



Strategies of English Expressions of Gratitude Used by Yemeni Male Speakers in Male-Male and Male-Female Interactions

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the types of English expressions of gratitude that are employed by Yemeni Male Speakers in Male-Male and Male-Female interactions. The participants of the study consisted of 230 students (115 males and 115 females) from Sana'a University. The data of the study were collected by using a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) questionnaire. The results of the study showed that the participants employed different types of English expressions of gratitude in different gratitude situations, but "bald thanking or using the word "thank" was the most frequently used strategy by Yemeni male speakers in male-male and male-female interactions. The results also indicated that there were similarities and few differences in terms of the frequencies, percentages and the type of strategies used by the participants in all situations.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language, according to Cui (2012) and Al-Ghamdi, Almansoob and Alrefae (2019), is an expression of human feelings and activities that are related to cultural, social, personal and religious affiliations. Language also plays an important role in human life because it is an effective way to clarify human wants, ideas, feelings and thoughts to other people. Therefore, people realize the importance of language for them to be involved in communication. According to Al-Marrani (2023) states that Yemen is one of the countries which has a unique culture. One thing that makes the culture unique is the way of communication. To attain successful communication, one has to grasp how to produce utterances appropriately in different situations. Yoosefvand and Rasekh (2014) state that a speech act is a fundamental feature of pragmatics, so when people use a suitable speech act in communication, they can build and strengthen the bonds of a relationship. Therefore, when people deal with each other in face-to-face communication, several types of speech acts occur such as gratitude expressions, requests, apologies, and compliments. One of the speech acts that have unique aspects to be investigated is expressing gratitude because it is one of the common acts that exert in our daily lives when people offer us kindness, a favour, a service or an invitation. Thanking according to Cheng (2005), and Yoosefvand and Rasek (2014), is realized when the speaker expresses gratitude for the hearer's participation in a previous action that was beneficial to the speaker. Hassan (2019) mentions that thanking is the feeling of gratefulness directed towards

others and it is also one of the effective ways that maintain harmony and social rapport among society members to overcome life difficulties. Yusefi, Gowhary, Azizifar, and Esmaeili (2015) indicate that thanking is one of the most common language expressions which strengthens the bonds between the members of society.

The current study, in general, is useful to EFL learners. In particular, it gives them the opportunity to realize which strategy of English expressions of gratitude attracts comprehension and which other one can cause misunderstanding. Learners should be careful when choosing a gratitude strategy in a given situation because language plays an essential role in the production of English expressions of gratitude and it also influences the interlocutors' interactions(Alrefaee, 2020; Al-Marrani, 2023; and Al-Sallal, 2024). The main purpose of the current study is to explore the types of English expressions of gratitude that are used by Yemeni male speakers at Sana'a University.

1.1. Research questions

To achieve the objective of the study, the following research questions are raised:

1. What are the types of English expressions of gratitude used by Yemeni male speakers from level four students at the Departments of English at Sana'a University?
2. What are the most frequently used English expressions of gratitude by Yemeni male speakers from level four students at the Departments of English at Sana'a University?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Speech Act of English Expressions of Gratitude

One of the most commonly used speech acts in everyday interactions is the gratitude speech act. Gratitude is one of the major instruments which strengthen the bonds among the members of a society. It is regarded as something positive both across time and across cultures. Jautz (2008) states that “English expressions of gratitude are used when a speaker wants the hearer to know that s/he is grateful for what the addressee has said or done” (p. 142). Moreover, Eisenstein and Bodman (1995) mention that English expressions of gratitude can “engender feelings of warmth and solidarity among interlocutors” (p. 64). Furthermore, English expressions of gratitude have been defined in various ways and have types and strategies that vary and often overlap. Eisenstein and Bodman (1995) claim two various views of thanking in the literature. They stress that Brown and Levinson (1987) categorize expressing gratitude as a face-threatening act in which the speaker feels obliged to admit a debt to the hearer. Leech (1983), on the other side, categorizes gratitude as a convivial function that the goal of stating appreciation helps in maintaining a polite and friendly social atmosphere between speaker and hearer.

2.2. English Gratitude Expressions Strategies

One of the most common categorizations for gratitude expression strategies that have been constantly used by many scholars and researchers is one that suggested by Cheng (2005). Cheng (2005) classifies expressions of gratitude strategies into eight general strategies. They are as follows: (1) *Thanking* strategy; it composes of three subcategories; a) thanking only by using the word “*thank you*” (*Thanks a lot! thank you very much!*), b) thanking by stating the favour (*Thank you for your notice!*) and c) thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by

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the favour (*Thank you for helping me cleaning the kitchen*). (2) *Appreciation* strategy; it includes two subcategories; a) by using the word "appreciate" without elaboration (*I appreciate it!*) and b) by using the word appreciate and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor (*I appreciate the time you spent for/with me*). (3) *Positive Feeling*; it has two categories; a) by expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer) (*You are a life saver!*) and b) by expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor (*This book was really helpful!*). (4) *Apology* strategy; it consists of three categories; a) using only apologizing words (*I'm sorry*), b) by using apologizing words (*sorry or apologize*) and stating the favor or the fact (*I'm sorry for the problem I made!*), c) criticizing or blaming oneself (*I'm such a fool!*) and d) expressing embarrassment (*It's so embarrassing!*). (5) *Recognition of imposition*; it contains three subcategories; a) acknowledging the imposition (*I know that you are not allowed to give me extra time!*), b) stating the need or the favor (*I try not to ask for extra time, but this time I need it!*) and c) diminishing the need for the favor (*You didn't have to do that!*). (6) *Repayment*; it consists of three subcategories; a) by offering or promising service, money, food or goods (*Next time it's my turn to pay!*), b) indicating his/her indebtedness (*I owe you one!*) and c) by promising future self-restraint or self-improvement (*It won't happen again!*). (7) *Others* are expressions that do not belong to the above strategies are categorized as the other strategies. There are four subcategories under the Other strategy; a) here statement (*Here you are!*), b) small talk (*Your face is very familiar to me but I can't remember where I saw you. What do you study?*), c) leave-taking (*Goodbye, have a nice day!*) and d) joking (*Don't forget to pay again next time*). (8) *Alerters*: in the thanking situations, attention getter and address term are likely to occur in the same utterance. The alerters are classified as; a) attention getter (*Hey, Hi, Well*), b) title (*Dr., Professor! Sir!*) and c) name (*John, Mary*).

