want to make sure they are not bluffing".

Fault Finding. This strategy occurred twice only: once by a male and once by a female. It occurred by a male in situation five which said “Wow, that was brilliant, it was very good and you were confident and convincing!” and the response was /ana haset iny aaket el donia, wel introducation makanetsh wadha/ "I felt that I am messing up everything and that the introduction was unclear."

Yet the only female used it in situation two which contains the compliment: “Oh, you lost weight and you look like a model now!” While her response was, /ana telealy adalat we baaet zai el regala/ "I've grown muscles and became like men" So again each found faults in themselves, probably related to what concerns them the most.

5.2.4 Other Responses

The category 'other category' was added based on the investigator's realization that not all compliments given by Egyptian undergraduates can be categorized as accept, reject or evade, a conclusion that has been reached after conducting a pilot study on the same topic in 2013. These include the strategies

'sarcasm', 'jokes', 'prayer' , 'non-verbal responses' , 'offering' , 'motivation' , 'ignoring the compliment' , 'superstitious comments' , 'fishing for more compliments' , 'flirtatious comments' , ' rejecting and reassuring comments' and 'laughter'. Most of the micro categories were created by the investigator based on the data that has been collected; some were decided upon after the completion of the pilot study and some were created in the process of labeling the data in the corpus. One of the primary reasons for developing this category is the excessive use of metaphoric language by the targeted population.

Sarcasm: Thirty eight tokens out of the entire corpus accounted for the usage of this strategy. Thirty one were by males and the remaining seven were from females. These differences, to someone who is in direct contact with Egyptian youth, are not surprising. Back to the point of metaphoric language, in most of the cases participants did not like the compliment or interpreted in a way different from the intended meaning, so they decided to reply with sarcasm. One of these compliments is situation eight in the DCT “I love the color of this room, excellent choice; it’s pleasing on the eye!” This was directed from a male to another male in the males' DCT and the reason the complimenter was of the same sex is that it is socially unacceptable, to a large portion of the society, to have a friend from an opposite sex invited to the home. This situation got almost half the sarcasm responses. The responses were disturbing; they reflected their deep interest in using sexual insinuations and also reflecting their phobia of homosexuality, which is reflected in almost everything they say. This can be considered as an indirect way of rejecting the compliment, as evident in examples (23-24-25-26):

Ex.23: CR (male) /matenshaf keda/ Man up!

Ex.24: CR (male)/ageblak birel aashan testargel/ should I get you Birell (the drink) so you can man up. (Inspired by a TV advertisement of a drink)

Ex.25: CR (male) /omy we okhty byetfarago aal mosalsal el turky rooh etfarag maahom/ My mom and sister are watching the Turkish series, go sit with them.

Ex.26: CR (male) /ya beh el betoolo da aeb we haram/ Mr. what your saying is wrong and unethical/ (inspired by the first movie in the Egyptian cinema depicting gays)

Responses that have been labeled by the investigator as sarcastic were those that intended to provide an offensive illocutionary force, defying the normal set of responses to someone who is saying a positive thing as a compliment. When females use sarcasm it is not used in the same manner as males and definitely with less frequency. Females' use of sarcasm is mild and does not carry connotations as negative as those used by males, however it still has the negative effect that defies the tact maxim (Leech, 1983) and is face threatening (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Jokes as opposed to sarcasm, using jokes is a way of returning the compliment which complies with the stereotypical image of Egyptians as being light hearted and funny people. Jokes were used twice as much as sarcasm. Seventy six tokens were found in the corpus; 45 of them were by males and 31 were by females.

Ex. 27: C (Female): Wow, that was brilliant, it was very good and you were confident and convincing!

CR (male): /el abd lellah mesek el hadeed tanah/

Literal meaning: God's worshiper (I) held an iron rod and bent it.

Intended meaning: I can do anything.

Another response to the same compliment:

Ex. 28: CR (male): /kolo beldahlaka/

Literal meaning: This word is absolutely meaningless inspired by an Arabic movie called 'EL Kaif' which contained numerous meaningless words.

Intended meaning: I tried to play it smart

Another example:

Ex. 29: C (male): Thank you, I don't know what would I have done without you, you are very helpful"

CR (male): /elsohab l baadeeha, hataakelny eh enaharda?/ This is what friends are for, what are you going to offer me for lunch?

As mentioned earlier in this section, one of the very common responses which were labeled as a joke is /di aa'aal haga aandy/ "this is the least I have or the least of my abilities" (depending on the situation) and this was the response most frequently used by females and males alike. The joke strategy can be considered as an indirect way of accepting compliments.

Prayer: There are many stereotypes about Egyptians. One of them is that they are very religious people by nature. Regardless of whether this is true or not, they do use a lot of religious related phrases in almost every situation. This is done spontaneously without even noticing; for example, so many of those who were complimented did not thank the complimenter, but rather thanked God for enabling them to do this thing or granting them this certain thing, considering that what they are being complimented for is a blessing from God and He is the one to be thanked.

Religious phrases were depicted in three forms. One is combined with an appreciation token, when the complimentee thanks the complimenter and then pray for them either for God to bless them /Rabena yekremak/, to save them /Rabena yehfazak/ or for them to get blessed with the same thing for which they were complimented.

Ex.30: C (male): /Helw awi el t-shirt da/ that's a very nice T-shirt.

CR (male): /Shukran, Rabena yekhalik/ Thank you, God bless you

The second form is when the complimentee thanks God and sometimes adds a prayer for the complimenter as well, for example:

Ex.31: C (female): “Wow, that was brilliant, it was very good and you were confident and convincing!”

CR (male): /El hamd lellah, ya Rab enti kaman taamely helw/ Thank God, I hope you too do well.

The third form is related to the belief in envy (or the evil eye) and the probability of being jinxed, which leads complimentees to refer to verses from the Qura'n or to say a certain prayer such as: /besm Allah ma shaa Allah/ In the name of

God and God's will, /men shar haseden etha hasad/ an excerpted phrase from the Quran which contextually means we pray to God to protect us from envy, to ward off anticipated harm.

Ex.32: C (male): “what’s with all the technology, you became very advanced and you have a smart phone now, it’s really nice!”

