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Letter from the Editor

We are very delighted to introduce the first issue of the International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation (IJLLT) to academic researchers around the globe. The main goal of IJLLT is to expand our circle of readers and contributors and generate new knowledge about English language, linguistics, literature, culture and translation as well as English teaching and learning all over the world. We emphasize that IJLLT is a journal open to all scholars regardless of their religion, or background. It is our hope that you will take this opportunity to notify other scholars and researchers at your institution of our presence.

International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation (IJLLT) is a double-blind peer reviewed open access journal. It aims to provide a high-level platform for academic researchers, scholars and practitioners all over the world to share latest findings, views, ideas, information and academic experiences in the form of written scholarly articles. Authors are encouraged to submit novel locally-and globally-oriented original and unpublished research papers covering all areas of linguistics, literature and translation. We are non-profit, and seek to collect and disseminate information and research on new trends of linguistics, literature and translation. IJLLT publishes Original articles, Research articles, Reviews articles, Mini-reviews, Case reports, Commentaries, Editorials, Letters to Editor, Short reports, as well MA and
PhD theses. Special Issues devoted to important topics in linguistics, literature and translation will occasionally be published.

It is our mission with IJLLT to spread new knowledge about linguistics, literature and translation throughout the entire world and to focus on promoting research among scholars and academic researchers. IJLLT is striving to provide the best platform for researchers and scholars worldwide to disseminate their latest research results and exchange views on future research.

We recognize that our mission is a challenging one, and we will need all possible support from colleagues at all levels, including universities, public and private research centers, institutions and learning centers. We welcome you all to IJLLT and encourage you to share your experiences and insights.

Kind Regards,

IJLLT Editor-in-Chief
ABSTRACT
This study attempts to delineate the socio-pragmatic functions of the exchanged speeches in marital engagements in North Jordan in light of politeness and face management notions. It also intends to examine the relationship between the linguistic etiquette expressions exchanged on marital engagement and certain variables such as age, literacy, sociocultural, and socioeconomic factors. A handful of recorded speech events on marital engagement were collected from different parts in North Jordan alongside some notes. These recordings and notes are transliterated and translated into English. Next, the data are analyzed in terms of an appropriate socio-pragmatic account.

The study came up with the following conclusions concerning the linguistic components of the speech events of marital engagement. These include greeting, complimenting, requesting, using relevant religious texts, honorifics, expressions of solidarity, and expressions of camaraderie. These linguistic components constitute the linguistic etiquette norms, and they are intended to express positive politeness and positive face. Moreover, all these components are used to show consideration, regard, and respect between the interlocutors in the marital speech events in North Jordan. Furthermore, the findings show that variables such as age, literacy, socioeconomic, and sociocultural factors strongly affect the process of selecting the interlocutors who are authorized to talk on behalf of the girl's and the man's families. These variables are based on deference, respect, and veneration.

KEYWORDS: Linguistic Etiquette; Politeness; Face; Speech Acts; Socio-pragmatic functions

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Subject/major: Linguistics
Institution: Department of English, Yarmouk University, Jordan
Degree: MA
Year of award: 2009
Supervisor: Dr. Sayyah Al-Ahmad
Yarmouk University
Department of English

A Socio-pragmatic Study of Speeches Delivered on Marital Engagement Occasions in North Jordan

A Thesis
Submitted to the Deanship of Graduate Studies and Academic Research in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Masters Degree in Linguistics, at the Department of English and Literature

By: Mustafa Mohammad Al Qudah

Supervisor: Dr. Sayyah Al-Ahmad

November 2009
Yarmouk University

The Deanship of Graduate Studies and Academic Research
Department of English

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(Professor of Linguistics)

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(Associate Professor of Linguistics)

Dr. Mohammed Shunnaq
(Associate Professor of Cultural Anthropology)
Dedication

To my parents

To my supervisor Dr. Sayyah Al Ahmad

To my brothers and sisters, especially Fighter Pilot Ahmad Al Qudah
To my brothers-in-law Zaid Al Qudah and Muheeb Al Momany

To all my colleagues and friends
I dedicate this work
Acknowledgement

I would like to express my profound gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Sayyah Al Ahmad for his tremendous efforts which he exerted in having this work come into being. I would like to thank Dr. Sayyah for his tolerance, patience, support and encouragement in commenting on and modifying meticulously this work.

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I am very grateful to my colleagues Mr. Oqab Shwashreh and Mr. Hesham Al Damen for their continual and benevolent encouragement.
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### Arabic Reading Conventions

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<td>y as in ع</td>
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<tr>
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<td>u/ as in yaktub</td>
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Abstract

Al-Qudah, Mustafa Mohammad

A Socio-pragmatic Study of Speeches Delivered on Marital Engagement Occasions in North Jordan.

Masters of Linguistics, Department of the English Language and Literature

Yarmouk University, 2009

(Supervisor: Dr. Sayyah Al Ahmad)

This study attempts to delineate the socio-pragmatic functions of the exchanged speeches in marital engagements in North Jordan in light of politeness and face management notions. It also intends to examine the relationship between the linguistic etiquette expressions exchanged on marital engagement and certain variables such as age, literacy, sociocultural, and socioeconomic factors. A handful of recorded speech events on marital engagement were collected from different parts in North Jordan alongside some notes. These recordings and notes are transliterated and translated into English. Next, the data are analyzed in terms of an appropriate socio-pragmatic account.

The study came up with the following conclusions concerning the linguistic components of the speech events of marital engagement. These include greeting, complimenting, requesting, using relevant religious texts,
honorifics, expressions of solidarity, and expressions of camaraderie. These linguistic components constitute the linguistic etiquette norms, and they are intended to express positive politeness and positive face. Moreover, all these components are used to show consideration, regard, and respect between the interlocutors in the marital speech events in North Jordan. Furthermore, the findings show that variables such as age, literacy, socioeconomic, and sociocultural factors strongly affect the process of selecting the interlocutors who are authorized to talk on behalf of the girl's and the man's families. These variables are based on deference, respect, and veneration.

**Key Words:** Linguistic Etiquette; Politeness; Face; Speech Acts; Socio-pragmatic functions
Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Theoretical Background

Jordanian speech constitutes a fertile area of linguistic phenomena that easily lend themselves to linguistic research. In fact, many studies have been conducted on Jordanian speech in terms of speech acts, phonological systems, speech sounds variations, and syntactic patterns as well as pragmatic and sociolinguistic functions.

To begin with, it is worth defining the term 'Sociolinguistics'. Trudgill (1974) and Wardhaugh (1986) define sociolinguistics as the study of language in terms of sociology. That is, the study of language within social situations and contexts. Moreover, they have been concerned with investigating the relationships between language and society, and how languages function in communication and social interactions. Hence, the study of language is vital to the study of society and they are inseparable. Sociolinguistics provides a straightforward account of these phenomena concerning the appropriateness of language use in different social occasions and situations.

One important aspect of sociolinguistics is the study of linguistic etiquette. Al–Hassan (1991:74) defined linguistic etiquette as "a social contract monitoring and regulating verbal behavior ". In other words, there
are certain rules and norms governing the use of language at a certain stage of whatever oral interactions occurring among people. This, in turn, correlates to another discipline of study, which is 'Pragmatics'.

Basically, Pragmatics is the study of situational meanings. Leech (1983:x) provided a rough definition of this term as "Pragmatics can be usefully defined as the study of how utterances have meanings in situations." Davis(1991: 3), based on Morris’s early work(1972), defines pragmatics as “the study of the relation of linguistic units to their users”. These definitions show that the condition, the circumstances of the interlocutors, and the kind of language they perform are interrelated. That is, language changes according to a change in the speakers’ surroundings. Thus, the choice of certain words, sentences, or even speech acts depends primarily on the interlocutors themselves.

1.2 Cultural Background

Happy social occasions in Jordan can be studied from a linguistic perspective because they contain various forms of speech acts, such as congratulations, compliments, greetings, and requests. Wedding parties are occasions of prime importance in Jordanian society. Marital engagements have special ceremonies that distinguish them from other occasions. The process starts when a young man and a young girl get acquainted and are willing to marry each other. The man asks his parents and sisters to visit the girl’s parents’ house to ask for her hand. Once she and her parents accept
the proposal, both parties agree on the time and date of the engagement ceremony. In their turn, the young man and his parents start to prepare for that day. They invite relatives and friends to go with them to the woman’s house in a procession to ask for her hand from her parents (i.e. her nuclear family) and then from her bigger family (i.e. the extended family) in a ritual known as "Jaha".

Similarly, the girl’s parents invite their relatives and friends and gather in their house to receive the ‘Jaha’. Each of the young man’s family and the girl’s family select a person, usually a notable eloquent man to represent each party in the engagement rituals. When the ‘Jaha’ arrives at the girl’s house, they are received and welcomed warmly and politely by the girl's family and friends. The rituals begin when the man’s representative speaks on his behalf. The latter starts his speech with verses from the Holy Qur'an which bless and encourage Muslims' marriage. Then, he uses certain social etiquette expressions ending up with asking the girl's family to honor the ‘Jaha’ by accepting the engagement proposal. The girl's family representative, in turn, welcomes the 'Jaha' by using certain etiquette expressions, concluding with accepting the marriage or the engagement proposal. After that, the girl’s representative asks the ‘Jaha’ to drink the coffee that they previously had postponed to drink until their request is accepted.

The speech event of asking for the girl's hand has various
linguistic dimensions and aspects respectively, in that it includes various components in one speech event. First of all, the setting where this speech event takes place, which includes the time and place of its occurrence. The time is usually agreed upon by the two families involved in the engagement occasion in advance. It is mostly in the afternoon or in the evening, but neither in the early morning or at midnight. Apart from that, the engagement frequently takes place in a large common hall called 'di:wa:n' or 'maða:fah', which is used to host the sad and happy occasions of the tribes concerned, or sometimes outdoor in a tent meant for such kinds of occasions. The interlocutors along with other members of the "jaha" sit in rows of chairs facing one another. The representatives of each tribe are very often seated facing one another.