2.3. Gender

Gender, according to Wardhaugh (2002), is one of a lot of factors that influence the daily language and use of speech act, so men and women use language differently. Tannen (1990; 1994; 1995) clarify that men's and women's methods of communication are very various. According to Xia (2013), men and women also differ in the type of language they use and how they use it. Mills (2003) also indicates that gender plays a significant role in determining suitable strategies in different situations. Since both men and women have various styles of speaking. They may accordingly have different ways of using speech acts. Consequently, males and females have different strategies in offering English expressions of gratitude.

2.4. Previous Studies

Nisa (2021) conducted a study under the title "*Gender-Based Strategies in Expressing Gratitude in English Realized by Indonesian EFL Learners*". The goal of this study is to depict the gratitude strategies utilized by Indonesian EFL female and male students in responding to various academic situations. The participants were 85 undergraduate students of English Literature, at Brawijaya University in Malang. The data were gathered by using Discourse Completion Tasks (DCT) from O'Keeffe, Clancy, and Adolphs (2011). The results showed that the diversity of gratitude strategies based on Chen, Ho, and Yang's (2005) taxonomy and used by the participants from both genders, varied from brief, lengthy, to complex thanking acts. It is also revealed that both genders successfully expressed their gratitude in responding to the five academic contexts made by the researcher.

Bakırcı and Özbay (2020) introduced a study “*Investigating EFL speakers’ gratitude strategies: Interlanguage pragmatics*”. The main aim of the study is to identify gratitude strategies used by EFL speakers which have always been the focus of interest by researchers who observed the presence of pragmatic transfer strategies by which speakers express their gratitude. The subjects included 80 EFL learners in Turkey and 70 non-native European speakers of English at the tertiary level. The researchers also interviewed 44 Turkish-speaking participants. The data were collected by several adapted versions of Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) by Eisenstein and Bodman (1986) are constructed based on the original version and largely applied to the participants from various backgrounds. The primary findings of this study indicated strong divergences and weak similarities between both speaker groups who resorted to the speech act of thanking compared to non-native European speakers who also differed in thanking strategies.

Rydh (2019) conducted a study under the title “*Gender Differences in Gratitude among University Students in Sweden*”. This study aims to investigate possible gender differences in trait gratitude and positive and negative affect. In addition, a possible relationship between the trait gratitude and its effect is investigated as well as cultural differences between Swedish students and international students studying in Sweden. The subjects consisted of 184 individuals currently studying at a university in Sweden. The gender distribution was 132 female participants (71.7%), including 47 international students and 52 male participants (28.3%), including 10 international students, resulting in a total of 57 international students (31.0%). The data were collected through a questionnaire that was created digitally via the Google Forms platform and distributed via social media, i.e. Facebook. The results of this study were unable to find any differences in trait gratitude, however, a gender difference was found in experienced negative affect and cultural differences were found in both positive and negative affect. A positive relationship between trait gratitude and positive affect, as well as a negative relationship between trait gratitude and negative affect, were also found.

Hassan (2019) conducted a study under the title “*Genderlect and Thanking*”. This study aims to find out the strategies Iraqi EFL learners use concerning the speech act of thanking and to Conclude whether female learners thank more than males overall. The subjects were selected by conducting a test on a random sample of Iraqi EFL fourth-year students at the Department of English/ College of Education for Human Sciences. University of Babylon (2016-2017). The data were collected through the test that has been constructed. The results of this study revealed that the students used the direct strategies to thank almost all the time and they even left some of the strategies (especially the indirect one) unused. As for gender; females used thanking strategies a bit less than males.

Al-Momani, Jaradat, Al-Khawaldeh, and Bani-Khair (2017) introduced a study titled “*Expressing Gratitude in an EFL Context: The Case of Jordanian Learners*”. This study aims to reveal the existing literature on interlanguage pragmatics by investigating intermediate Jordanian EFL learners’ gratitude speech act realization compared to that of native American English speakers. The study considered both aspects of pragmatic competence including pragmalinguistic knowledge (the use of gratitude strategies) and sociopragmatic knowledge (the influence of contextual variables). The subjects were 60 participants divided into two

groups: 30 native speakers of American English, and 30 Jordanian EFL learners. The data were elicited by using a discourse completion task (DCT) questionnaire. The results revealed that while Jordanian EFL learners and American English native speakers have access to the same gratitude strategies, both groups differed in the order preference of the used strategies and their frequency of use. Furthermore, the two groups showed different patterns in responding to contextual variables (social power and size of imposition).

3. METHOD

3.1. Participants

The participants of the questionnaire are about 230 male and female Yemeni EFL learners (115 males and 115 females). In addition, all samples are native speakers of Arabic language and undergraduate students from Level Four from English Departments (Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Faculty of Education and Faculty of Languages) and Translation Department (Faculty of Languages), Sana'a University, Yemen. The reason behind selecting this sample is that the participants are relatively homogeneous in terms of their cultural background and academic/linguistic experiences.

3.2. Instrument

In order to collect the required data for the current study, the researcher uses the instrument of a written Discourse Completion Test (DCT) questionnaire. The DCT is one of the fundamental collection instruments in pragmatic research. DCT usually consists of a short description of a particular situation. DCT, according to Ebadi and Salman (2015) is the most common method used for investigating speech acts. It motivates the researcher to elicit the required data in different social situations and then allows the researcher to collect research data in an approximate short time.

3.3. Data collection procedures and analysis

After discussing the validity of the DCT with the supervisor and six other professors from different faculties at Sana'a University and modifying the DCT based on the professors' notes and suggestions, the researcher randomly selects the required samples on which the instrument is applied. Besides this, the researcher takes permission from target faculties to distribute the DCT to all participants in this study. After collecting the data from three faculties by using the instrument of a written Discourse Completion Test (DCT) questionnaire, the researcher classifies and codes the participants' responses in accordance with a coding system devised by Cheng (2005). Finally, the quantitative method is used to analyse the collected data for the DCT by using the statistical analysis SPSS program in terms of (frequencies and percentages).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher introduces the analysis and discussion of the data which are collected by using a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) questionnaire. The data are analysed to explore the types of English expressions of gratitude that are used by Yemeni male speakers at Sana'a University, and then determine the most frequently used strategies that the participants favour to employ when thanking others. After collecting the data via the DCT, the participants' responses are classified and coded based on the coding scheme proposed by Cheng (2005).

This analysis involves all participants' responses in order to identify the highest and lowest percentages of English expressions of gratitude.

4.1.The Strategies of English Expressions of Gratitude as Used by Yemeni EFL Learners with People of Higher Status (Male-Male).