CR (female): /Besm allah ma shaa Allah/ In the name of God and God's will

The number of participants who responded using this strategy is 50, 38 males and 12 females. Maybe the usage of a strategy as such is not an indicator of humility as much as it is another way to avoid self praise and because males, in most of the cases the investigator came across, are not comfortable around compliments they tend to use it frequently; while females tend to deal with compliments in a more direct and easy going manner. The first two ways of responding are considered as a way of acknowledging and accepting the compliment, yet in a humble way. It can be somehow similar to the downgrading strategy in effect, however the third response is obviously a rejection and it is face threatening and embarrassing, and it reaches its peak if anything harmful happens to the object or thing the person was complimented for.

Non-Verbals micro category does not include only silences or smiles, however it contains any form of nonverbal responses such as: a pat on the shoulder, hugs and kisses or high fives. There are 24 incidents of non-verbal communication in the entire corpus.

Ex.33: C (male): /ea da you look so pretty/ what’s that! You look so pretty.

CR (female): (She gave him a hug.)

Ex.34: C (male): “Oh, what’s that? You lost weight and you look perfectly fit now!”

CR (male): High five me

Males use this strategy much more than females, at a ratio of 17:7. In some cases, the complimentee was silent and just gave a smile or blushed. That does not clearly indicate whether it is a sign of acceptance or rejection. For example:

Ex.35: C (male): /Haayat men el dehk, begad dahakteny fashkh/ You made me laugh so hard I was about to cry.

CR (male): (smile)

Therefore, this form of responding can be either a way of indirect acceptance or indirect rejection, depending on the context and the relationship between the interlocutors. One of the methods of responding to compliments is what was labeled by Bolton (1994) as lax acknowledgment, which basically included any non verbal response.

Offering

This strategy appeared 63 times in the corpus, 37 times by males and 26 times by females. In spite of the fact that there is a difference in numbers, there is no significant difference in the way males and females use it. The intended meaning is simply offering the object appreciated by the complimenter and in case the compliment is on a certain ability, such as being helpful, the complimentee offers his

willingness to help whenever needed, same as in the first of the two examples above. This is an indirect way of accepting a comment, whether the respondent is offering an object or help because usually the complimenter does not accept something of value. In case of offering to perform a certain action this is again a sort of acknowledgment that this action is well liked by people, therefore more of it can be offered.

Ex.36: C (female): “Thank you for your great help! You saved me with your help in English; I, for one, know nothing about it!”

CR (male): /maamaltesh haga , law ayza mosaada tany kalemeeni/

I did nothing, if you need help with anything else call me.

Ex.37: C (female): “‘what’s with all the technology, you became very advanced and you have a smart phone now, it’s really nice!’”

CR (male): / Etfadali/ You can have it.

Motivation. This micro strategy was not used very frequently, with only 17 incidents in the corpus, 14 times by males and three by females; however it caught the investigator's notice because it also supports the modest attitude the participants used when it came to certain situational settings, such as compliments on character and ability. It is perceived positively in contrast to other attitudes that were considered, from an investigators personal point of view, as negative.

Ex.38: C (female): “Thank you for your great help! You saved me with your help in English; I for one know nothing about it!”

CR (male): I did nothing, your English is good, you just need to practice and yours would be better than mine.

The response shifts credit from the complimentees ability to the complimenter's ability to improve, as a kind of motivation. This strategy was also used when the compliment was related to going to the gym and having a good body and the motivation was, "Join me at the gym and you too will feel a great difference."

Ignoring the compliment. This strategy occurred only six times in the corpus, five times by males and once by a female. It is basically when the complimentee changes the subject entirely so as not to respond to the compliment. Sometimes it is done as directly as /ana mesh harod alek/ "I won't respond" or by changing the topic.

Ex.39: C (female): "You are a gentleman."

CR (male):"/ hmm... wenty akhbarek eah fel mozakra/ " Hmm... and how's studying going with you?"

This is an example that shows that this strategy does not necessarily mean rejecting the compliment, however it can be an extreme way of evasiveness caused by a feeling such as embarrassment, or maybe it is rejection if the guy does not really appreciate the compliment and thinks it is out of place or maybe perceived it as an unwelcomed form of flirtation.

Superstitious comments: Further social influences are reflected upon using this micro category. It is used out of the strong belief in the power of the evil eye and being jinxed, in an attempt to deflect the harm that might fall upon the user. In this strategy however, the complimentees do not use religious verses or phrases, however they resort to superstitious sayings that are commonly used in the society. Examples of these are:

Ex.40: CR: /khamisa we khemesa / (with the show of palm) meaning five and five. It is believed that the number five acts as a shield against the evil eye, and the open right hand is used as a sign of protection.

Ex.41: CR: /ein el hasood feeha ood/ the eye of the person who jinxes contains a stick, this is said in an attempt to distract the eye from observing one way or another, by poking it.

Ex.42: CR: /matboseleesh be ain radia ana talaan ain aboya fel saudia/ do not give me the evil eye my dad is working hard in Saudi Arabia; this saying is inspired by bumper stickers found on taxis, minibuses and trucks.

Another way of being superstitious is by telling the complimenter that the object they admire might get ruined because of the admiration or for the complimentee to ask the complimenter if the compliment should be considered as a jinxing attempt?

This strategy was not used much by the examined population. Only eight incidents were counted in the corpus, six from females and two from males. This was expected because the members of this population are of a relatively ~~very~~ high social standing and most of them received the best education offered in Egypt, therefore the use of superstitious beliefs is not expected to exist, or if it does, it would be with a very low frequency, such as the case we have at hand.

Ex.43: C (female): ‘‘what’s with all the technology, you became very advanced and you have a smart phone now, It’s really nice!’’

CR (male): /da a'atebro arr wala eah/ should I consider that as an attempt to jinx me?

Fishing for more compliments: Four incidents of this micro strategy occurred in a corpus of 1042 responses. When the investigator added this micro strategy, there was an assumption that only females would use this strategy, however while collecting field notes at AUC an incident of a male using it was recorded; the total numbers recorded were three females and one male.

Ex.44: C (male): ‘‘Hey, you look great! Honestly, you look outstanding’’

CR (female): /eh dah begad,wala mush awi/ Seriously or it isn't very good?

The female here wants the compliment to go further entailing more details maybe rather than just a collective compliment on her general looks.