The representatives of each tribe are traditionally selected prior to the engagement events, and in some cases as the engagement speech commences. The selection is not arbitrary, but rather there are certain factors such as age, literacy, sociocultural, and socioeconomic which govern the whole process. The suitor's tribe agrees on whom to speak or who is in charge of making the request. Similarly, the counterpart tribe agrees on whom to accept the marriage offer (i.e. the reply). The condition that the two parties bear in mind while selecting their representatives, is the
representatives' ability to maintain and preserve their positive face before the others. (cf. Brown and Levinson 1978).

After that, the speech act of requesting the girl's hand is initiated, and the interlocutors take turns in exchanging the speeches in a (i.e. the first starts his talk and the second replies to him.) According to (Levinson 1983), two speakers exchange tokens but without any possibility of overlap. Their speeches are loaded with linguistic etiquette which is intended to express politeness. The speech event starts mostly with greeting formulas, followed by compliment formulas, and is ended up with a polite request. The counterpart response usually starts with a reply to the greeting, complimenting, and ends up with accepting the offer of the engagement proposal.

Finally, these speeches are expressed and exchanged in light of the Jordanian traditions and habits, and the act of violating these traditions and habits is condemned by all Jordanains. In their speeches, the interlocutors in both parties exchange certain kinds of expressions which display some kind of sociolinguistic etiquette, deference, and veneration.

As far as the speech event of marital engagement is concerned, politeness and face management are socio-pragmatic notions related to linguistic etiquette and are often restored on such occasions. Furthermore, the other speech acts such as greeting, complimenting, and requesting are
exchanged in a girl's engagement. These speech acts can be the linguistic etiquette devices which the interlocutors should master.

These acts might have pragmatic and social meanings which are intended to express solidarity and friendliness, or to seek acceptance from the girl's family. The pragmatic functions of asking for the hand of a girl can show consideration and appreciation between the two parties and their representatives in terms of politeness and face management.

This study is intended to examine politeness and face as socio-pragmatic aspects of the linguistic etiquette and the role of other different variables such as age, literacy, sociocultural and socioeconomic status of the speakers who are chosen to speak on behalf of the parties concerned in marital engagement occasions in North Jordan.

1.3 Statement of the Problem
Due to the variety of the linguistic etiquette devices which are expressed through various linguistic components, namely, speech acts, the speech event of engagement in North Jordan is loaded extensively with these etiquette devices that hardly exist in in any other different forms of interactions. These polite formulas constitute an area of study, since they have not been investigated with a linguistic study previously. The highly polite forms of speech events are to be tackled into a socio-pragmatic study in order to give an appropriate linguistic account of them with relation to the social contexts within which they are expressed. Moreover, the effect of
the cultural norms on the various linguistic etiquette devices and the polite formulas lends itself to a socio-pragmatic analysis in the relevant speech events of engagement.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to examine the linguistic etiquette components of the speech events of engagement in terms of etiquette and politeness norms. In addition, it attempts to examine the relationship between the kind of the linguistic etiquette devices exchanged on marital engagement occasions in North Jordan and the age, literacy, sociocultural and socioeconomic background of the speakers who are chosen by the parties concerned to represent them in asking for a girl's hand and responding to the marriage proposal.

1.5 Research Questions

This study addresses the following questions:

1- What are the linguistic etiquette devices exchanged on the speeches of marital engagements? And what socio-pragmatic functions do they entail?

2- What role do age, literacy, and socioeconomic and sociocultural factors play in the selection of the speakers who are authorized to speak on behalf of the girl's family and the man's family in the speech events of marital engagement?

1.6 Significance of the Study
Engagements in Jordan are happy occasions during which important discourse is exchanged between representatives of the man's and the girl's families (tribes). In addition, the language of this discourse contains a large number of specific linguistic features that are worth investigating. Since no studies, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, have been conducted on this kind of discourse, the present study attempts to fill in the gap. Hence, this thesis is deemed significant. Therefore, the study contributes to the field of socio-pragmatics in that it provides a new linguistic account of the forms and pragmatic functions of linguistic etiquette, which is expressed on engagement occasions in North Jordan.
Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

2.1 Studies on Linguistic Etiquette

First of all, it is worth reviewing some studies conducted on various linguistic etiquette features in different languages all over the world. Linguistic etiquette includes the speech acts which are governed by its norms.

Collier's Encyclopedia (1978: 361) defined etiquette as "the manners and forms prescribed by custom, usage, authority and accepted, when people deal with each other, as correct or proper behavior. The purpose of etiquette is to assert and preserve for the rights and dignities of others."

Geertz(1972) carried out a study in Java examining the use of honorifics as a form of linguistic etiquette. He (1972:67) defined honorifics as "forms of linguistic etiquette: honorifics that modulate two style levels, high and low". Both styles are used to address the Javanese people in terms of appropriateness (i.e. the form of address that should match with the type of honorifics that goes with it). One can use high honorifics to address prestigious people. He (1972:173) pointed out that "politeness is something one directs towards others; one surrounds the other with a wall of behavioral formality which protects the stability of his inner life." Yet, he tried, through examples from the Javanese society, to make a relationship
between politeness and linguistic etiquette. He stated that politeness is a function of linguistic etiquette and always determines the use of the appropriate honorifics of address.

Al-Hassan (1991) examined the forms of speech at Jordanian shops in terms of an embedded discipline of linguistic etiquette. Through a process of corpus transactions and recordings, he managed to record real life data of the possible speech acts components in buying and selling. These are "greetings on arrival, enquiring about the availability of goods, and ordering and paying and leave taking" (p.33).

He maintained that "these verbal transactions are not all arbitrary; rather they are governed by some binding, albeit unwritten, socio-cultural norms of etiquette." Based on this, he defined etiquette as "a social contract monitoring and regulating verbal behavior". (ibid: 47)

In his thesis, Rababa’h (1994) examined the linguistic etiquette patterns and strategies expressed among visitors and their hosts in Irbid province. He gathered and transcribed more than one hundred conversations between people. He considered the data in terms of Brown and Levinson's (1978) politeness and face management theories and Grice’s (1975) maxims of conversation features. His study was based on the subsequent occurrence of six speech acts in a conversation. These are: greetings upon arrival, asking about each other's health, domestic small talks, asking for something (requesting), favor asking and the purpose of
the visit, and leave taking. The study tackled these speech acts in terms of various factors such as, age, sex, and the status of the hearers. In his study, Rababa’h investigated the rules of linguistic etiquette and politeness in their naturally occurring settings. He also identified some face threatening acts, namely, turn-taking and interruption that could affect the hearer or the addressee negatively.

Finally, Rababa’h (1994: 98-104) concluded with the following. First, there is a relationship between the selection of certain greeting formulas and the sociocultural or socioreligious factors (i.e. which are connected to religion, namely Islam), and other variables such as age, sex, and the level of closeness between the interlocutors. Second, males use more courteous greeting formulas than females, so do old people (males or females). Moreover, the study revealed that compliments have special effects on the hearers in that they emphasize solidarity and gain the addressees’ considerations and venerations. In terms of requests, females usually adhere to linguistic etiquette rules more than males. The study also showed that there is a difference between favor asking and requesting. To conclude, the study maintained that Jordanian people are in conformity with Brown and Levinson's (1978) theory of politeness and various forms of interactions.

Winter (1996) carried out a study examining the linguistic advice given to American English Speakers in etiquette manuals. He also argued
for the fact that people are very much concerned with the linguistic styles in their interactions. Besides, they all follow rules of linguistic etiquette, and these are very much observable when they are broken. He distinguished between three trends, on which his study is based on: the preferred forms of politeness, language style and morality, and gender issues.

He (1996:10) arrived at a definition of politeness as "a universal linguistic phenomenon: though its rules vary greatly from one culture to another, all languages have some way of encoding greater or lesser degrees of formality to show the appropriate level of respect to the hearer". There is no doubt that politeness formulas, strategies, and rules exist in whatever human language all over the world, but their occurrence, function, and usage are all relative. Every language is unique and shares or even differs in the forms of exhibiting politeness.

Al-Qudah (2001) investigated the congratulatory patterns in Arabic, viewing them from sociolinguistic and pragmatic perspectives. He indicated that these congratulation patterns are subject to a primary system of linguistic etiquette. His study covered the analysis of both spoken and written forms of congratulations, showing them in terms of certain different variables, namely, sex, age, literacy, and social status along with the context within which they are said.

Agha (1994: 293) asserted the relationship between the different
features of meanings and implications. He presented some of these features as factors governing the uses of honorifics, among which are “status, deference and demeanor”. These are known as the sociolinguistic components of honorifics. He (1994: 294) highlighted the relationship between honorifics and the factors mentioned above by maintaining that “the use of honorifics in all societies is constrained by the social status of individuals to whom deference is paid, but it is also sensitive to interactional variables.” Thus, it is clear that “social status”, which in part involves prestige, as well as deference, which is interpreted as consideration and regard, are integral components of the appropriate use of honorifics.

Farghal (2002) investigated the use of honorifics in the Jordanian society. He examined these honorifics in light of age, sex, and the social background of the participants. He proposed two different kinds of social honorifics, “situational” and “discoursal” honorifics. He maintained that both these forms of honorifics are used to fortify the social relationships between the interlocutors. He (2002:169) pointed out that “honorifics are an active component of Jordanians’ sociolinguistic competence.” Then he drew up the following conclusions. First, the honorifics which are expressed between speakers and hearers in the Jordanian society are “idiomatic expressions”. The use of these honorifics is associated with power and solidarity as determining factors among others. Moreover, the
Jordanian society is highly aware of the appropriate honorifics. Finally, the age factor proves to be the strongest in the use of honorifics, whereas the sex factor is the weakest. He maintained that religious honorifics, which are based on Islam, are communicated in the high variety of Arabic rather than the low for being learnt through formal writings.