Table 1: Yemeni EFL Learners' Performance with People of Higher Status (M-M)

Main Strategies	Secondary Strategies	Situation (1)		Situation (2)		Situation (3)		Situation (4)	
		F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%
Thanking	Bald thanking or using the word "thanks".	61	53.0%	17	14.8%	71	61.7%	22	19.1%
	Thanking and stating the favour.	6	5.2%	28	24.3%	4	3.5%	30	26.1%
	Thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favour.	4	3.5%	15	13.0%	0	0	9	7.8%
Appreciation	Using the word "appreciate" without elaboration.	5	4.3%	2	1.7%	6	5.2%	4	3.5%
	Using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor	3	2.6%	9	7.8%	0	0	20	17.4%
Positive feelings	Expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (<i>hearer</i>).	9	7.8%	7	6.1%	4	3.5%	3	2.6%
	Expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favour.	2	1.7%	16	13.9%	0	0	0	0
Apology	Using only apologizing words "sorry" or "apologize".	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favour.	0	0	0	0	6	5.2%	1	0.9%
	Criticizing or blaming oneself.	0	0	0	0	3	2.6%	0	0
	Expressing embarrassment.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recognition of imposition	Acknowledging the imposition.	5	4.3%	5	4.3%	2	1.7%	5	4.3%
	Stating the need for the favor.	2	1.7%	2	1.7%	1	0.9%	1	0.9%
	Diminishing the need for the favor.	1	0.9%	2	1.7%	5	4.3%	1	0.9%
Repayment	Offering or promising service, money, food or goods.	0	0	2	1.7%	0	0	0	0
	Indicating his/her indebtedness.	7	6.1%	1	0.9%	0	0	7	6.1%

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	Promising future self-restraint or self-improvement.	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%
Other	Here statement	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	5.2%
	Small talk	0	0	1	0.9%	0	0	0	0
	Leaving-taking	0	0	5	4.3%	0	0	0	0
	Joking	2	1.7%	3	2.6%	1	0.9%	0	0
Alerters	Attention getter	7	6.1%	0	0	6	5.2%	1	0.9%
	Title	1	0.9%	0	0	6	5.2%	1	0.9%
	Name	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2.6%
Total	24	115	100.0 %	11	100.0 %	115	100.0 %	115	100.0 %

From the data shown in Table 1 above, it appears that the participants used fourteen strategies for situation one. The main strategy that is used by 61 (53.0%) of the participants is *"bald thanking or using the word "thank"*. The second strategy is *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"* that is employed by 9 participants (7.8%). While, two strategies are equally preferred by 7 participants (6.1%) for each strategy. They are *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* and *"attention getter"*. Another strategy that is selected by 6 participants (5.2%) is *"thanking and stating the favor"*. In addition, two strategies are *"using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"* and *"acknowledging the imposition"* which are equally used by 5 participants (4.3%) for each one. Only 4 (3.5%) of the participants chose the strategy of *"thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* and 3 participants (2.6%) utilize the strategy of *"using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* to thank their oldest brothers for bringing a bouquet of flowers in their graduation party. Also, three strategies that are equally chosen by 2 participants (1.7%) for each strategy are *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"*, *"stating the need for the favor"* and *"joking"*. The last two strategies are *"diminishing the need for the favor"* and *"title"* that are equally selected by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy.

From the data in Table 1, in situation two, 28 (24.3%) of the participants prefer to thank others by using *"thanking and stating the favor"*. While *"bald thanking or using the word "thank"* is the second most used strategy which is employed by 17 participants (14.8%). Also, 16 participants (13.9%) chose *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"* and 15 participants (13.0%) used *"thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* to thank their uncles for inviting them and for the food. In addition, 9 participants (7.8%) employed *"using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* and 7 participants (6.1%) selected *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"*. Furthermore, two strategies that are equally preferred by 5 participants (4.3%) for each strategy are *"acknowledging the imposition"* and *"leaving-taking"*. Also, *"joking"* is used by 3 participants (2.6%). Other four strategies such as *"using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"*, *"stating the need for the favor"*, *"diminishing the need for the favour"* and *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"* are equally favored by 2 participants (1.7%) for each strategy. The last two strategies like *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* and *"small talk"* are equally employed by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy.

In Table 1 above, in situation three, the most frequently used strategy which is used by 71 participants (61.7%) is "bald thanking or using the word "thank"". The second four strategies that are equally chosen by 6 participants (5.2%) for each strategy are "using the word "appreciate" without elaboration", "using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor", "attention getter" and "title". Only 5 participants (4.3%) favor "diminishing the need for the favor". In addition, two strategies are "thanking and stating the favor" and "expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)" that are equally employed by 4 participants (3.5%) for each strategy. Also, 3 participants (2.6%) used "criticizing or blaming oneself" and 2 participants (1.7%) chose "acknowledging the imposition". The remaining two strategies that are equally used by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy are "stating the need for the favor" and "joking".

As seen that 30 participants (26.1%) chose "thanking and stating the favor" which is the most frequently used strategy in situation four. The second most used strategy is "bald thanking or using the word" which is used by 22 participants (19.1%). "Using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor" is the third most used strategy that is preferred by 20 participants (17.4%). In addition, 9 participants (7.8%) favor "thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor", 7 participants (6.1%) employed "indicating his/her indebtedness", 6 participants (5.2%) select "here statement", 5 participants (4.3%) use "acknowledging the imposition" and 4 participants (3.5%) prefer the strategy of "using the word "appreciate" without elaboration" to appreciate the others. The following strategies: "Expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)" and "name" are equally used by 3 participants (2.6%) for each strategy. Moreover, six strategies such as "using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor", "stating the need for the favor", "diminishing the need for the favor", "promising future self-restraint or self-improvement", "attention getter", and "title" are favored by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy.

4.2. The Strategies of English Expressions of Gratitude as Used by Yemeni EFL Learners with People of Equal Status (Male-Male)

Table 2: Yemeni EFL Learners' Performance with People of Equal Status (M-M)

Main Strategies	Secondary Strategies	Situation (5)		Situation (6)		Situation (7)		Situation (8)	
		F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%
Thanking	Bald thanking or using the word "thank".	32	27.8%	41	35.7%	43	37.4%	27	23.5%
	Thanking and stating the favor.	12	10.4%	13	11.3%	6	5.2%	8	7.0%
	Thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor.	5	4.3%	1	0.9%	4	3.5%	0	0
Appreciation	Using the word "appreciate" without elaboration.	6	5.2%	2	1.7%	8	7.0%	5	4.3%
	Using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor	1	0.9%	3	2.6%	1	0.9%	2	1.7%
Positive feelings	Expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer).	13	11.3%	21	18.3%	14	12.2%	8	7.0%