Ex.45: C (Female): Your sweater looks sexy (pronounced sweat)

CR (Male): Really, the sweat is what's sexy not me?

Response to question: I would have said that, if I wanted.

This incident does not just reflect that the boy is fishing for more compliments only however, he is fishing for more interaction.

Flirtatious comment micro strategy was expected to be used only by males and the assumption was warranted as 16 incidents of using flirtatious comments were counted and they were all by males.

Ex.46: CR (male):/shukran, enty el helwa, we amar w maadeya, aaool eah tani
bas? / Thanks, you're the one who's beautiful and outstanding, what
else should I say?

Presumably males perceive the compliment, especially if it is pertaining to appearance, in a way that gives them the liberty to respond in a flirtatious manner. According to Parisi and Wagon's (2006) study on compliment and gender in the United States, females worry that if they compliment males on appearance males may interpret it as a 'come-on'. Sometimes males verbally flirt just to impress the complimenter or as a way of returning the compliment knowing that appearance is something highly valued by females; however, males would do this when the relationship allows it and it would not be face threatening.

Rejecting and reassuring comments

This micro strategy was added in the process of labeling the responses. The incidents counted are 16, nine of them were given by males and seven by females. It was depicted mainly in situational settings about character and ability. By using this strategy, the respondents rejected the compliment tactfully and added a reassuring comment to make it seem even more tactful, for example:

Ex.47: C (male): Thank you for your help! You saved me with your help in
English; I for one know nothing about it!

CR: (female) /la khales ana el englezy beta3y dayea, bas ana bahawel
arakez ala hagat moayana, enta Kaman mehtag terakez aktar we eba
esaal el TAs low ozt haga/

No, my English is not good at all, I just focus on certain things , you need to focus more too and ask the TAs if you need anything"

The intention of both males and females was simply to deny the thing they have been complimented for either because it is not true or they deny it out of humbleness. In some situations complimentees offer advice along with the rejection or they try to make the complimenter feel better about themselves by providing a reassuring comment (example 47).

Laughter was only found three times in the data and was solely used by females. One of them wrote hahaha *Blush* and another two wrote hahaha and drew a smiley face. Apparently this is a method used to indicate shyness, and is believed to be a sign of acceptance. This strategy can be associated with Boloton's (1994) concept of lax acknowledgments.

5.3 Conclusion:

5.3.1 Review of the Study and Findings

The purpose of the present research was to discover whether there are differences in the way male and female Egyptian undergraduate students respond to compliments on both the macro and the micro levels, to examine the differences and the extent to which Egyptian culture influences them.

Based on the analysis of the results of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn. Although the study did not show much differences in the frequency of use of macro level compliment response strategies between male and female Egyptian undergraduate students, there seemed to be clear differences in most of the situations

on the micro level. The strategies of responding to compliments that were used varied, in some cases there were differences and in some others there were none. For example, the intended meaning of a CR in a micro category often differed by sex as did the level of politeness and sincerity. Finally, the responses are a momentous reflection of the attitudes and mindset of Egyptian students attending private universities which use the English language as a medium for instruction.

To the best of the investigator's knowledge, not many studies have examined sex- based compliment responses in the Egyptian context. However, compared to results of similar studies in different contexts, the results of this study do not support the findings of Pomerantz (1978) in her study of compliment responses in American English, as her data revealed that the large proportion of compliment responses are not categorized as acceptance (1978). However her study was purely qualitative so there are no precise proportions of each category. Holmes (1986), and Herbert (1990) also investigated compliment responses in New Zealand and the United States, they found more acceptances/agreements than rejections/disagreements in their corpora, which complies with the results of the study at hand. It is believed that the reason for this difference is that these researchers categorized agreements differently than Pomerantz did (Golato, 2002). For example, Holmes (1986) counted appreciation tokens, agreement tokens, an agreeing utterances, a downgrade or qualification, and a compliment return as agreements, however Pomerantz viewed downgrade or qualification, and compliment return “in between categories”.

Based on the point that different categorizations lead to different results, it was found that this study lead to different results than those reached in the pilot study, with almost the same sample population, on the micro level. The results of the pilot

study indicated that the responses on the macro level males tend to accept more, but females tend to evade more and rejections are very few. However, it is believed that the modification done to the categories in an attempt to improve the quality of the analysis, lead to a different outcome.

Having presented the analysis and given indications on the difference between male and female, Egyptian undergraduate students, in terms of using compliment responses and the differences between results from a study in this context and other studies in other contexts, it can be concluded that no cross cultural universal pattern can be generalized regarding the use of CRs.

5.3.2 Implications

Based on the results of this study and the reviewed literature, which show that there are differences between the way a faction of the Egyptians youth respond to compliments and the way English speaking societies do; it is suggested that compliment responses should be taught, as part of the curriculum, to speakers of other languages who wish to learn Arabic. This should be done in an attempt to eradicate or at the very least decrease the probability of pragmatic failure, especially for students who are on an exchange. This should be done with the aid of, Arabic for foreigners, curriculum designers to design curriculums and textbooks for Arabic learners, not only teaching language but also culture should be taken into consideration. Syllabus designers should take into account learners' needs considering the understanding and production of speech acts they are likely to come across (Al Falasi, 2007).

5.2.3 Limitations

The present study has a number of limitations regarding the research participants and the methods. Participants were recruited randomly at AUC, however

at the GUC the data collection depended primarily on the researcher's connections, and therefore the sample size was uneven. However, this did not impact the results as the researcher was not trying to compare the results from each context, but rather wanted to expand the collection options and to facilitate the process. Moreover, the present study initially planned to collect at least 100 field notes, but ended up with 83 only; field notes are very time consuming and require a flexible time frame.

In spite of the fact that the WDCT is a very practical instrument, given a longer period of time, it would be much more reliable to depend only on field notes or maybe on an instrument that elicits oral data with multiple turns, such as role plays.

Again given a longer period of time, a question about same sex interactions and opposite sex interactions could have been explored and would have provided a positive addition to the research findings.

5.3.4 Suggestions for future research

Due to the interesting nature of the topic, the richness and ambiguity of pragmatic usage of language by a group of Egyptians, further studies can be conducted on the same sample in interaction with adults or people of higher status; or perhaps on a different sample altogether, for example: adults, and the results can be compared with the results of this study to show whether there is a difference in response strategies or not.