Al-Natour (2004) carried out an interesting study examining the linguistic patterns of interactions that are exchanged between sellers and female customers in Jordanian shops in Irbid. Throughout her study, she concentrated on two aspects of linguistic etiquette. First of all, she tackled the forms and formulas of the bargaining language between women customers and sellers. Secondly, she pointed out that the gender of the sellers might affect the quality and the norms of any interactions. It is worth noting that she gathered her data through stealth recordings. That is, the participants were not being informed that they were being recorded.

2.2 Studies on Politeness

Since politeness is an important aspect or function of linguistic etiquette, and logically, no linguistic etiquette oriented speech acts can be expressed without politeness, the researcher reviewed some studies concerning politeness.

Brown and Levinson (1978) and Goffman (1967) were the first to discuss the notion of face management on a large scale. Brown and Levinson (1978:61) maintained that "face is something that is emotionally invested,
and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to interaction”. Thus, face management acts constitute an integral part of social interaction, (i.e. they are linguistic devices that organize and systemize the use of language in contexts appropriately.)

Sadock (2006) drew on Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory of politeness in approaching indirect speech acts. He pointed out that an essential element of politeness is face. He considered face management acts in terms of requests. He supported the claims that indirect or implied requests would contribute to maintaining face in conversation and are apt for the norms of politeness.

O’Driscoll (2007), in an attempt of evaluating Brown and Levinson’s face notion, tried to make a distinction between positive politeness and negative politeness. Positive politeness is a broader and more comprehensive concept, whereas negative politeness is more restricted to certain social contexts. He added that the concepts of respect and consideration differ notably from one culture to another, which in turn proposes extra aspects of face notion to be examined.

Harris (2003) explored the relationship between power and politeness in terms of responding to requests in governmental offices. Harris (2003: 31), following Meir (1995), maintained that “politeness itself is best defined as an appropriate behavior in context”. She (2003) confirmed that the politeness theory in the earlier work of Brown and Levinson (1978), is
quite beneficial in analyzing the recorded conversations in her research, especially in describing the participants verbal behavior. Moreover, she found a mutual relationship between powerful interlocutors and the employment of the politeness strategies in responding to requests, and this relationship is discursive.

Tiisala (2004) assumed that there is a strong relationship between politeness and power in Northern Baltic Europe in the Middle Ages. In her study, she examined the polite greeting formulas and salutations which are exchanged between the Swedish authorities and Hanseatic councils. She accounted for the variability of these polite formulas on the basis of the diversity of languages in the multilingual situations. She argued that Low German is the language which is associated with prestige and etiquette. Therefore, prestigious people address each other using this language. She maintained that there are certain descriptions, namely, “adjectives” and “adverbs” that are used by people in addressing each other properly. These are highly formal and polite, and they sustain their formality from the power and prestige of the interlocutors. She also asserted that these formulas differ distinctively from those of the ordinary people. Therefore, the social status is a determining factor in language use. A shortcoming of her study was that she did not consider these descriptions as “honorifics”, which are words of praise and flatter that accompany forms of address.

Ogino (1986) discussed the variability of politeness formulas and
expressions in the Japanese speech with reference to honorifics. She argued for the diversity of honorifics within speech events, relating them to a handful of variables such as intimacy, age, sex and the degree of acquaintance between people. She concluded that socially remote interlocutors tend to address each other more politely, preserving the appropriate honorifics, and the more acquainted people address one another with a lesser degree of politeness.

2.3 Studies on Language and Social Contexts

Labov (1972) stressed the importance of social factors in conversations among people as determining factors. He added that these factors play a significant role in choosing the speakers in interactions. He (1972: 237) defined a sociolinguistic variable as “one which is correlated with some non-linguistic variables of the social context: of the speaker, the addressee, the audience, the setting, etc.” As can be seen from the definition, the social variable undergoes changes from one context to another due to certain factors such as age, ethnicity, time, place, and the status of the interlocutors themselves. This change is always remarkable by its conformity to the contexts being used in. He discussed the social variables in light of sound change and variations from certain social or geographical varieties of language to others. It seems that his analysis can be extended to handle different sociolinguistic phenomena of politeness, linguistic etiquette, and sociocultural norms governing verbal behavior in
conversational settings, very often called Para-linguistic factors.

Dittmar (1976) introduced the essential elements of speech behavior in situational contexts. His study is not very much different from that of Labov (1972) in terms of social variables that affect the kind of conversation between interlocutors. Yet, he (1976:165-167) argued for further settings and factors. “These include participants, situation, forms of communication, function of the interaction, and channel.”

Markova (1978) presented the concept of social interactions in two distinct terms, namely, social contexts within which speech events take place and psychological status of the speaker (i.e. his mood, rationality, maturity and morality). She denoted an interrelated linguistic term which is "social psychology". She maintained that this term involves the appropriate way of thinking and exhibiting ideas and thoughts, which are apt for the social contexts. She (1978:7) pointed out that "A sentence, however, is only the medium for an assertion and as Rommetveit has demonstrated, can be the medium for various assertions or messages, depending upon the context in which it is uttered and the intention of the people who utter it". Almost all linguists agree that context is of great significance to the study of language use. Without a complete awareness of context within which words and sentences are said, there would be certainly misinterpretation and the pragmatic functions would be distorted.
She stressed the mutual relationship between language and contexts in social events. She argued for considering it as a crucial factor in both language production and comprehension.

Fielding and Fraser (1978) pointed to a correspondence between the choice of a certain variety of language and the social context in which it is used. It seems that they emphasize the role of intimacy between interlocutors. Intimacy, camaraderie are considered to be important social factors in determining the variety of language to be opted for, bearing in mind its appropriateness to the context.

Wardhaugh (1986) suggested an appropriate way of exhibiting our feelings to others in terms of several social factors such as solidarity, power, distance, respect, and intimacy. He also identified a way of being aware of social customs and habits, relating these to politeness strategies.

2.4 Studies on the Relevant Speech Acts (Greeting, Complimenting and Requesting)

The speech acts of greeting, complimenting, and requesting are the main three speech acts expressed in marital engagement speeches. They are features of linguistic etiquette, politeness, and face management.

Al-Abdul Halim (1994) analyzed a diversity of greetings formulas in Jordanian Arabic sociolinguistically, examining their linguistic etiquette features. Moreover, he examined all forms of greetings from, relating them
to a host of factors (age, setting, and power), and highlighting the role of sex in exchanging greeting formulas. He maintained that greeting is deemed to be a human activity that is not restricted to a mere kind of people.

Basically, his study examined the exchange of greetings between professors and students as well as between patients and physicians. There is a great deal of variations with regard to greetings. Al-Abdul Halim presented some very frequent greeting formulas such as "sabaah ilxeer" good morning, "? Assalaamu- ?alaykum" peace be upon you, "marhaba" hello, "masa ilxeer" good evening, and "keef haalak" how are you? etc. It seems that the writer is not very much concerned with the literal meanings of these formulas as is with their pragmatic functions and the social meanings they convey.

Burhanudeen (1998) investigated the speech acts of greeting among members of the royal family in Malaysia. She stated that the royal family members greet one another in two languages Malay and English. Burhanudeen proposed some occasions and situations where the act of greeting takes place, one of which is wedding parties. Moreover, she asserted the relationship between different social factors and the kind of greeting adopted in either language to be performed. Some of these factors listed are “educational background and the degree of closeness between the speakers” (p.83). Formality and intimacy are of great importance in
exchanging formulas in different situations and contexts.

Drawing on the early work of Austin (1962), Sadock (2006) first made a distinction between performatives and constatives speech acts by saying that every utterance has both situational meaning and influential meaning. He (p.54) maintained that “the point of Austin’s lectures was, in fact, that every normal utterance has both a descriptive and effective aspect: that saying something is also doing something.” It seems that he considered the implied aspects of whatever utterance. He thought deeply of what the speaker’s intention is beyond the utterances he/she produces.

There are three types of contrasting intentions and the implications of utterances which can be manifested in performing a speech act. These are locutions, illocutions and perlocutions. Locutionary acts are the acts which constitute the speech segments and construct statements that are compatible with language rules and phonetic systems. Illocutionary acts are these acts where the speaker states or asserts an intention through saying something. For example, an illocution of imperative can have different interpretations depending on the context, such as ordering, requesting, or even threatening. On the other hand, interrogative statements can be said to inquire about or even mock at something. Perlocutionary acts refer to the effects of the utterances said. These effects target the addresses’ thoughts and feelings, persuading them, for example.

As for compliments, Popkin (1998) pointed out that there should be an
equal exchange of giving and receiving compliments among people, “reciprocity”. He also maintained that compliments help strengthen relationships between people.

Ruhi (2007) dealt with an important aspect of assessing (im) politeness or “higher order intentions” that could be grasped within discoursal and social interactions. He (p.109) defined higher order intentions as "…concern the interactional goals that people have, and these affect utterances interpretation in that interpretation is contextually situated by a variety of aspects of the communicative event that interlocutors are aware of and select from". It seems that he is very much concerned with the pragmatic insights of compliments within specific contexts and responses, trying to view this in terms of the relevance theory. Ruhi (2007) pointed out that compliments are mostly said to serve maintaining positive self politeness. He stressed the appropriateness of self politeness and compliments in social contexts and situations. In other words, what is suitable to be said in a context might not be so in another.