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	Expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor.	2	1.7%	2	1.7%	3	2.6%	5	4.3%
Apology	Using only apologizing words "sorry" or "apologize".	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	4.3%
	Using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor.	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	7.0%
	Criticizing or blaming oneself.	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%	1	0.9%
	Expressing embarrassment.	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%	1	0.9%
Recognition of imposition	Acknowledging the imposition.	3	2.6%	0	0	5	4.3%	4	3.5%
	Stating the need for the favor.	6	5.2%	3	2.6%	1	0.9%	3	2.6%
	Diminishing the need for the favor.	2	1.7%	0	0	2	1.7%	4	3.5%
Repayment	Offering or promising service, money, food or goods.	12	10.4%	9	7.8%	2	1.7%	18	15.7%
	Indicating his/her indebtedness.	12	10.4%	13	11.3%	5	4.3%	8	7.0%
	Promising future self-restraint or self-improvement.	1	0.9%	0	0	1	0.9%	4	3.5%
Other	Here statement	2	1.7%	3	2.6%	0	0	0	0
	Small talk	0	0	1	0.9%	0	0	0	0
	Leaving-taking	1	0.9%	0	0	1	0.9%	0	0
	Joking	3	2.6%	1	0.9%	2	1.7%	1	0.9%
Alerters	Attention getter	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	13	11.3%	3	2.6%
	Title	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	2	1.7%	0	0
	Name	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	24	115	100.0%	115	100.0%	115	100.0%	115	100.0%

In Table 2, in situation five, it can be observed that there are eighteen strategies are chosen by the participants. 32 (27.8%) of the participants thank others by using "bald thanking or using the word "thank"" which is regarded the most frequent used strategy in this situation. 13 participants (11.3%) chose "expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)". This is the second most used strategy. The third three strategies are "thanking and stating the favor", "offering or promising service, money, food or goods" and "indicating his/her indebtedness" which are equally used by 12 participants (10.4%) for each strategy. "Using the word "appreciate" without elaboration" and "stating the need for the favor" are equally preferred by 6 participants (5.2%) for each strategy. While "thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor" is employed by 5 participants (4.3%). Furthermore, "acknowledging the imposition" and "joking" are favored equally by 3 participants (2.6%) for each strategy. Also, three strategies are equally used by 2 participants (1.7%) for each strategy. They are "expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor", "diminishing the need for the favor" and "here statement" to thank their cousins for a video camera that they lent them in a wedding party. The last four strategies are "using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor", "promising future self-restraint or self-improvement", "leaving-taking", "attention getter" and "title" which are equally used by only 1 participant (0.9%).

As shown in Table 2, in situation six, most of the participants employed "bald thanking or using the word "thank"" that is used by 41 participants (35.7%). While "expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)" is preferred by 21 participants (18.3%). Other two

strategies that are equally favored by 13 participants (11.3%) for each strategy are *"thanking and stating the favor"* and *"indicating his/her indebtedness"*. 9 participants (7.8%) thank others by using *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"*. In addition, three strategies are equally used by 3 participants (2.6%) for each strategy. These strategies are *"using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*, *"stating the need for the favor"* and *"here statement"*. Two strategies are equally chosen by only 2 participants (1.7%) for each strategy which are *"using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"* and *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"*. Also, five strategies are equally favored by only 1 participant (9.0%) for each strategy. They are *"thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*, *"small talk"*, *"joking"*, *"attention getter"* and *"title"*.

In Table 2 above, the participants use nineteen English gratitude expression strategies for situation seven. They use *"bald thanking or using the word "thank""* which is preferred by 43 participants (37.4%). This strategy is the most frequently used one. The next strategy is *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"* which is used by 14 participants (12.2%). The participants use other strategies such as *"attention getter"* which is employed by 13 participants (11.3%), *"using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"* which is employed by 8 participants (7.0%) and *"thanking and stating the favor"* that is chosen by 6 participants (5.2%). Moreover, two strategies like *"acknowledging the imposition"* and *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* are equally selected by 5 participants (4.3%) for each strategy. 4 participants (3.5%) use *"thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* and 3 participants (2.6%) employ *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"*. These four strategies *"diminishing the need for the favor"*, *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"*, *"joking"* and *"title"* are equally favored by 2 (1.7%) of the participants for each strategy. The last six strategies are equally used by 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy. They include *"using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*, *"criticizing or blaming oneself"*, *"expressing embarrassment"*, *"stating the need for the favor"*, *"promising future self-restraint or self-improvement"* and *"leaving-taking"*.

In situation eight, eighteen English gratitude expression strategies are preferred by Yemeni EFL learners. The most frequently used strategy is *"bald thanking or using the word "thank""* which is used by 27 participants (23.5%). The second most used strategy is *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"* that is favored by 18 participants (15.7%). Other four strategies like *"thanking and stating the favor"*, *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"*, *"using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor"* and *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* are preferred equally by 8 participants (7.0%) for each strategy. Other three strategies that are equally employed by 5 participants (4.3%) for each strategy are *"using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"*, *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"* and *"using only apologizing words "sorry" or "apologize""*. Additionally, 4 participants (3.5%) for each strategy equally used three strategies. They are *"acknowledging the imposition"*, *"diminishing the need for the favor"* and *"promising future self-restraint or self-improvement"*. 3 participants (2.6%) for each strategy are equally employed both two strategies *"stating the need for the favor"* and *"attention getter"*. In this situation, another strategy that is chosen by 2 participants (1.7%) is *"using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*. *"Criticizing or blaming*

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oneself", "expressing embarrassment" and "joking" are equally used by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy.

4.3. The Strategies of English Expressions of Gratitude as Used by Yemeni EFL Learners with People of Lower Status (Male-Male).

Table 3: Yemeni EFL Learners' Performance with People of Lower Status (M-M)

Main Strategies	Secondary Strategies	Situation (9)		Situation (10)		Situation (11)		Situation (12)	
		F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%
Thanking	Bald thanking or using the word "thank".	38	33.0%	82	71.3%	81	70.4%	66	57.4%
	Thanking and stating the favor.	14	12.2%	10	8.7%	11	9.6%	14	12.2%
	Thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor.	3	2.6%	2	1.7%	1	0.9%	2	1.7%
Appreciation	Using the word "appreciate" without elaboration.	4	3.5%	3	2.6%	3	2.6%	3	2.6%
	Using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor	5	4.3%	2	1.7%	1	0.9%	0	0
Positive feelings	Expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (<i>hearer</i>).	17	14.8%	6	5.2%	4	3.5%	13	11.3%
	Expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor.	4	3.5%	1	0.9%	2	1.7%	1	0.9%
Apology	Using only apologizing words "sorry" or "apologize".	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor.	2	1.7%	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Criticizing or blaming oneself.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Expressing embarrassment.	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%	0	0
Recognition of imposition	Acknowledging the imposition.	0	0	1	0.9%	0	0	3	2.6%
	Stating the need for the favor.	0	0	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	1	0.9%
	Diminishing the need for the favor.	1	0.9%	0	0	1	0.9%	0	0
Repayment	Offering or promising service, money, food or goods.	13	11.3%	0	0	2	1.7%	3	2.6%