Also, same sex interactions in terms of compliment/ compliment responses, compared to opposite sex interaction would be a fruitful study, especially in a culture such as the Egyptian one, in which opposite sex interactions are usually controversial and characteristically uncomfortable.

All the suggestions so far would probably be best undertaken in the Cairean context, however, it is highly suggested that studies related to speech acts are conducted in other contexts i.e. other subcultures in Egypt; for example in Nubia; due to the investigator's personal observation of their extreme level of politeness, which make it interesting to examine their strategies in using different speech acts generally and compliment responses specifically.

This research of compliment responses may not extend its generalizability beyond this study; therefore, further investigations are needed. Moreover, other social variables such as social class, educational background as well as contextual factors such as social distance and status may be attended.

In conclusion, all the claims made in this study are language-specific, i.e., they are not universal claims about compliment events and cannot, and were not intended to be generalized. They were done in an exploratory attempt to find out about the youths' use of compliment responses and how differently males and females use them, and as an addition to speech act studies specifically and pragmatic studies generally.

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Appendix A: DCT Arabic version (males)

عزيزي المشارك: أولاً، شكراً جزيلاً لأخذك جزء من وقتك لملء هذا الاستبيان. سوف تجد ثمانية أسئلة عن مواقف ربما تكون تعرضت لها. الرجاء الرد على هذه المواقف باستخدام الطريقة الأكثر طبيعية للتعبير، تخيل نفسك في الموقف وعليه يرجى تقديم معلومات كافية رداً على كل موقف. في حالة تفضيلك للرد الغير لفظي في بعض الحالات يرجى التعبير عن هذا كتابة (ابتسامه، لا يوجد رد، ...الخ).

الموقف الأول:

نظم أصدقائك إحتفال بمناسبة نهاية الفصل الدراسي. كنت قد جهزت ما سوف ترتديه بعناية. عند وصولك للحفل، قالت إحدى صديقاتك (انثى): "انت شكلك حلو اوى! بجد شكلك معدي".

الرد:

.....
.....

الموقف الثاني:

كنت تذهب الى صالة الالعاب الرياضية "الجيم" بانتظام في الشهرين الماضيين. في طريقك إلى الجامعة، إلتقيت أحد الأصدقاء (ذكر) وقال لك: "ايه ده انت خسيت اوى، و بقيت فورمه".

الرد:

.....
.....

الموقف الثالث:

أحد أصدقائك إنتقل هو وعائلته مؤخراً في شقة جديدة في نفس المبنى الذي تعيش به. طالب منك مساعدته في ترتيب الأشياء. أمضيت عدة ساعات لمساعدته. و أنت على وشك المغادره، صديقك (ذكر) يقول: "شكراً! مش عارف من غيرك كنت هعمل ايه، انت جدع اوى".

الرد:

.....
.....

الموقف الرابع:

بعد طلب المشورة حول إمتحانات اللغة الإنجليزية، صديقتك (أنثى) تقول لك: "ألف شكر على المساعدة! إنتَ بجد انقذتني بالانجليزى بتاعك ده، انا بقى ماليش فيه"

الرد:

.....
.....

الموقف الخامس:

بعدالإنتهاء من عرض تقديمي (presentation)، زميلتك (أنثى) قالت: " تحفه، كانت حلوه اوى، و إنت كنت واثق من نفسك و مُتّنع!"

الرد:

.....
.....

الموقف السادس:

في نهاية العرض التقديمي نفسه، شريكك (ذكر) (الذى قدم معك، وهو ليس صديق قريب) قال لك: "لولاك مكنتش عارف هعمل ايه، بجد شكراً على أفكارك و مجهودك."

الرد:

.....

.....

الموقف السابع:

كنت قد اشتريت هاتفاً محمولاً جديداً. عندما رن الهاتف، صديقتك (أنثى) تلاحظ أن الهاتف جديد. وبعد أن انتهيت من المكالمه، قالت لك: "ايه ده بقى التطور ده! وجبنا سمارت فون، حلو أوى بجد من أحسن التليفونات "

الرد:

.....

.....

الموقف الثامن:

بعض الأصدقاء عندك في منزلك. واحد منهم (ذكر) يذهب إلى الغرفة الخاصة بك ويقول: "أوضتك حلوه اوى ألوانها مريحه للعين و متروقه!"

الرد:

.....

.....

معلومات شخصية:

السن: _____

اسم الجامعه: _____

Appendix B: DCT Arabic version (females)

عزيزتي المشاركة: أولاً، شكراً جزيلاً لأخذك جزء من وقتك لملء هذا الاستبيان. سوف تجدي ثمانية أسئلة عن مواقف ربما قد تكوني تعرضتي لها. الرجاء الرد على هذه المواقف باستخدام الطريقة الأكثر طبيعية للتعبير عن ردك. تخيلي نفسك في الموقف وعليه قدمي معلومات كافية رداً على كل موقف. في حالة تفضيلك للرد الغير لفظي في بعض الحالات يرجى التعبير عن هذا كتابة (ابتسامه، لا يوجد رد، ... إلخ).

الموقف الأول:

نظم أصدقائك إحتفال بمناسبة نهاية الفصل الدراسي. كنت قد جهزت ما سوف ترتديه. عند وصولك للحفل، قال أحد أصدقائك (ذكر): "إنت شكلك حلو أوى! بجد شكلك تحفه".

الرد:

.....

.....

الموقف الثاني:

كنت تذهبين إلى صالة الألعاب الرياضية "الجيم" بانتظام في الشهرين الماضيين. في طريقك إلى الجامعة، إلتقيت احد الأصدقاء (انثى) وقالت لك: "ايه ده إنت خسيتي أوى، وبقيتي زى الموديلز".

الرد:

.....

.....

الموقف الثالث:

إحدى صديقاتك إنتقلت هي وعائلتها مؤخراً في شقة جديدة في نفس المبنى الذي تعيشي فيه. طلبت منك مساعدتها في ترتيب الأشياء. امضيت عدة ساعات لمساعدتها. وإنت على وشك المغادره، صديقتك تقول (انثى): "شكراً! مش عارفه من غيرك كنت هعمل ايه، إنتي جدعه أوى".

الرد:

.....
.....