Al Falasi (2007) discussed compliment expressions in Emarati Arabic against their counterpart compliment expressions in American English. She based her study on a sort of pragmatic transfer between the two languages, proposing different contexts where the use of these expressions would be appropriate. He defined the pragmatic competence as one's capability of perceiving and using language appropriately in contexts. Apart from that,
he defines compliments as a formic speech act of addressing positively crediting words by the speaker to his listeners. This means that compliments might hold flattering, praising, positively evaluating words, and expressions being used in a certain context to address somebody. Simply, complimenting is a speech act of mentioning what the interlocutors like, but not what they dislike to hear. It involves a special way of manipulating words so that the hearer would be attracted and might feel proud of them. Hence, there would be a sort of rapport between the speaker and the hearer.

As far as requesting is concerned, the process of asking for the hand of a girl always involves a request of some kind. It is the core concept of such a speech event. Searle (1979) argued for the verification of the illocutionary force of requests. He maintained that the illocutionary force of requests varies with respect to their pragmatic implications related to the social contexts. Also, he stated that the act of requesting might be a command, an order, or even a polite request. Requests also involve different pragmatic features of politeness and face management.

2.5 Arabic Studies on Marital Engagement in Jordan

In order to depict the exact setting of the marital engagement ceremonies in Jordan, the researcher reviewed some social studies in Arabic language about this speech event.

Al – Tal (2006) examined the protocol of asking for a girl's hand in
the Jordanian society. He pointed out "Al Nallbah", a special term that is used to refer to the engagement process, which is (the request for a girl's hand for the sake of marriage). This occurs when the man's family goes to the girl's family's house to ask for her hand formally. The gathering is called "Al Jahah". It consists of the tribal chief and the notables in the tribe. Then one of the girl's relatives offers a cup of coffee to the representative of the 'Jaha'. Consequently, the head of the "Jahah" postpones drinking the coffee offered. This postponement is implicitly conditioned by accepting the 'Jaha's request. The representative asks for the hand of the girl from her patron formally and waits for a reply. He maintained that this process is in agreement with the Jordanian traditions, customs, and social norms.

His study had a direct bearing on the social etiquette of the situation. He viewed this in terms of the social traditions, discarding its linguistic ramifications and patterns which are the subject of this study.

Al- Uzaizi (1974:244) described a procession of marital engagements in Madaba province and the neighboring Bedouin areas. He defined the "Jaha" as the procession of a group of people going to the girl's family and asking for the hand of their daughter. This gathering goes to the girl's house, headed by a representative, mostly a tribal chief. Then, the representative is traditionally offered a cup of coffee solely. He postpones drinking it until his request is accepted. He also pointed out that there is a special term standing for stating acceptance, that is "nu\lq a:n" (the social
term of acceptance). Moreover, he presented some frequent expressions that are mentioned in such speech events of engagement, such as,

"ihna  ق:i:na:k ﱥalla:bi:n wa min ﱥind Allah wa min ﱥindak inسأ: Allah ma ihna 3a:ybi:n" ( We are coming to you to ask for your daughter's hand, and we ask you by God not to disappoint us.)

He also states that the appropriate reply in a natural setting of this occasion.

"hayya:kum Allah ilgamar gida:mkum wa elدولم wahara:kum" ( you are welcome, the moon is before you and darkness is behind you.).

This plausible description of the engagement process exactly depicts the real pictures of marital engagements in Jordan but without any socio-pragmatic account of etiquette devices used. Further, it describes the situation in a different linguistic setting in Jordan, which may have its own varied linguistic features.

Obeidat (1986:94) discussed the ceremony of asking for the girl's hand in the context of the Jordanian traditions and customs. He noted that the ceremony is held after consulting each family's cousins and relatives in terms of acceptance or refusal. Then, the man's family, relatives, and friends go in a group to the girl's parents' house in order to ask for her hand. He indicated that this gathering or the ‘Jaha’ which is intended to ask for the girl's hand is a formal speech event, and he tackled it from a social
perspective, without showing any appropriate linguistic account of etiquette.

The previously mentioned studies investigated marital engagement from a social perspective. However, they have not examined the linguistic etiquette expressed in the speech event of asking for the girl's hand from a socio-pragmatic aspect. Therefore, this study will bridge the gap and provide a linguistic account of this phenomenon.
Chapter 3
Research Methodology

3.1 Data Collection

To obtain reliable and realistic data, the researcher attended 12 marital engagements (Jahas) in different areas in North Jordan. Gathering the data was facilitated by the two parties as they were informed about the purpose of the study. Therefore, the researcher had the opportunity to come close to the interlocutors and recorded what was being said. Apart from that, the researcher gathered personal information about the interlocutors themselves. He gathered 12 speeches exchanged on engagement occasions in different villages in North Jordan.

Additionally, the researcher listened to the conversations and took notes since not all the conversations of the engagement speeches were permitted to be recorded. The data collection process took a long period of time since it was difficult to know about and be invited to many engagement occasions.

3.2 Data Analysis

In order to answer the research questions, the researcher selected 12 marital speeches as he thought they were representative. He transcribed the recorded data. Then, he categorized the utterances in terms of different speech acts: greetings, compliments, and requests which the marital speeches hold as well as the sociolinguistic and pragmatic implications of
these utterances. The researcher transliterated the recorded data using the appropriate Arabic phonetic symbols. After that, he translated them into English. Next, he categorized the social factors that affect the selection of the interlocutors namely, age, literacy, sociocultural, and socioeconomic, and the pragmatic aspects of the speeches exchanged, classifying them into categories and subheadings. These include socio-pragmatic functions of greeting, religious sayings and verses, complimenting, requesting, religious texts, honorifics, expressions of solidarity and camaraderie.

3.3 Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to sociolinguistic and pragmatic aspects of the speeches exchanged on engagement occasions in North Jordan. However, the study is not concerned with the syntactic patterns and sound variations of these speeches.

Chapter 4
Analysis and Discussion

In addressing the first question, *what are the linguistic etiquette devices exchanged on the speeches of marital engagements? And what socio-pragmatic functions do they entail?*, the data identified three speech acts; greeting, complimenting, and requesting, as well as other linguistic etiquette devices: these are the religious texts, honorifics, expressions of solidarity, and expressions of camaraderie mainly exchanged on engagement speech events. Traditionally, the speech of engagement, initiated by the suitor's family representative, starts with an appropriate form of greeting, followed by complimenting, and finally ended up with a request or an offer. Similarly, the reply starts with responding to the greeting, counter complimenting, and mostly ends up with accepting the offer.

4.1 Greeting

Many various greeting formulas that were exchanged on the speech events of engagement have been observed. These greeting formulas were characterized by formality and courtesy. Moreover, these formulas were polite and they were intended to suit such a kind of conversation. The data involve formal and informal formulas of greeting. The formal greeting formulas are expressed in Standard Arabic while the informal is expressed in Colloquial Arabic.
4.1.1 Standard Greeting Formulas and their Implications

The man's family representative usually initiates the greeting by saying:

Example 1 Addresser: - assala:mu ʂa:li:kum wa rahmatu Allah wa baraka:tuh.

“Peace be upon you and may Allah have his blessings and mercy upon you”

This is a highly respectable formal form of greeting. The girl's family representative responds to the greeting by saying:


“In all meanings of respect and esteem, I warmly welcome you on the behalf of my family”.

The above mentioned forms of greeting and counter greeting are formal by virtue of being expressed in Standard Arabic. As we can see, the first greeting is highly formal because it is expressed in its complete form, as opposed to the shortened as ”assala:mu ʂìlaykum" which is used in daily greeting among people. It seems that this form is less formal and very frequently used among people in informal interactions. Therefore, it does not convey the same pragmatic meaning of politeness, consideration, and
courtesy that the complete formal form would do. The use of standard form exhibits the speaker’s adherence to his religious belief, Islam, since this is the Islamic preferred formula of greeting. Hence, it is highly regarded and appreciated by all Muslims, especially; the audience is pleasant with it on the speech event of marital engagement. The perlocutionary force of such a kind of standard formula is to attract the listeners' attention to the speaker’s talk, and produce the effect that the addressees' desire to be satisfied.

The addressee's response entails a great deal of consideration, deference, and veneration expressed as a response to the former greeting form. This formula is frequently said in written or spoken discourse in political, religious, and even educational formal ceremonies, but if expressed in informal occasions such as marital engagement, it highlights deference and respect. However, it is meant to show politeness and positive face.

Obviously, the speaker's implementation of such a kind of formal form of greeting response does not only show respect to his listeners, but also to look more prestigious before them. This formula does not only show consideration and appreciation to his listeners, but also to the family who chose him to represent them.

Consider the following example.

"At first, we would like to warmly welcome you".

The above form of greeting response seems to be quite courteous and polite. This can be clearly noticed through the examination of the prestigious form of language expressed so far. The speaker is very polite and prestigious, and he is trying to direct the utmost beautiful greeting formula to his listeners in order to appreciate their attendance. This greeting form enhances intimacy and solidarity between the interlocutors, and contributes to preserving the speaker's positive face before them. The above formula is expressed in the plural form "nurrahibu" (we welcome). The speaker uses the plural form in order to first speak on behalf of his own family, and secondly to express his deep gratitude to his own family for selecting him to represent them. Another important aspect is that the plural formulas always appear to be a more respectable form of address.

Another formula in which the previously mentioned analysis is applicable to is the following.

Example 4 addresser: *?-as ëdda Allah masa:?akum ċami: aњ bikulli 3ayir*

"May Allah Almighty grant you a merry evening"

This greeting formula is devoted to the etiquette manuals and norms being exchanged between the interlocutors. The pragmatic function of this
is to get the listeners to realize that they deserve to hear such a pre-eminent expression. Therefore, this speaker is highly regarded and respected by the attendants of this speech event. The speech event of engagement is a social activity rather than a public, cultural, or even a governmental activity. This social domain of language use naturally calls for the colloquial variety to be used; however, the use of the standard is believed to be rather polite, honorable and marvelous, and it is associated with esteem. The social meaning of using these discoursal greeting formulas other than the daily exchanged casual formulas such as "marhaba" (Hello) and "Ṣabah al3ayi:r" (Good morning), is to highlight the use of the linguistic etiquette devices used among people in interactions. Thus, these formulas encompass a higher degree of politeness for showing consideration and veneration.