	Indicating his/her indebtedness.	6	5.2%	4	3.5%	2	1.7%	3	2.6%
	Promising future self-restraint or self-improvement.	1	0.9%	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	Here statement	1	0.9%	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%
	Small talk	1	0.9%	0	0	2	1.7%	0	0
	Leaving-taking	0	0	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	0	0
	Joking	2	1.7%	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alerters	Attention getter	2	1.7%	2	1.7%	1	0.9%	2	1.7%
	Title	1	0.9%	0	0	0	0	3	2.6%
	Name	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%	0	0
Total	24	11 5	100.0 %	115	100.0%	115	100.0%	115	100.0%

It is clear from Table 3, in situation nine, that the strategy *"bald thanking or using the word 'thank'"* is used by the highest number of participants 38 (33.0%). *"Expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"* is chosen by 17 participants (14.8%), *"thanking and stating the favor"* is also favored by 14 participants (12.2%) and *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"* is used by 13 participants (11.3%) to express their grateful to others. Moreover, 6 participants (5.2%) preferred *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* and 5 participants (4.3%) selected *"using the word 'appreciate' and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*. Two strategies are *"using the word 'appreciate' without elaboration"* and *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"* which are equally used by 4 participants (3.5%) for each strategy. *"Thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* was chosen by 3 participants (2.6%). In addition to these three strategies *"using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor"*, *"joking"* and *"attention getter"* are equally selected by 2 participants (1.7%) for each strategy. Five strategies are equally preferred by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy. These strategies are *"diminishing the need for the favor"*, *"promising future self-restraint or self-improvement"*, *"here statement"*, *"small talk"* and *"title"*.

Situation ten shows that the most frequently used strategy which is preferred by more than half of the participants, 82 (71.3%) is *"bald thanking or using the word 'thank'"*. The next strategy is *"thanking and stating the favor"* which is used by 10 participants (8.7%). Only 6 participants (5.2%) thanked others by using *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"*, 4 participants (3.5%) chose *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* and 3 participants (2.6%) used *"using the word 'appreciate' without elaboration"*. Three strategies that are equally favoured by 2 participants (1.7%) for each strategy are *"thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*, *"using the word 'appreciate' and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* and *"attention getter"*. The last four strategies that are equally employed by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy are *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"*, *"acknowledging the imposition"*, *"stating the need for the favor"* and *"leaving-taking"*.

According to Table 3 above, situation eleven illustrates that half of the participants, 81 (70.4%) prefer to thank others by using *"bald thanking or using the word 'thank'"*. About 11 participants (9.6%) chose *"thanking and stating the favor"*. About 4 participants (3.5%) use *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"* and about 3 participants (2.6%) select *"using the word 'appreciate' without elaboration"*. In addition, four strategies that are

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equally employed by 2 participants (1.7%) for each strategy are *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"*, *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"*, *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* and *"small talk"*. Moreover, eight strategies are equally used by 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy are *"thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*, *"using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*, *"expressing embarrassment"*, *"stating the need for the favor"*, *"diminishing the need for the favor"*, *"leaving-taking"*, *"attention getter"* and *"name"*.

In situation twelve, the most frequently used strategy is *"bald thanking or using the word "thank""* which is employed by 66 participants (57.4%). The second most used strategy is *"thanking and stating the favor"* which is used by 14 participants (12.2%). The third most strategy that is used by 13 participants (11.3%) is *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"*. Other five strategies: *"Using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"*, *"acknowledging the imposition"*, *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"*, *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* and *"title"* are equally utilized by 3 participants (2.6%) for each strategy. Only 2 participants (1.7%) for each strategy are equally chosen the following strategy: *"Thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* and *"attention getter"*. The last three strategies that are equally preferred by 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy are *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"*, *"stating the need for the favor"* and *"here statement"*.

Furthermore, in all the previous situations (1-12), it can be noticed that in Yemeni culture, the male participants in M-M interactions use new strategies of English expressions of gratitude which do not utilise by English native speakers like (religious semantic formulas) that shows their strong ties with religion. Besides this, they use simple strategies of gratitude to express their thanks to other people. These strategies are as follows:

1. Thanking by stating moral attachments

This strategy includes three types of religious strategies:

(A). Expression of praying for the favor giver (hearer) (*"Allah bless you"*, *"God bless you"*, *"Alhamdulillah, because you are my friend, may God bless you"* and *"Allah save you my father"*).

(B). Expression of asking God (Allah) for rewarding the favor giver (hearer) (*"may Allah help you as you help me"*).

(C). Expression of wishing for something good for the hearer (*"may Allah makes your life with all happiness"*).

2-Appreciation tokens (*"it was a very kind of you, thanks"*, *"thank you from the bottom of my heart"* and *"above my head"*).

3- Silence

This strategy composes of three strategies like:

(A). Thanking and hugging (*"I'll hug him and say thank you daddy"*)

(B). Thanking and kissing (*"I will kiss my father's hand"*).

(C). Thanking and smiling (*"I will give him a wide smile"* and *"I will hug him and smile"*).

4. Request (*"You can take it"* and *"take it"*).

5. Expression of love ("I love you, daddy").

6. Expression of surprising and happiness ("you made my day", "you really surprised me, I am so much proud of you boy" and "pleasure to have friends like you").

4.4. The Strategies of English Expressions of Gratitude as Used by Yemeni EFL Learners with People of Higher Status (Male-Female)

Table 4: Yemeni EFL Learners' Performance with People of Higher Status (M-F)