الموقف الرابع:

بعد طلب المشورة حول إمتحانات اللغة الإنجليزية، صديقك يقول لك (ذكر): "ألف شكر على المساعدة! إنت بجد أنقذتيني بالإنجليزى بتاعك ده، أنا بقى مالمش فيه"

الرد:

.....
.....

الموقف الخامس:

بعدالإنتهاء من عرض تقديمي (presentation)، زميلك قال (ذكر): " برافو، كانت حلوه اوى، وإنت كنت واثقه من نفسك و مقنعه!"

الرد:

.....
.....

الموقف السادس:

في نهاية العرض التقديمي نفسه، شريكك (التي قدمت معك، وهى ليست صديقه قريبه) قالت لك (انثى): "لولاكى مكنتش عارفه هعمل إيه، بجد شكراً على أفكارك و مجهودك."

الرد:

.....
.....

الموقف السابع:

كنت قد اشتريتي هاتفاً محمولاً جديداً. عندما رن الهاتف، صديقك يلاحظ أن الهاتف جديد. وبعد أن انتهيت من المكالمه، قال لك (ذكر): "ايه ده بقى التطور ده! وجبنا موبايل جديد و سمارت فون كمان، حلو اوى بجد، من أحسن التليفونات"

الرد:

.....
.....

الموقف الثامن:

بعض الأصدقاء عندك في منزلك. واحده منهم بعد دخولها الغرفة الخاصة بك، تقول(انثى): "أوضتك حلوه اوى الوانها مريحه للعين و متروقه!"

الرد:

.....
.....

معلومات شخصية:

السن: _____

اسم الجامعة: _____

Appendix C: DCT English version

***Dear participant:** Firstly, thank you very much for sparing your valued time filling out this questionnaire. Hereunder, you will find eight questions of situations that you have probably experienced before. While responding to the questions please use the most natural way to express your response, imagining yourself in a real situation. If you think a non-verbal response is more suitable in any of the situations, you may write your action (e.g., silence, smile, etc.) All the compliments in the following situations are sincere compliments. Thank you again for your help and cooperation.*

Situation 1:

Your friends have organized a party to celebrate the end of semester. You've dressed up for the party. As you arrive at the party, one of your girl friends says: "Hey, you look great! Honestly, you look outstanding"

Response:

.....
.....

Situation 2:

You have been going to the gym regularly in the last couple of months. On your way to the university, you meet a friend and he/she says: "Oh, what's that you lost weight and you look like a fit now!"

Response:

.....
.....

Situation 3:

One of your friends together with his/her family has recently moved in a new apartment. S/he asks you to help him/her arrange the things. It takes you several hours to put all the things away. As you are about to say goodbye, your friend says: "Thank you, I don't know what would I have done without you, you are very helpful".

Response:

.....
.....

Situation 4:

After asking for advice about English language exams, your friend says to you: “Thank you for your help! You saved me with your help in English; I for one know nothing about it!”

Response:

.....
.....

Situation 5:

After you have completed a presentation, your classmate says: “Wow, that’s brilliant, it was very good and you were confident and convincing!”

Response:

.....
.....

Situation 6:

At the end of the same presentation your partner (who presented with you) says to you: “But for your help and clever ideas, our presentation would not have been so successful.”

Response:

.....
.....

Situation 7:

You have bought a new mobile phone. When you receive a call, your friend notices that your phone is a different one. Having looked at it and tried some functions, s/he says: “what’s with all the technology, you became very advanced and you have a smart phone now, It’s really nice!”

Response:

.....
.....

Situation 8:

Some friends are over at your house. One of them goes to your room and says: “I love the colour of this room, excellent choice; it’s nice on the eyes!”

Response:

.....
.....

Demographics:

Age: _____

Name of University: _____

Appendix D: Illustrations

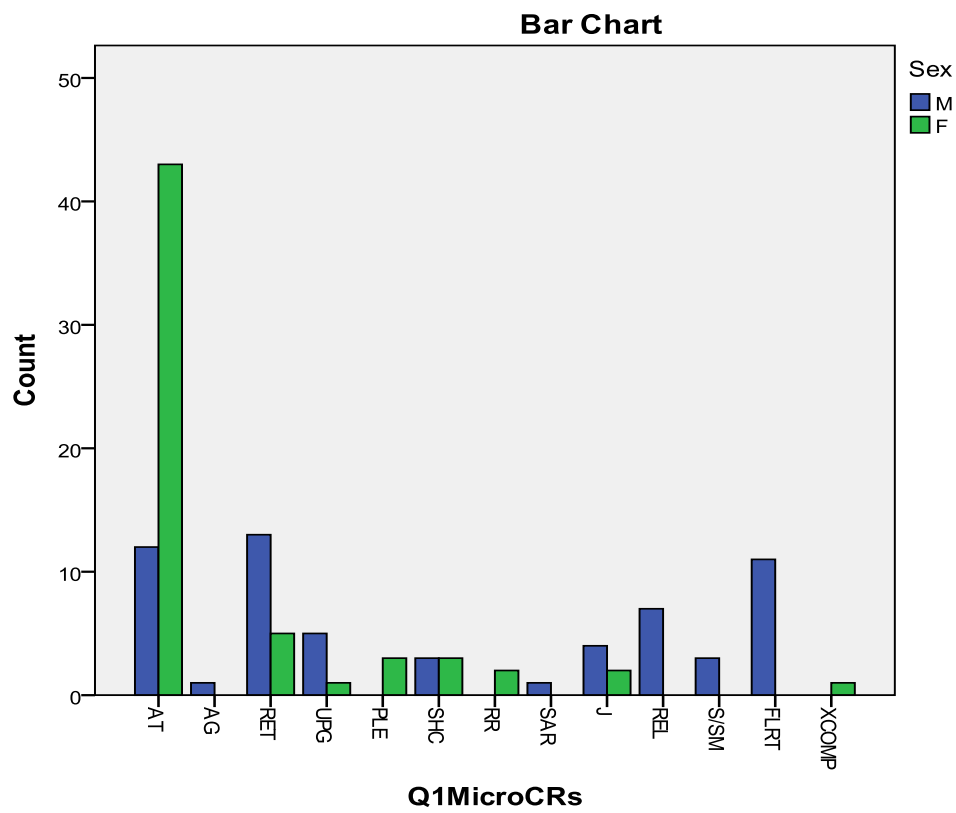


Figure 6: Situation 1 (Appearance)