4.1.2 The Use of the Colloquial Greeting Formulas

As mentioned earlier in this section, the use of certain expressions among others expounds the social and cultural background of the interlocutors. In a nutshell, the use of the standard greeting formulas demonstrates that the interlocutors are literate and educated.

On the other hand, the use of the colloquial or informal formulas might not be so. These formulas, though they are not expressed in Standard Arabic, are linguistic etiquette oriented and governed. These formulas are
rather expressed for different socio-pragmatic considerations. Consider the following examples.

Example 5 addressee:  
-ال Jahah al karim mahu Allah ymassi ku bal3ai r

аза:кум Allah 3ayran ände tafirum bi hulu:ru ha:đa almu:ʔtamar al3airi:.

"Noble Jahah! Good evening. May Allah Almighty reward you well for honoring us to attend this good assembly."

This example shows that the speaker is addressing the attendants in Standard Arabic and suddenly shifts to Colloquial Arabic to express greeting. This shift is not arbitrary; rather it is intended to express solidarity and closeness as well as intimacy. The informal greeting formula, being incorporated in such a formal context, is very courteous and polite. Moreover, the speaker's positive face is not harmed by saying this formula. The greeting is accepted and appreciated by the addressees through using the greeting response 'masa annu:r' (Good evening). Clearly, it seems that the interlocutors are very pleased with these formulas although they carry on exchanging speeches in Standard Arabic. However, the linguistic etiquette norms are not violated. The pragmatic function that could be grasped from the above expression and context, (i.e. the perlocutionary force) is that we are alike and we expect you to accept us and accept our
offer. This is the perlocutionary force of persuasion. (Leech 1978 and Sadock 2006)

The data included expressions such as:

Example 6 addresser: *'Allah ymassi:hum bil3ai:r'* "Good evening."

The reply to this formula is the following expression:

Example 7 addressee: *'Allah mhyi:k'*

"God greet you" literally, but functionally "you are warmly welcome".

These colloquial greeting expressions are also subject to the linguistic etiquette norms. The interlocutors try to make a certain polite greeting formula, while the addressees try to reply with an equivalent or even a better formula. This kind of linguistic behavior entails politeness, face management, and seeking acceptance from each other. The greeting response formula can be used to express greeting at one time or to function as a situational honorific at another, depending on the context within which they are expressed. It will be discussed in this chapter under the subtitle situational honorifics.

Furthermore, it has been noticed that almost all the speeches exchanged on the marital engagement, end up with a formal greeting formula.

Example 8 addressers and addressees: *' assala:mu $alli:kum wa rahmatu Allahi wa baraka:tuh.'*
"Allah's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you"

This highly regarded expression could function both as an opening and ending greeting formula. In Arabic discourse, it is a convention to end up a speech with the above greeting formula. Thus, the speaker would obtain the listeners' appreciation as well as respect of what he says. If the pragmatic function is considered, such an expression is meant to express the speaker's loyalty and faithfulness to his religion Islam. One more thing is that this expression implies the speaker's gratitude and thankfulness to the listeners for paying attention to him. So there is an implicit connotation of thanking.

To sum up, the greeting formulas exchanged in marital engagement speeches whether in Standard or Colloquial Arabic, are not all arbitrary, but rather are subject to considerations of linguistic etiquette. The reciprocal greeting formulas exhaust all the possible aspects of politeness and face management, and imply regard, deference, veneration, and prestige.

4.2 Complimenting

Complimenting is another linguistic etiquette device comprising politeness. It is the most adorable and sensational aspect of the whole process of marital engagement. It has been noted that almost all the speakers in the engagement ceremony mention what their listeners like hear. It is the longest part of any engagement ceremony, within which the interlocutors
exchange a great deal of polite patterns. These patterns of flattering and praising entail immeasurable formulas of polite expressions. Besides, they are subject to the norms of linguistic etiquette and honorifics. Furthermore, complimenting can be considered as a mitigating politeness strategy; in that it is a successful way of gaining the others' respect and acceptance.

Consider the following examples:

"Your daughter and your family are noble and generous"

Example 10 Addreser:- ?abna:? â∫ j i:rat....ha:ðihi alâ∫ j i:rah
almuktramah
"Sons of family … This respectable family".

It is quite evident that the above mentioned formulas are exchanged between the interlocutors, in order to express compliments. Basically, saying nice words and expressions to somebody is a sign of respect and deference as far as the illocutionary pragmatic force is concerned. These compliment formulas express the interlocutors' gratitude towards each other. They are not necessarily intended to be true. Sometimes these compliments might be untruthful and illusive (i.e exaggerated), but they are exchanged on purpose. The purpose of this is to gain each other's acceptance and consideration.
Another purpose is to ratify closeness and intimacy between them. For instance, the following example shows how the interlocutors preserve their positive politeness and positive face equally.

Example 12 addresser: \( na\text{-}kurukum\text{-}\text{š}ala\ h:\text{ḍ}a\ al\text{-}\text{stiqa}:l\ arra: ?\text{ḥ} \text{wa} \ ?\text{in} \ dall\ \text{š}ala \ \text{ṣai}\text{-}\text{in} \ \text{fa}\text{-}\text{innama}\ \text{ya}\text{-}dulu \ \text{ṣ}ila \ \text{n}i\text{-}bi \ \text{ma} \ \text{ḥ}\text{anikum}\ \text{wa} \ \text{ḥ}\text{usni} \ \text{istiqa}:\text{likum}\ \text{fa}\text{-}\text{ntum}\ \text{a}l\text{-}\text{ʔa}:\text{hil}\ \text{wa} \ \text{la}\ \text{ʕa}\text{-}\text{i}:\text{rah}. \)

"Thank you for this wonderful reception. It denotes your good origins and your nice way of welcoming us. You are our family and our tribe."

This example shows how the speaker is polite, and how he expresses regard and consideration to the other representative (speaker) in a very polite way. This can be considered a technique of fortifying closeness and solidarity between the interlocutors. It is a very good way of establishing a social rapport between each other.

4.2.1 Expressing Solidarity through Compliments

Basically, the purpose of complimenting is to establish social acquaintance between two remote families (i.e. two socially distant families). Consider the following example.

Example 13 addressee: \( -na\ \text{fazzu}\ \text{wa} \ \text{nafta3er}\ \text{bilmu}\text{-}\text{ʔa}:\text{harati}\ \text{ma} \ \text{ba}:\text{yyina} \)

\( \text{ʕa}\text{-}\text{i}:\text{ratayina} \)
"We are very proud to have affinity between our families".

Such an expression is undoubtedly appropriate to the context of marriage. This compliment expression is used in the appropriate domain of language use. As a result, the norms and manuals of linguistic etiquette as well as politeness are all preserved. Pragmatically, this use of such kind of expressions strengthens solidarity and maximizes the degree of closeness between the interlocutors. It also enhances camaraderie (i.e friendliness).

4.2.2 Expressing Intimacy through Compliments

Intimacy is also communicated through the use of polite compliment formulas. Camaraderie and friendship, if exist between the interlocutors, are also advocated through the use of the appropriate compliment expressions. Hence, the pragmatic functions of using compliment expressions in this regard are to gain acceptance from the other party, and secondly, it is a way of persuading them. To accept the marriage proposal can be considered as the perlocutionary force of these utterances. Consider the following example.

Example 14 addressee: -wa: iḥna a:rfiḥn ?ahl al3a: ib minṭzama:n,

 Candid: ṣaḥ ḥayybi:n wa ?aḥsan min ḥiṣk ma: biʔi:r

"We have known the suitor's family for a long time. They are very good people, indeed".
It seems very reasonable that the addressee does not only seek to get acquaintance with the addresser, but also he tries to express intimacy and camaraderie. The addresser's intention is to show closeness and reinforce a strong relationship with the girl's family through the use of such verbal behavior (i.e. complimenting).

### 4.2.3 Expressing Courtesy through Compliments

Being courteous is an important aspect of complimenting. People involved in marital engagements are very kind to each other. The purpose of this is to gain each other's consideration and regard.

Naturally, Jordanian people are courteous, especially when it comes to requesting or accepting a request accordingly. Hence, the whole speech event is based on courtesy, kindness, and superior linguistic treatment of each other. The following examples are quite illustrative.

Example 15 addresser: -

>tara: ihna ئاّyyi:n wa mit∫a∫ mi:n bilw€wu:h alNayybih alkari:mah

"We are coming to you, looking forward to accepting our offer, as you are generous and benevolent".

Example 16 addresser: -

>wa la: ziltum ئاهlan lil3ayr wa ∫∫ukran... wa qahwa:tu al?a€wa:d la: tabrudu ?abadan.

"You are incredibly good. Thank you." The second expression can be translated literally as "The Noble's coffee never gets cold", but the
expression delivered in this context has another pragmatic function. It aims at directing words of praise with the use of intellectual words, to show respect and deference. Thus, it could be translated functionally into English as "You are always very hospitable".

These two distinctive compliment expressions conform to the norms of the linguistic etiquette and imply politeness and face management. These expressions convey the meaning of courtesy on the basis of the pragmatic function they hold. The use of these two expressions has a special effect on the addressee's in that it helps enhance the social relationship between the interlocutors. Another example through which these pragmatic functions of respect are manifested is:

Example 17 addresser: -fama: ahidnø ?aكان min ?اللى....؟يلة:

?u:ilibna bihi di:nan wa 3uluqan wa kasaban wa na:saba

“Everybody we have acquaintance with from … family, we admire his religious commitment, manners, pedigree, and origin.”