Main Strategies	Secondary Strategies	Situation (1)		Situation (2)		Situation (3)		Situation (4)	
		F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%
Thanking	Bald thanking or using the word "thank".	63	54.8%	18	15.7%	67	58.3%	27	23.5%
	Thanking and stating the favor.	2	1.7%	16	13.9%	1	0.9%	20	17.4%
	Thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor.	2	1.7%	8	7.0%	0	0	11	9.6%
Appreciation	Using the word "appreciate" without elaboration.	5	4.3%	1	0.9%	3	2.6%	2	1.7%
	Using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor	2	1.7%	5	4.3%	1	0.9%	14	12.2%
Positive feelings	Expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer).	12	10.4%	10	8.7%	13	11.3%	9	7.8%
	Expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor.	8	7.0%	34	29.6%	0	0	1	0.9%
Apology	Using only apologizing words "sorry" or "apologize".	0	0	1	0.9%	0	0	0	0
	Using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor.	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%	4	3.5%
	Criticizing or blaming oneself.	0	0	0	0	2	1.7%	0	0
	Expressing embarrassment.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recognition of imposition	Acknowledging the imposition.	6	5.2%	3	2.6%	3	2.6%	3	2.6%
	Stating the need for the favor.	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	5	4.3%	2	1.7%
	Diminishing the need for the favor.	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	4	3.5%	1	0.9%
Repayment	Offering or promising service, money, food or goods.	0	0	3	2.6%	0	0	2	1.7%
	Indicating his/her indebtedness.	4	3.5%	2	1.7%	0	0	7	6.1%
	Promising future self-restraint or self-improvement.	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%
Other	Here statement	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	6.1%
	Small talk	0	0	1	0.9%	0	0	0	0
	Leaving-taking	0	0	4	3.5%	0	0	0	0
	Joking	1	0.9%	5	4.3%	1	0.9%	0	0
Alerters	Attention getter	8	7.0%	2	1.7%	7	6.1%	1	0.9%
	Title	0	0	0	0	6	5.2%	0	0
	Name	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%	3	2.6%
Total	24	11	100.0	115	100.0	115	100.0	11	100.0
		5	%		%		%	5	%

In Table 4, in situation one, it notices that 63 participants (54.8%) express thanking for their oldest sisters for bringing a bouquet of flowers in their graduation party by using "bald thanking or using the word "thank"" and this is the highest number of the participants. The next strategy that is used by 12 participants (10.4%) is "expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)". The third two strategies are "expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor" and "attention getter" that are equally selected by 8 participants (7.0%) for each strategy. In the same situation, "acknowledging the imposition" is employed by 6 participants (5.2%), "using the word "appreciate" without elaboration" is chosen by 5 participants (4.3%) and "indicating his/her indebtedness" is also favored by 4 participants (3.5%). Additionally, three strategies that are equally used by 2 (1.7%) of the participants for each strategy are "thanking

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and stating the favor", "thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor" and "using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor". While, "stating the need for the favor", "diminishing the need for the favor" and "joking" are employed by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy.

In situation two, the most frequently used strategy is "expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor" that is employed by 34 (29.6%) of the participants. The second most used strategy which is used by 18 participants (15.7%) is "bald thanking or using the word "thank"". "Thanking and stating the favor" is chosen by 16 participants (13.9%), "expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)" is favored by 10 participants (8.7%) and "thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor" is favored by 8 participants (7.0%). "Using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor" and "joking" are preferred equally by only 5 participants (4.3%) for each strategy. 4 participants (3.5%) select "leaving-taking". Moreover, two strategies like "acknowledging the imposition" and "offering or promising service, money, food or goods" are equally used by only 3 participants (2.6%) for each strategy. Also, "indicating his/her indebtedness" and "attention getter" are equally preferred by 2 participants (1.7%) for each strategy. Five strategies such as "using the word "appreciate" without elaboration", "using only apologizing for words "sorry" or "apologize"", "stating the need for the favor", "diminishing the need for the favor" and "small talk" are equally utilized by 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy.

It can be noticed, in situation three. The highest strategy which is used by 67 participants (58.3%) is "bald thanking or using the word "thank"". The second strategy that is preferred by 13 participants (11.3%) is "expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)". While "attention getter" is employed by 7 participants (6.1%). There are other strategies like "title" which is favored by 6 participants (5.2%), "stating the need for the favor" that is chosen by 5 participants (4.3%) and "diminishing the need for the favor" that is employed by 4 participants (3.5%). Additionally, "using the word "appreciate" without elaboration" and "acknowledging the imposition" are favored by 3 participants (2.6%) for each strategy. The strategy that is favored by 2 participants (1.7%) is "criticizing or blaming oneself". Finally, "thanking and stating the favor", "using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor", "using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor", "joking" and "name" are equally selected by only 1 participant (0.9%).

Situation four in Table 4, illustrates that seventeen strategies are preferred by male and female Yemeni EFL learners. About 27 (23.5%) of the participants thank their parents by using "bald thanking or using the word "thank"". "Thanking and stating the favor" is used by 20 participants (17.4%), whereas, "using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor" is favored by 14 participants (12.2 %). Also, "thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor" is employed by 11 participants (9.6%) and "expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)" is chosen by 9 participants (7.8%). Besides this, two strategies are equally preferred by 7 participants (6.1%) for each strategy. They are "indicating his/her indebtedness" and "here statement". Another strategy that is used by 4 participants (3.5%) is "using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor". While, "acknowledging the imposition" and "name" are favored by 3 participants (2.6%) for

each strategy. Also, these three strategies "using the word "appreciate" without elaboration", "stating the need for the favor" and "offering or promising service, money, food or goods" are equally chosen by 2 participants (1.7%) for each strategy. These last four strategies like "expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor", "diminishing the need for the favor", "promising future self-restraint or self-improvement" and "attention getter" are equally used by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each one.

4.5. The Strategies of English Expressions of Gratitude as Used by Yemeni EFL Learners with People of Equal Status (Male-Female).

Table 5: Yemeni EFL Learners' Performance with People of Equal Status (M-F)

Main Strategies	Secondary Strategies	Situation (5)		Situation (6)		Situation (7)		Situation (8)	
		F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%
Thanking	Bald thanking or using the word "thank".	47	40.9%	53	46.1%	44	38.3%	32	27.8%
	Thanking and stating the favor.	12	10.4%	12	10.4%	5	4.3%	10	8.7%
	Thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor.	2	1.7%	3	2.6%	4	3.5%	0	0
Appreciation	Using the word "appreciate" without elaboration.	6	5.2%	6	5.2%	7	6.1%	8	7.0%
	Using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor	0	0	4	3.4%	1	0.9%	5	4.3%
Positive feelings	Expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer).	12	10.4%	10	8.7%	11	9.6%	7	6.1%
	Expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor.	1	0.9%	3	2.6%	7	6.1%	4	3.5%
Apology	Using only apologizing words "sorry" or "apologize".	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3.5%
	Using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor.	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3.5%
	Criticizing or blaming oneself.	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%	1	0.9%
	Expressing embarrassment.	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%	3	2.6%
Recognition of imposition	Acknowledging the imposition.	3	2.6%	3	2.6%	4	3.5%	6	5.2%
	Stating the need for the favor.	6	5.2%	3	2.6%	0	0	3	2.6%
	Diminishing the need for the favor.	1	0.9%	0	0	4	3.5%	5	4.3%
Repayment	Offering or promising service, money, food or goods.	11	9.6%	3	2.6%	0	0	9	7.8%
	Indicating his/her indebtedness.	11	9.6%	10	8.7%	7	6.1%	2	1.7%
	Promising future self-restraint or self-improvement.	0	0	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	7	6.1%
Other	Here statement	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	0	0	0	0
	Small talk	0	0	1	0.9%	3	2.6%	0	0
	Leaving-taking	1	0.9%	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Joking	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	2	1.7%	2	1.7%
Alerters	Attention getter	0	0	1	0.9%	12	10.4%	3	2.6%
	Title	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%	0	0
	Name	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	24	115	100.0%	115	100.0%	115	100.0%	115	100.0%