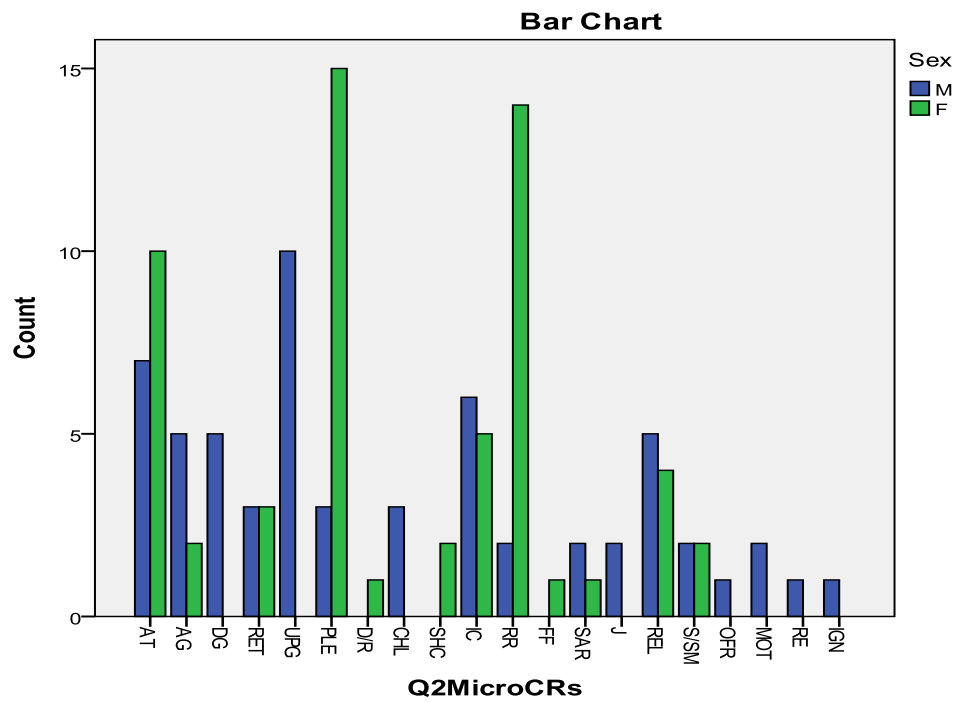


Figure 7: Situation 2 (Appearance)

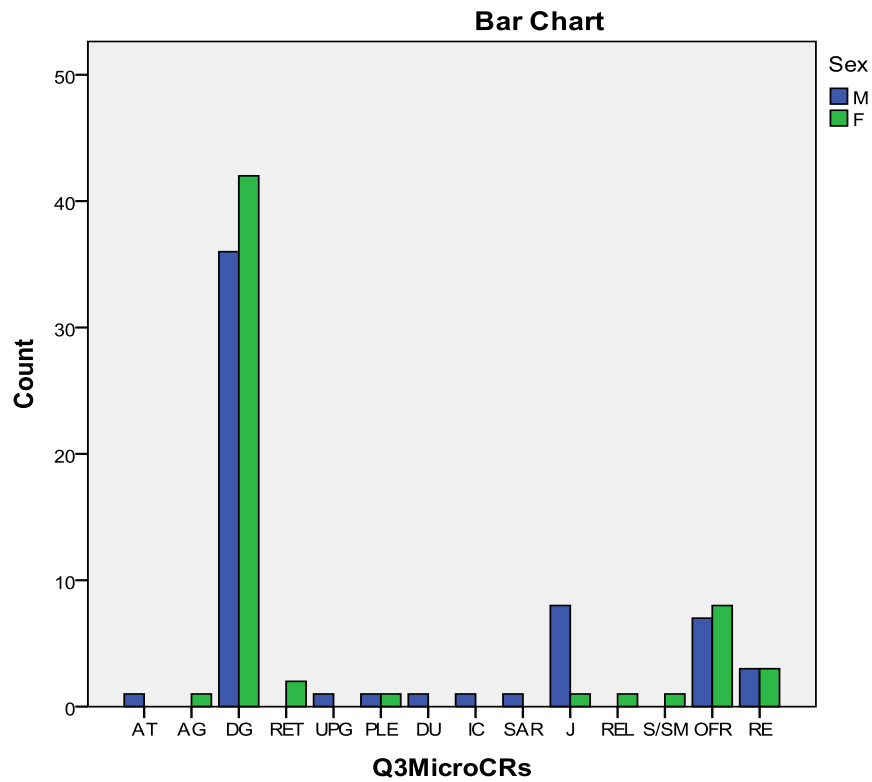


Figure 8: Situation 3 (Character)

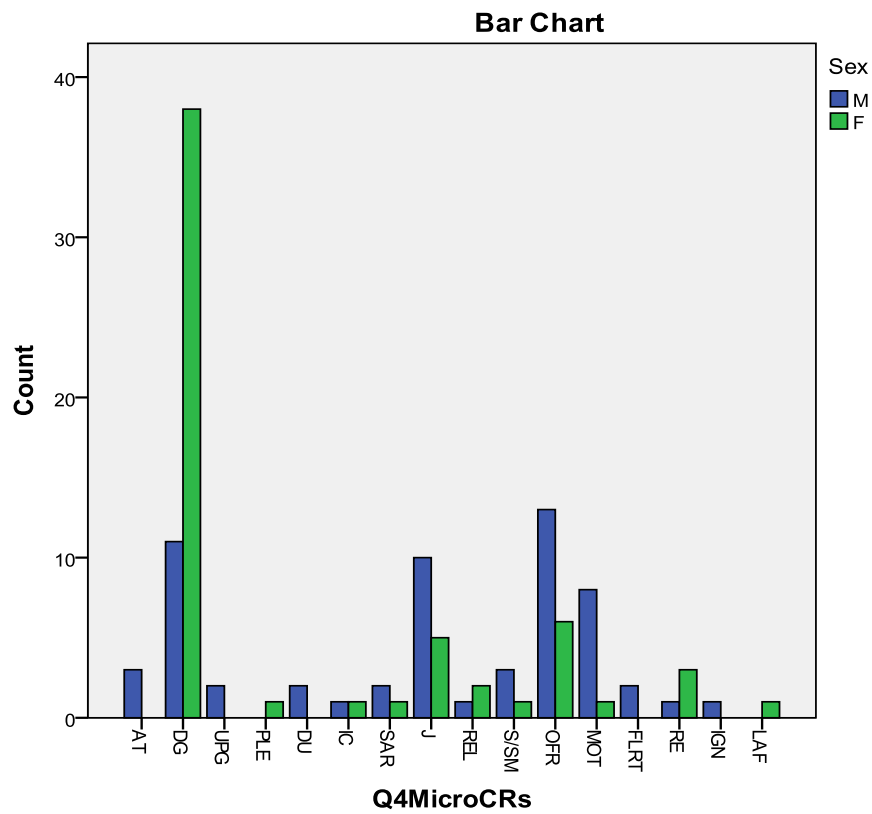


Figure 9: Situation 4 (Character)