Through the use of highly educated prestigious Arabic, the speaker of the above quotation intends to deliver a very courteous compliment expression. This expression shows that the addressee is highly affected by the Islamic doctrine. It is appreciated and valued by the addressees and it credits the speaker himself. It also communicates the addresser’s regard and consideration to his addressees.
In short, the data show that the use of the formulaic compliment expressions on the marital engagement ceremony has different socio-pragmatic ramifications. These compliment expressions are meant to establish a sort of social rapport between the interlocutors. Besides, they are intended to strengthen the relationships. Pragmatically, they have a persuasive effect, on the addressees in that they are used to get acceptance from the other party. These compliment expressions are extremely polite, and they maintain the speaker’s positive face before his hearers.

4.3 Requests

Requests are the focal point in the engagement speeches. Requests occur at the end of these speeches. The speech event of engagement is primarily held to make a request for a girl's hand, which often results in accepting this request. Asking for a girl’s hand in marriage is not easy to perform, especially, before the audience. Therefore, there are certain linguistic etiquette norms that the interlocutors should be committed to. These norms are consistent, and have special features such politeness and face, thus, requesting in this regard is rather sophisticated and governed by certain underlying etiquette rules. Consider the following example.

Example 18 addressee: -ya: ʔ3wa:n ?iḥna ʔalabna ʔiyu:m hua ʔalab ʔiyi:d bintkum lʔa3u:na assayid...
"O brothers. We are here today to ask for your daughter’s hand … to our brother Mr…"

The representative, who was a former prime minister, commenced his talk with an appropriate honorific “O brothers.” This form of address shows how the speaker tries to express closeness and intimacy to his hearers. He stated a direct explicit request in a very polite way, repeating the word "n alab' "request" twice for the sake of emphasis. Obviously, the above mentioned formula has no face threatening act neither to the speaker nor to his hearers. Therefore, this form of request maintains the speaker's positive face and his positive politeness.

To show that this request is positively accepted and the hearers are pleased with, the reply comes more polite and exhibits a higher degree of consideration by the representative of the counterpart party (i.e. the girl’s family).


“Our on behalf of my brother and cousin Mr…. I would like to say that the Jaha’s request is accepted. And my brother has authorised me to say that he agrees to marry his daughter to Mr. ….”
This is a prestigious form of accepting a request. There is an implicit thanks and gratitude implied by the speaker to his family because of the honour he has been given to be the family representative in the ceremony. He seems to express his consideration and regard to both his own family as well as his addressees. This form is reciprocal between the interlocutors in terms of politeness, positive face, and linguistic etiquette manuals, and it corresponds to the request directed by the first interlocutor in such kind of conversation.

4.3.1 The Use of the Plural Form in Requesting

Requests have to be expressed in two linguistic forms: one is singular and the other is plural, but both forms show deference and respect to the addressees. Some interlocutors involved in the speech event of engagement use the plural form of address to make their requests comply with the linguistic etiquette devices. This etiquette device (i.e. the use of the plural) seems to be quite influential and acceptable by the addressees. The data show that the interlocutors refer to the plural to talk on behalf of their families so as to express solidarity and respect as mentioned earlier in the discussion. Consider the following examples.

“Members of … family, their relatives, and cousins-in-law have come to you to ask for your daughter’s hand Miss… and we hope that you would accept our proposal”.

It is quite evident that the speaker uses the plural forms to talk on behalf of his own family as well as addressing the other family members (addresses) respectively. The girl's family representative responds to the request as follows.

Example 21 addressee: 

\[
\text{fa\text{\textsl{innani }bismi }al\text{\textsl{i:rah bi }\text{\textsl{aklin }\text{\textsl{a:m wa bism wa:lid alma3 fi:bah bi }\text{\textsl{aklin 3a:}? na }tu\text{\textsl{uzu wa nafta3iru bilmu}a:harah ma: bayina }\text{\textsl{a}}[\text{\textsl{iratayna ... Na}la\text{\textsl{abukum musta}}\text{\textsl{b a:b wa i}f\text{\textsl{f rabu algahwah}.}}}}
\]

“On behalf of my family and on behalf of the fiancée's father in particular, we are very proud of having affinity between our families…. We accept the request and please drink your coffee”.

In the above example, the addressee uses the plural form in stating his acceptance. The first person pronouns, the second person pronouns, and the verbs are formulated in the plural form. It is a fine style of exhibiting prestigious forms of language associated with esteem. The purpose of this is to show regard and deference.

4.3.2 Indirectness in Requesting and Accepting the Request
Sometimes the interlocutors in the speech event of engagement express their requests in an indirect way, thinking that they would look more prestigious and gain each others' appreciation and deference. These people use expressions that do not necessarily mean the same as if they were said in isolation or in any other social context.

The interlocutors expresses their pride towards the new relationship that results from marriage, then they usually make the acceptance explicitly as well as implicitly through asking the other interlocutor to drink the coffee.

Example 22 addressee (hayya:ku Allah iʃrabu gahwitku billi a ʤi:tu bi:h).

"Welcome! You have what you asked for. Drink your coffee"

This is a sign of showing consideration and deference. Consider the following example of requesting and accepting the offer.

Example 23 addressee: -alʤa:ha almu:ʔalʃah min ba ʤa:j a ::ʔir irbid

tarrafat di:wa:nakum alNa:hir Na:libatan yada ibnatikum...lilsayid ...

ra:ʧi:na minkum wa mina Allah husna alqubu:l

“The Jahah, consisting of some families from Irbid, have come to your honorable diwa:n 'hall', to ask for your daughter’s hand…. for Mr. .... We beg Allah and then you to accept our proposal”

The reply to this comes as follows.
Example 24 addressee: -iḍaː ʕaː?akum man tardoː na diːnahu wa 3uːlaqah faziwiʕuːh.

“If a person with good faith and moral comes to you asking for your daughter's hand, accept him as a husband for your daughter”.

The indirectness as a pragmatic notion is manifested in the reply to the request. The speaker refers to a saying by Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) to express his approval. This way is very respectable and appreciated by all listeners (attendants). The pragmatic function (i.e. the illocutionary force) of this saying is that the addressee emphasizes that the suitor has good faith and he agrees to marry the family’s girl. The addressee does not mention this saying to urge Muslim youth to get married; but rather he mentions it for a different pragmatic function. This intellectual use of the religious quotation accounts for linguistic etiquette norms, since Jordanian society believes that whoever loves and appreciates Prophet Mohammad, should abide by his saying. In fact, the speaker makes the use of Muslims' love for prophet Mohammad (PBUH) as a strategy of getting very close to them. It is also a positive face preserving strategy. In conclusion, there are two ways of expressing requests in the marital engagement speech in terms of directness and indirectness.

4.3.3 Expressions of Requests in Colloquial Arabic
There are certain colloquial expressions of requests in the speeches of engagement. These request formulas in Colloquial Arabic do not vary distinctively from those expressed in Standard Arabic in terms of perlocutionary force and linguistic etiquette, besides, these formulas sound more intimate to the addressees. Moreover, these formulas are highly valued and taken into consideration by the addressees. Furthermore, these colloquial linguistic patterns of requests are sociolinguistically considered. The eloquent speaking men who are chosen by the man's family and the girl's family to be their representatives are not necessarily educated. Although they are uneducated they can express themselves well. Sometimes certain eloquent men are chosen to talk on behalf of their groups because of their age. Consider the following examples.

Example 25 addresser: -\textit{tara}: ikna \textit{a:yi:n} wu mit aʃ mi:n bilwu\textit{u:h} al
\textit{Nayi:bih} elkari:mih inku tigba:lu \textit{Nala:bna} wu hu i:d binitku ... \textit{Sala sunat Allah wa rasu:luh}.

“As you are good and generous, we are coming to you hoping you would accept our marriage proposal according to the teachings of Allah Almighty and his Prophet”.

The reply is reciprocal as follows:

Example 26 addressee: -\textit{iʃ ru} rabu gahwitku wa \textit{ibiʃ ru} billi: ?a$i:tu bi:h.

“Drink your coffee and you will get what you have come for".
The functional translation of this might be as follows.

“We accept the request”.

Another example of requests in Colloquial Arabic and the reply are the following.

Example 27 addressee: -i\textsc{kna binit} \textsc{farr\textsc{a}f inna nu} \textsc{l\textsc{u\textsc{b}}} i\textsc{:d bintku} \ldots ?illa:

\textit{ibna ... fala almahr wa a\textsc{j}uru:n almutafag f\textit{alayha}.

“We have the honor to ask for your daughter’s hand…. for our son ….in light of the conditions and dowry agreed upon in advance”.

The reply comes as follows:

Example 28 addressee: -hayya:ku Allah billi ?a\textsc{cul} i\textsc{tu f\textsc{i:h wa i\textsc{f} ra:bu}

g\textit{a:hwitku wu ?ahalan wa sahlan

“Allah greet you with what you have come for. Have your coffee and welcome again.”

The above mentioned examples are very polite, indeed. There are certain mitigating strategies associated with these tokens by the interlocutors. First, they incorporate compliment expressions such as

Example 29 addressee-“mit f\textsc{a} jmi:n bilwi \textsc{C u:h al\textsc{a}:ybih alkari:mih”.

Second, these interlocutors use honorifics such as “\textit{binit farr\textsc{a}f}” (We have the honor) or (It is an honor). Moreover, other greeting formulas are also exchanged, more particularly in the reply. These are meant to mitigate the
interlocutors' tokens; they do not necessarily function the same as if they were said before the process of requesting. Hence, they are linguistic etiquette devices exchanged mainly to show politeness, consideration and regard, and seek acceptance from or persuade the other party (Searle 1979). Requesting, expressed through greeting and complimenting, is a speech act which is subject to certain linguistic etiquette restrictions. If these restrictions or norms are to be violated by the speaker, the request itself would be condemned, rejected, or even considered to be absurd. For example, consider the following hypothetical example.