In Table 5, most of the participants in situation five use "bald thanking or using the word "thank"" that is employed by 47 participants (40.9%).12 participants (10.4%) for each strategy prefer equally to express their grateful to others by using "thanking and stating the favor" and "expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)". 11 participants (9.6%) for each

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strategy choose equally *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"* and *"indicating his/her indebtedness"*. Also, 6 participants (5.2%) for each strategy used equally *"using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"* and *"stating the need for the favor"*. Other different strategies like *"acknowledging the imposition"* that is favored by 3 participants (2.6%) and *"thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* that is chosen by 2 participants (1.7%). The remaining five strategies that are equally used by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy are *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"*, *"diminishing the need for the favor"*, *"here statement"*, *"leaving-taking"* and *"joking"*.

The previous Table 5, shows that in situation six, the most frequently used strategy that is selected by 53 participants (46.1%) is *"bald thanking or using the word "thank" "*. The second most used strategy that is used by 12 participants (10.4%) is *"thanking and stating the favor"*. In this situation, *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"* and *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* are equally employed by 10 participants (8.7%) for each strategy. *"Using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"* is also chosen by 6 participants (5.2%) and *"using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* is favored by 4 participants (3.5%). Moreover, these five strategies are *"thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*, *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"*, *"acknowledging the imposition"*, *"stating the need for the favor"* and *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"* are equally preferred by only 3 participants (2.6%) for each strategy. Also, the other five strategies are equally selected by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy. They are *"promising future self-restraint or self-improvement"*, *"here statement"*, *"small talk"*, *"joking"* and *"attention getter"*.

In situation seven, the main strategy which is used by 44 participants (38.3%) is *"bald thanking or using the word "thank" "*. The rest of the participants use different strategies. For instance, 12 participants (10.4%) select *"attention getter"* and 11 participants (9.6%) employ *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"*. These three strategies *"using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"*, *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"* and *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* are equally favored by 7 participants (6.1%) for each strategy. This strategy *"thanking and stating the favor"* is chosen by 5 participants (4.3). Also, three strategies which are equally used by 4 participants (3.5%) for each strategy are *"thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*, *"acknowledging the imposition"* and *"diminishing the need for the favor"*. *"Small talk"* is favored by 3 participants (2.6%) and *"joking"* is also preferred by 2 participants (1.7%). The last five strategies are *"using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*, *"criticizing or blaming oneself"*, *"expressing embarrassment"*, *"promising future self-restraint or self-improvement"* and *"title"* that is equally used by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy.

For situation eight, it appears that *"bald thanking or using the word "thank" "* is preferred by 32 (27.8%) of the participants. *"Thanking and stating the favor"* is used by 10 participants (8.7%), while 9 participants (7.8%) thank others by using the strategy of *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"* and about 8 participants (7.0%) express their appreciation for others by using *"using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"*. Two strategies that are equally chosen by 7 participants (6.1%) for each strategy are *"expressing a positive reaction to the*

favor giver (hearer)" and "promising future self-restraint or self-improvement". 6 participants (5.2%) employ "acknowledging the imposition". Furthermore, 5 participants (4.3%) for each strategy are equally used "using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor" and "diminishing the need for the favor". 4 participants (3.5%) for each strategy are equally favored three strategies "expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor", "using only apologizing words "sorry" or "apologize" and "using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor" and 3 participants (2.6%) for each strategy are equally employed these three strategies "expressing embarrassment", "stating the need for the favor" and "attention getter". Also, "indicating his/her indebtedness" and "joking are equally preferred by 2 participants (1.7%) for each strategy. While the last strategy that is used by only 1 participant (0.9%) is "criticizing or blaming oneself".

4.6. The Strategies of English Expressions of Gratitude as Used by Yemeni EFL Learners with People of Lower Status (Male-Female).

Table 6: Yemeni EFL Learners' Performance with People of Lower Status (M-F)

Main Strategies	Secondary Strategies	Situation (9)		Situation (10)		Situation (11)		Situation (12)	
		F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%
Thanking	Bald thanking or using the word "thank".	39	33.9 %	84	73.0 %	78	67.8%	59	51.3%
	Thanking and stating the favor.	16	13.9 %	13	11.3 %	7	6.1%	16	13.9%
	Thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor.	4	3.5%	0	0	1	0.9%	1	0.9%
Appreciation	Using the word "appreciate" without elaboration.	4	3.5%	6	5.2%	6	5.2%	6	5.2%
	Using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor	8	7.0%	0	0	3	2.6%	2	1.7%
Positive feelings	Expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer).	14	12.2 %	3	2.6%	5	4.3%	8	7.0%
	Expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor.	0	0	2	1.7%	4	3.5%	2	1.7%
Apology	Using only apologizing words "sorry" or "apologize".	1	0.9%	0	0	1	0.9%	0	0
	Using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor.	1	0.9%	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Criticizing or blaming oneself.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Expressing embarrassment.	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%	1	0.9%
Recognition of imposition	Acknowledging the imposition.	1	0.9%	3	2.6%	1	0.9%	4	3.5%
	Stating the need for the favor.	3	2.6%	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	1	0.9%
	Diminishing the need for the favor.	1	0.9%	0	0	1	0.9%	0	0
Repayment	Offering or promising service, money, food or goods.	8	7.0%	1	0.9%	2	1.7%	4	3.5%
	Indicating his/her indebtedness.	7	6.1%	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	5	4.3%
	Promising future self-restraint or self-improvement.	2	1.7%	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	Here statement	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%
	Small talk	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	1	0.9%	0	0
	Leaving-taking	1	0.9%	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Joking	3	2.6%	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alerters	Attention getter	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%	3	2.6%
	Title	1	0.9%	0	0	1	0.9%	2	1.7%
	Name	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	24	115	100.0 %	115	100.0 %	115	100.0 %	11 5	100.0 %

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Table 6, clarifies that in situation nine, about 39 participants (33.9%) thank their students for fixing their computers by using the strategy of *"bald thanking or using the word "thank"*", about 16 participants (13.9%) used *"thanking and stating the favor"* and about 14 participants (12.2%) employ *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"*. *"Using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* and *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"* are equally favored by 8 participants (7.0%) for each strategy. Other strategies like *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* which is favored by 7 participants (6.1%). *"Thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* and *"using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"* that are equally chosen by 4 participants (3.5%). Additionally, *"stating the need for the favor"* and *"joking"* are equally employed by 3 participants (2.6%) for each strategy. *"Promising future self-restraint or self-improvement"* is also used by 2 participants (1.7%). The last seven strategies like *"using only apologizing words "sorry" or "apologize"*", *"using apologizing words sorry or apologize and stating the favor"*, *"acknowledging the imposition"*, *"diminishing the need for the favor"*, *"small talk"*, *"leaving-taking"* and *"title"* are equally preferred by 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy.