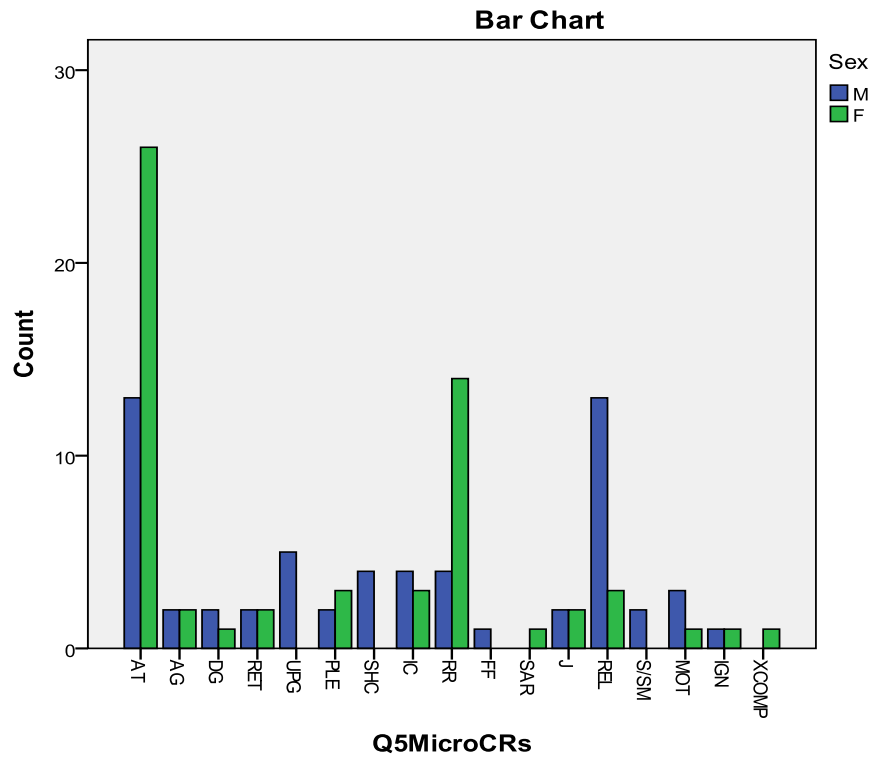


Figure 10: Situation 5 (Ability)

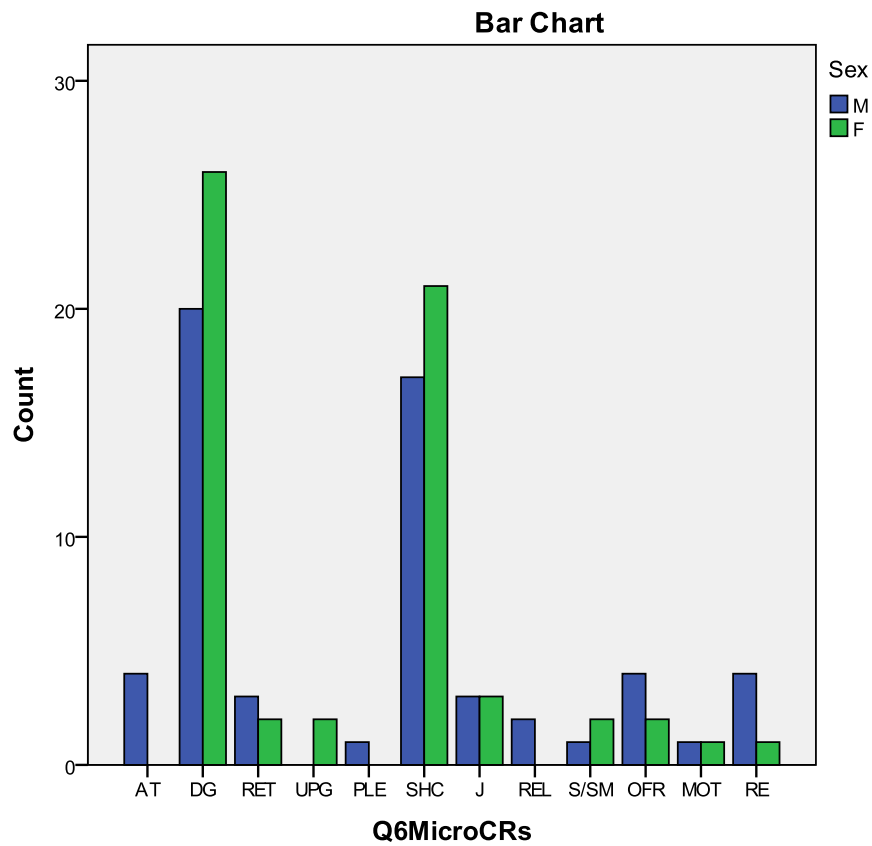


Figure 11: Situation 6 (Ability)