Example 30 addresser: -'bidna binitku li?bina elyu:m'
"We want your daughter's hand for our son today".

This request formula does not have the same illocutionary and perlocutionary force as the other request formulas mentioned formerly. It does not sound polite. There is no room for face-threatening acts and stigmatized forms of language in requesting, and every single utterance should sound polite and prestigious in the speech event of engagement.

4.4 The Socio-pragmatic Functions of the Religious Texts.
Since Jordanian community is Muslim, the interlocutors share the same religious background knowledge of Islamic principles, especially, those related to marriage. Therefore, most speech events of engagement in North Jordan attest mentioning some religious texts, namely: verses from the
Holy Qur'an and sayings by Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon Him). The ultimate purpose of mentioning these religious texts is to urge Muslims youth to get married. However, there seem to be some other socio-pragmatic functions and aspects that call for the use of these religious texts. The most frequent verse of the Holy Qur'an recited on the ceremony of engagement is the following.


Al Roum chapte,r verse 22

And among His signs

Is this, that he created

For you mates from among yourselves, that ye may

Dwell in tranquility with them

And he has put love and mercy between your (hearts):

Verily in that are signs


This verse has been mentioned 7 times in 12 speech events of engagement. It is the most common religious text in the ceremony, probably because of its direct relevance to the context of marriage. This verse shows how the interlocutors express their strong commitment to their
religion, Islam. The Muslim interlocutors are quite faithful, and they strongly believe in Allah Almighty. The verse also indicates the interlocutors’ social and cultural background.

The verse is very often enclosed in a preliminary introduction to requesting the girl’s hand in marriage. Virtually, the use of such a kind of religious piece of evidence helps to gain the other party’s regard, respect, and consideration. In fact, Jordanian Muslims listen attentively to the holy religious texts as being recited by the addressers in the engagement rituals. Therefore, the speaker uses these texts as an access to his listeners’ heart and mind, in an attempt to gain their respect (i.e. the perlocutionary force). This might be the perlocutionary force of this utterance. Another sociolinguistic point of view is that the addresser implies solidarity, more particularly religious solidarity, between his own family and the counterpart family. Additionally, it is a kind of mitigating politeness strategies; there is nothing could be more polite than reciting a verse, indeed. It is divine and highly influential. It contributes to the interlocutors’ conservation of positive face before the others. What applies to the previous verse, applies to the following verse, too.

“And it is he who has created man from water; and has appointed for him kindred by blood and kindred by marriage”.

This verse is also frequent in the engagement ceremony and it has been mentioned five times out of 12 speeches. This verse involves the same socio-pragmatic functions as the one before it.

The analysis of the religious texts extends to the Prophet’s sayings (PBUH). The most common saying, in the context of marriage is the following:


“O young people! Whoever among you is able to marry, should marry”. Khan (1990:p.3 Vol. VII).

Another frequent saying is the following.


“If a person of acceptable religion and character presents himself for marriage, marry him, otherwise, there would be widespread sedition and rampant corruption in the land”. (http//www.Islamonline.net).
Some other two examples also appear throughout the speeches are the following:

Example 35 addresser: *-man ka:na mu:siran li?an yankik wa lam yankik fala:ysa mini:*

“Whoever is affluent should marry. If he doesn’t marry, he is not with me”. (http://ibnayyub.wordpress.com).


“A woman may be married by four qualifications: one on account of her money; another on account of the nobility of her pedigree; another on account of her beauty; the fourth, on account of her virtue. Therefore, look out for a woman that hath virtue”. (www.twf.ogr/sayings.html).

These sayings are usually said after the Quranic verses. The prophet’s sayings entail the same socio pragmatic functions as that of the Quranic verse. There is very often an implicit request or approval through the divine sayings. One important linguistic feature of these sayings is that they are very much listened to by the hearers themselves, (i.e. they are highly influential). The influentiality of these sayings is derived from their truthfulness. Whatever Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said is true because he is inspired by Allah Almighty. Therefore, reciting these sayings in marital
engagement occasions is courteous, and contributes to enhance solidarity and intimacy between the interlocutors themselves.

4.5 Honorifics

4.5.1 Honorifics with Forms of Address

These honorifics are primary components of the speech event of engagement. These honorifics account for a larger concept which is linguistic etiquette. The speech event of engagement is an area of plenty of honorific formulaic expressions. These honorifics are associated with the appropriate forms of address. They are mostly exchanged to express deference and consideration between the interlocutors. The most common or frequent honorific expression is the following:

Example 37 addressee: “alkari:mah”

"Generous Jahah (assembly)."

This honorific is associated with addressing the (Jaha) upon initiating one’s talk. The addresser uses this honorific expression so as to reveal his good intention towards his listeners. Another longer honorific expression which can be grasped throughout the speeches delivered is the following.

“Dear brothers! Members of … family, headed by his Excellency father of…. Our dear big brother.”

Obviously, every single word uttered in this present example is an honorific in itself. The addresser starts addressing his audience (listeners) in the plural form in order to address the audience as well as the other party’s representative, or probably to show consideration, deference, and respect. Suddenly, the speaker shifts from the plural form into the singular to address an individual among them. (i.e. the other party’s eloquent representative) wa ḍla raḥiṣim sa ḍ:dat aʃay3 ḍ:abu ... This shift marks a great deal of deference and consideration to the other party’s representative who is a tribal chief in the above example. This form of exchanging honorifics ensures that the speaker himself gains the regard and consideration of his listeners.


“O virtuous and dear brothers! Our adorable relatives and our beloved … genorous family.”

These forms of honorifics involve flattering, praising, and positively evaluating words. The choice of these words is very appropriate to this context of address. These honorifics are very diligently expressed in this
situational context of engagement. On the other hand, honorification in this context is a politeness mitigating strategy. Therefore, interlocutors appeal to it to show friendliness, and to consolidate camaraderie. It is a positive face preserving strategy, too. Another example of these honorifics is the following:


"Your Excellency Mr. prime minister and his excellencies noble-minded companions."

This is an excellent example of expressing honorifics in forms of address. Honorifics like (ma ʕa:li, ʕuʔu:fah, and ssa ʕa:dah) have the usual English equivalent "your Excellency". This example testifies how power correlates to politeness. It is evident that the addressee and the addressees all occupy high governmental positions in the country; therefore, they deserve to be addressed with the appropriate honorifics. If the parties concerned were addressed with their first names, then it would take the risk of considering this as a sign of intimacy and closeness. By contrast, it is a sign of degradation and probably humiliation. These honorifics function as a wall built around these highly prestigious entities (i.e. these public figures), thus, protecting them from humiliation. Furthermore, they preserve the
addresser's positive face before them, and they would provide him with a certain degree of respect. Hence, with no doubt, there is a mutual relationship between power and politeness in the speech event of marital engagement in north Jordan.

4.5.2 Situational Honorifics

There are certain expressions that could be considered situational honorifics. These expressions are usually exchanged spontaneously. They differ distinctively from the previous kind of honorific in that they do not often accompany forms of address; rather these honorifics are expressed in isolation as responses. They comprise certain features of linguistic etiquette among which are a higher degree of politeness, positive face, and the appropriateness to the contexts within which they are exchanged. The most frequent formula is the following, *hayya:k Allah* or *Allah mhayyi:k* these two forms of the same honorific mean literally "you are welcome". But if this is the only meaning it holds, then there is a distortion of its pragmatic message. However, my main concern in this connection is not translation, but it is the socio-pragmatic aspects of this kind of honorifics. The interlocutors exchange these honorifics to compliment and express gratitude to each other more than greeting each other. Therefore, these situational honorifics are of two folds, a kind of compliments and thanks.

However, the use of the situational honorifics implies a new mitigating strategy of politeness. These honorifics are very polite. This is due to the
functional repetition of these honorifics within on speech event of engagement. Similarly, there are other formulas of honorifics which are religiously based. They entail an explicit supplication of some kind to Allah Almighty. It is also a form of situational honorifics, but the pragmatic function and the illocutionary force of utterances vary notably, depending on verification of the social contexts. For example, the following honorific form is a supplication if considered by its surface meaning (literal meaning).

Example 41 addressee: \textit{ba:raka Allah fi:k} or \textit{Allah yba:rik fi:k}

"May Allah Almighty bless you."

Nevertheless, these honorifics do not necessarily mean exactly so. The illocutionary force of these utterances is to communicate compliments and thanks to each other. Additionally, they sound more respectable since they are associated with the name of Allah Almighty, who is supreme. The following is rather a more sophisticated honorific expression. It is an idiomatic expression which is expressed in Standard Arabic. Farghal (2002) provided a rough account of religious honorifics.

Example 42 addresser: \textit{hafiḍa:kum Allah ta ḥ:la wa ?akramakum}

"May Allah Almighty protect and dignify you"
This form of honorific is prestigious and exhibits high standards of politeness and deference; therefore, it is abide by the linguistic etiquette norms.

4.6 Expressions of Solidarity

Interlocutors, very often, tend to seize the opportunity of marital engagement speech to express solidarity and camaraderie using special expressions and statements. It seems for the first time that these expressions are irrelevant to the topic and context of marriage, but they are significant on this speech event of engagement. These expressions are fruitful and they are said on purpose. There are sociopragmatic functions behind these expressions. Although these expressions seem to violate Grice's maxim of relevance, the interlocutors believe in that they are of great importance to be exchanged in this context. The ultimate purpose of using these expressions is to strengthen the social relationships between the interlocutors as well as their own families. Normally, these interlocutors intend to draw a linkage of kinship and affinity between their own families and the counterpart families. The following example is intended to show solidarity.