It is clear that in situation ten, more than half of the participants, 84 (73.0%) thank others for telling them the direction to the dean's office by using the strategy of *"bald thanking or using the word "thank"*". 13 participants (11.3%) prefer *"thanking and stating the favor"* and also, 6 participants (5.2%) choose *"using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"*. Besides this, there are two strategies like *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"* and *"acknowledging the imposition"* are equally used by 3 participants (2.6%) for each strategy. Also, *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"* is selected by 2 participants (1.7%). Moreover, the other four strategies which are equally employed by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy are *"stating the need for the favor"*, *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"*, *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* and *"small talk"*.

In situation eleven, it can be observed that male and female Yemeni EFL Learners prefer to use *"bald thanking or using the word "thank"*" which is used by 78 participants (67.8%). Other strategies such as *"thanking and stating the favor"* that is employed by 7 participants (6.1%), *"using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"* is preferred by 6 participants (5.2%), *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"* is used by 5 participants (4.3%) and *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"* is selected by 4 participants (3.5%). In addition, about 3 participants (2.6%) chose *"using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"* and about 2 participants (1.7%) favor *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"*. Moreover, the remaining ten strategies like *"thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*, *"using only apologizing for words "sorry" or "apologize"*", *"expressing embarrassment"*, *"acknowledging the imposition"*, *"stating the need for the favor"*, *"diminishing the need for the favor"*, *"indicating his/her indebtedness"*, *"small talk"*, *"attention getter"* and *"title"* are equally chosen by only 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy.

The most frequently used strategy in situation twelve is *"bald thanking or using the word "thank"*" which is preferred by 59 participants (51.3%). The second strategy is *"thanking and stating the favor"* which is used by 16 participants (13.9%). While the third strategy is *"expressing a positive reaction to the favor giver (hearer)"* that is chosen by 8 participants (7.0%). The fourth strategy is *"using the word "appreciate" without elaboration"* that is used

by 6 participants (5.2%). The fifth strategy is *"indicating his/her indebtedness"* which is favored by 5 participants (4.3%). Additionally, *"acknowledging the imposition"* and *"offering or promising service, money, food or goods"* are equally employed by 4 participants (3.5%) for each strategy. 3 participants (2.6%) express their thanking to others by *"attention getter"*. These three strategies *"using the word "appreciate" and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*, *"expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favor"* and *"title"* are equally favored by 2 participants (1.7%) for each strategy. These last four strategies *"thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favor"*, *"expressing embarrassment"*, *"stating the need for the favor"* and *"here statement"* are equally used by 1 participant (0.9%) for each strategy.

Moreover, in all these situations (1-12), it can be observed that in a Yemeni culture, the male participants in M-F interactions employ new strategies of English expressions of gratitude that do not used by English native speakers like (religious semantic formulas). This clarifies their strong ties with religion. In addition, they favor simple strategies to express their thankfulness to others. These strategies are as follows:

1. Thanking by stating moral attachments

This strategy is one of the most commonly used category in Yemeni culture. It contains three types of religious strategies:

(A). Expression of praying for the favor giver (hearer) (*"Allah keep you my mother"* and *"God keeps you to me"*).

(B). Expression of asking God (Allah) for rewarding the favor giver (hearer) (*"Allah will reward you"*).

(C). Expression of wishing for something good for the hearer (*"Allah give you happiness"* and *"may Allah makes you happy in your whole life"*).

2-Appreciation tokens (*"I am fond of flowers a lot, thank you"* and *"thank you my sister"*).

3- Silence

This strategy includes two strategies such as:

(A). Thanking and kissing (*"thank her and kiss her head"* and *"I'll kiss her hand"*).

(B). Thanking and smiling (*"smile and say thanks"*).

4. Request (*"you can take it"* and *"take it"*).

5. Expression of surprising and happiness (*"I am so happy for helping me"* and *"I am so glad because you helped me"*).

5. CONCLUSION

Generally, the results of this study indicate that the male participants in M-M and M-F interactions use twenty-four English expressions of gratitude for twelve situations with different in frequencies and percentages, but the most frequent preferred strategy by all the participants in all gratitude situations is *"bald thanking or using the word "thank"'*. Also, the data of the actual study show that the second most frequently used strategy is *"positive feelings"* which is selected by the male participants in M-M and M-F interactions to express the speakers their thankfulness to the hearers of different statuses and in order to maintain the relationship between them. It is the expected behavior in Yemeni culture to illustrate solidarity, familiarity/closeness or friendship with each other. Therefore, they prefer to use *"positive feelings"* to make acceptable gratitude. Also, the participants tend to use more positive reactions towards either their hearers or actions done. It appears that Yemeni male speakers employ *"repayment"* as the third most frequently used strategy due to their nature which tends to be more appreciative. This strategy is used by the male participants in M-M and M-F

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interactions, especially when the speaker of a lower or equal position thanks people of a higher or an equal position. One respectful way in the Yemeni culture is to acknowledge the need for the favor in order to satisfy others and maintain the harmony with each other, and also to avoid direct thanking, because they believe that the use of this strategy is enough to express gratitude to the hearer.

Furthermore, according to the results obtained from the present study, it can be noticed that the most frequently used strategies are (*thanking, positive feeling, repayment, appreciation and recognition of imposition*) which are chosen by the male participants in M-M and M-F interactions to thank others. While the rest of the English expressions of gratitude are utilized with a low frequency or amount by all groups. On the other hand, it can be noticed that the male participants in M-M interactions employ English expressions of gratitude with higher percentages than in M-F interactions. Moreover, it was expected that male participants would use lower percentages than female participants, but it is the contrary because men in Yemeni society can express thanking and behave more freely than women. Finally, the results reveal that the participants' lack of knowledge about using various types of English expressions of gratitude that are affected their usage of English gratitude expression strategies. This happens because they have never heard of these strategies, so they are unable to use them successfully and appropriately.

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