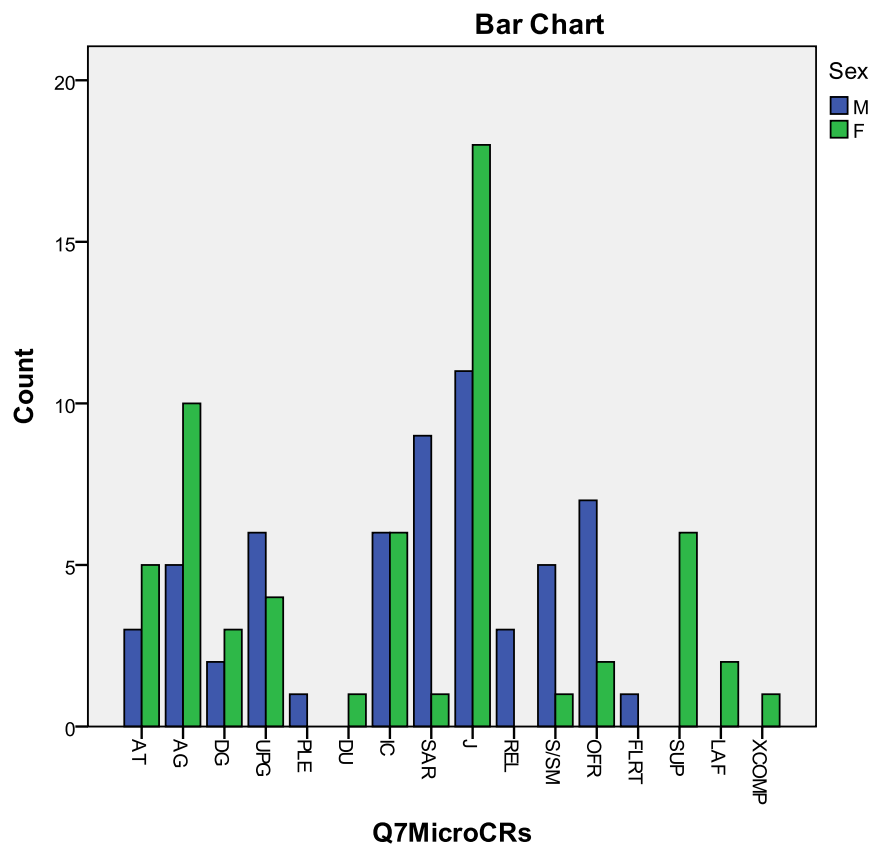


Figure 12: Situation 7 (Possession)

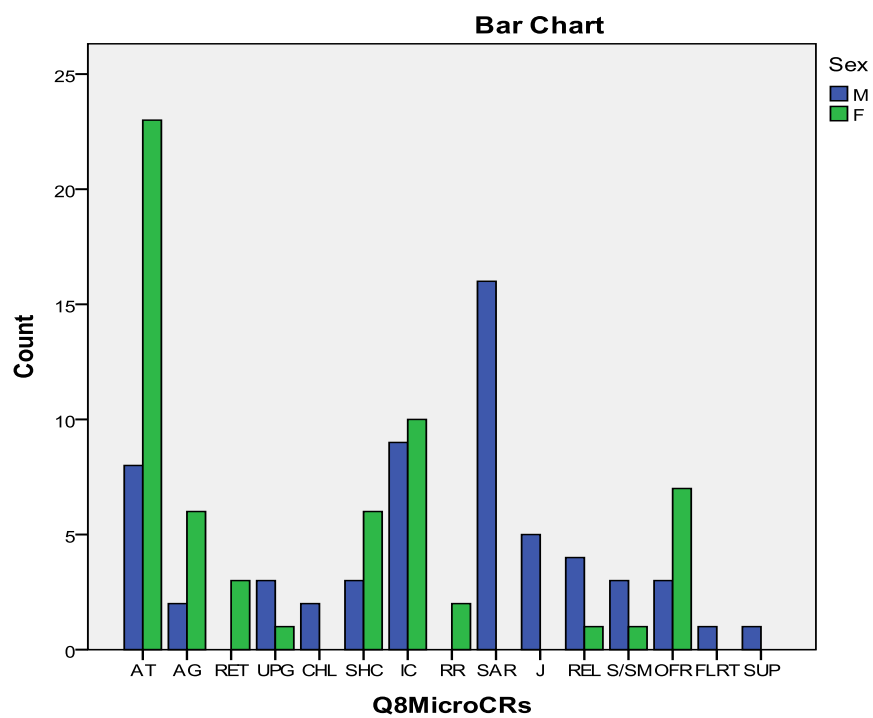


Figure 13: Situation 8 (Possession)

Appendix E: Consent Form



Documentation of Informed Consent for Participation in Research Study

Project Title: A Study of Compliment Responses among Male and Female Egyptian

Undergraduate Students

Principal Investigator: Mariam Mostafa

You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of the research is to investigate compliment responses used by undergraduate students, and the findings may be *published in an MA thesis and might as well be presented in a conference.*

The expected duration of your participation is not expected to exceed ten minutes, during which you will be asked to provide written responses for eight situations.

There *will not be* any risks or discomforts associated with this research.

There *will not be* benefits to you from this research.

The information you provide for purposes of this research *is confidential.*

For further information about the research or your rights please contact Mariam Mostafa at 01211499863

Participation in this study is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____

Appendix F: Institutional Review Board's approval (Text)

To: Mairam Mostafa
Cc: Sara Tarek
From: Atta Gebril, Chair of the IRB
Date: Feb 4, 2015
Re: Approval of study

This is to inform you that I reviewed your revised research proposal entitled “**A Study of Compliment Responses among Male and Female Egyptian Undergraduate Students,**” and determined that it required consultation with the IRB under the "expedited" heading. As you are aware, the members of the IRB suggested certain revisions to the original proposal, but your new version addresses these concerns successfully. The revised proposal used appropriate procedures to minimize risks to human subjects and that adequate provision was made for confidentiality and data anonymity of participants in any published record. I believe you will also make adequate provision for obtaining informed consent of the participants.

This approval letter was issued under the assumption that you have not started data collection for your research project. Any data collected before receiving this letter could not be used since this is a violation of the IRB policy.

Please note that IRB approval does not automatically ensure approval by CAPMAS, an Egyptian government agency responsible for approving some types of off-campus research. CAPMAS issues are handled at AUC by the office of the University Counsellor, Dr. Amr Salama. The IRB is not in a position to offer any opinion on CAPMAS issues, and takes no responsibility for obtaining CAPMAS approval.

This approval is valid for only one year. In case you have not finished data collection within a year, you need to apply for an extension.

Thank you and good luck.
Dr. Atta Gebril
IRB chair, The American University in Cairo
2046 HUSS Building
T: 02-26151919
Email: agebril@aucegypt.edu