Example 43 addresser:-ayu:ha ali3wah kama ta'lamu:na wa na 3lamu

殇 :San ?anna rawa:bi'ia almahabati wa al ?u3wati wa alqurba wa
O brothers. As you all know that the bond of goodwill, brotherhood, kinship, and neighborhood ties between our families have its own deep extending roots. I am very hopeful and confident that this legal relation will reinforce and advocate these relations in this dear province that we are honored to be born and brought up in under the victorious Hashemite leadership.

These verbal expressions assert camaraderie and friendship between people involved in the engagement events. The addresser is trying to emphasize that our friendship, but this friendship has become stronger now due to the latest relationship of marriage. The addresser then goes on to remind his addressees that we all belong to the same province. This is an explicit token of solidarity, which is expressed with reference to Jordan under the Hashemite leadership, which is a shared knowledge between all Jordanians.
The addresser makes the point that all Jordanians love and adore their homeland Jordan. Since all the audience is Jordanians and they are loyal to the Hashemite regime, the addresser uses these expressions to gain an advantageous remark of solidarity for himself and his family. The pragmatic function, manifested in the perlocutionary force, can be interpreted as since we are citizens of one country and ruled by a wise leadership, we hope that we would become one family through accepting our marriage proposal.

It is worth mentioning that such an expression of solidarity and camaraderie is extremely polite and positive face saving. Similarly, consider the following example.


?a Sizza:?

"I welcome you as you are dear Jordanian citizens."

This is also an explicit expression of solidarity. It emphasizes a patriotic feeling between the addresser and his addressees. Another expression of solidarity which is very frequent on engagement speeches, and shares the same pragmatic function is the following:

"Under the rule of his majesty, king Abdullah II son of the late king Hussein"

It is a fact that the bulk of Jordanians are loyal and faithful to their king Abdullah II. This is an appropriate expression of solidarity which completely suits the context within which it is said. The addressees seem always to like it and they take it seriously; so it has the perlocutionary force of persuading them. Moreover, this expression is highly influential and is very apt to be stated in these occasions of engagement.

Example 45 addressee: ?ahalan wa sahlan bikum fi baladikum a88a:ni
"Welcome in your second home town."

Example 46 addressee :-ya: ?ahlna wa ifwitna wa garayibna

"We are relatives and almost one family"

These two expressions are expressive examples of solidarity. They exhibit an enormous deal of politeness and etiquette. In the first expression, it does not necessarily mean that the hosting town or village is really their second home town, but rather it can be pragmatically considered as 'you are accepted among us, and we accept your offer, too. Besides, these expressions highlight intimacy and closeness between the interlocutors.

4.7 Expressions of Camaraderie

There have been marked through certain expressions of camaraderie (i.e. friendship or fellowship) in the speech events of engagement. These
expressions are highly valuable and appreciated by all the participants in the speeches of engagement. These expressions are purposeful in that they imply a sort of mutual intimacy between the interlocutors, and this reflects on the rest of the audience of both parties of the engagement occasions. Some of these expressions are the following.


"This respectable family, which we love, which we have strong friendship in different walks of life."

This is a straightforward expression of camaraderie. The addressee tries to assert a strong relationship of friendship or fellowship. Through saying this, the speaker attempts to gain the listeners' regard and acceptance, thus, the speaker shows politeness and keeps positive face before his listeners.

Other two examples of these camaraderie expressions are these:


"Thanks are due to Allah for making us beloved brothers, and for creating affinity among us in order to increase love and cooperation between us."
Example 49 addressee: -Faha:Śa anna:sabu kalgay0 wa kalma φ: kulama nazala: ɑla al?arði tuzhir wa tinbitu annaba:ta:ti a ɑffibah

"This affinity is like rain, as it falls down, it blossoms, and grows good plants."

In example 48 the addresser expresses his admiration and appreciation of having such a kind of relationship with his addressee. This expression is intended to seek social acceptance, since camaraderie expressions help break the barriers between interlocutors if they exist. They also help enhance the intimate relations. Moreover, this is an intellectual politeness mitigating strategy, because the addresser uses highly prestigious forms of language to address the audience.

Example 49 exhibits the speaker's high level of education as a religious man and a university professor at the same time. This evidently shows an intellectual use of words through the employment of simile and likeness. The speaker likens affinity and marriage relation to the rain which is useful to the soil. The social meaning of using such a simile is to express intimacy and camaraderie, whereas the pragmatic function is to show consideration and respect to the other party. Therefore, this expression is highly influential and respectful. It is also accepted and estimated by all the audience in the speech event.
Expressions of solidarity and camaraderie constitute an integral component of marital engagement speeches. Any speech event of engagement which does not contain the use of these expressions is still lacking and wanting. Therefore, almost all these speeches gathered show a great deal of these expressions. Hence, such a use of these expressions guarantees the interlocutors' positive face and prestige before each other.

In answering the second question of the study, what role do age, literacy, sociocultural, and socioeconomic factors play in the selection of the speakers who are involved in the speech events of engagement? the data, collected from different 12 speech events of engagement in various areas in North Jordan, showed that age, literacy, sociocultural, and socioeconomic factors have a significant role in selecting the representatives of each party.

4.8 Age

Age proves to be one of the most prominent and determining factors in selecting the speakers. Conventionally, the data confirmed that elderly men are highly regarded and respected by different members of the society in North Jordan, through saying:
Example 50 some of the audience "ma: hada hitbadda Šala abu... hu: ilkabi:r tabašna bilgašdíih". 'Nobody is in charge of speaking other than father of... since he is the oldest among us.' Or through stating other formulas such as

Example 51 some of the audience 'itfaddal ya: ?abu fla'n intih ilkabi:r ya: zalamih'. 'Go ahead father of... you are the oldest among us.'

The use of the word '?abu' "father of" is a sign of showing respect and friendliness in Jordanian speech. In the Wikipedia (last modified 2009), the word '?abu' is used as an honorific to express politeness to a male offspring even if he is childless. People use this Arabic cultural bound word as an honorific when addressing each other in informal interactions. It sounds very respectful and polite; also it accounts for the linguistic etiquette norms.

Obviously, these two examples show that Jordanians prefer to select elderly men to be their representatives who are supposed to ask for the girl's hand on behalf of the man's family. In fact, these two expressions entail a higher degree of politeness maintained by the attendants and directed towards the elderly people on the speech event of engagement. Yet, they imply deference, regard, and consideration to the old people among them. Using the appropriate
honorifics to address each other, for example, the word ‘?abu’ which is a sign of respect, is very polite and respectful. Moreover, their use of the highly polite formulas such as ‘if?adaal’ is very significant in this regard. The use of this and other honorifics is a part of linguistic etiquette verbal devices which are intended to show politeness.

There is a strong relationship between age and other factors, namely, literacy, sociocultural, and socioeconomic. Elderly people who are literate, educated, or even occupy or previously occupied certain governmental positions (i.e. authority), are likely to be selected to represent the engagement parties. In some areas in North Jordan, the process of selecting these two eloquent speaking men occurs due to two different factors; age and literacy. Consider the following example.

Example 52 addresser the man's representative

\[ \mathit{alma?ada?ab... wa la: ziltum ?ahlan lil3ai:r wa \mathit{\text{sukran}} } \]

'Family of… this is family… is among you, requesting your daughter's hand miss … for our decent son Mr. … and you have been always benevolent. Thank you.'

These utterances are delivered by an old man. He uses standard Arabic to maintain his request. The speaker seems to be very well
educated. The use of Standard Arabic, sociolinguistically, is expressed to show that the addressee is literate or educated, which is an advantage. Furthermore, age and literacy would contribute to sociocultural and socioeconomic factors. The old literate speaker might occupy a prestigious social status or occupy an important position in the state such as, a university professor, a minister, an officer in the army, or even a director of whatever institution. It is believed that these factors play an important role in the selection of the representatives of the two families. On the other hand, the reply, the act of accepting the offer, comes to be reciprocal in terms of age but not in terms of the variety of Arabic (i.e. it differs in the variety used to accept speaker 1’s offer). The counter representative replies in colloquial or informal Arabic because he is not very well educated.

The representative of the girl's family speaks up to welcome the “Jaha” and accept the request using colloquial Jordanian Arabic. He says:

Example 53 the addressee , the girl's representative - “hayya:k Allah, wa Allah ?ahlann wa sahlan bi:ku wi i∫∫rabu gahwitku”

“You are warmly welcome. Drink your coffee”.

The use of Colloquial Arabic in this quotation signals the speaker's level of education. This addressee is given the right to talk and represent his family because of his age. The way he replies to the other party’s representative is very brief and directive, and he is not very much concerned with using formal Arabic. If he were able to respond to the
request in Standard Arabic, then he would be more prestigious than he really is. Yet, he shows regard, respect and veneration through the utterances he expresses. Moreover, he is very keen on keeping all the norms of linguistic etiquette; politeness, face, and honorifics.

In brief, the formerly presented examples show that age is a decisive factor in selecting the representatives regardless of whatever social or educational background they have.

4.9 Literacy

Literacy plays a crucial role in the selection of the representatives of the two parties in the speech events of engagement. Literacy can be defined as the speaker's ability to speak, read, and write Standard Arabic and this reflects on speech. Generally, it is a fact that any speaker, who can express himself in Standard Arabic is appreciated and admired by his audience in the Jordanian community. The more eloquent he is, the more respect and deference he receives. Halliday (1978:156) argues for the importance of this variable. He maintains that "The variable in question is highlighted as a carrier of social meaning." He further argues that these variables are very significant in shaping standard forms of speech. Consider the following example.

al ihtira:m wa al frrfa:n. “Oh honorable brothers in town…. At first, I would like to seize the opportunity to express my deepest thanks and gratitude to you”.

The example above shows the people’s adherence to Standard Arabic as a medium of communication in these marital speech events.

This quotation exhibits the speaker’s literate faculty as well as his educational background. Clearly, his speech is characterized by the proper idiomatic expression, the choice of words (diction), and the correct syntactic patterns. These features helped select him to be a representative of his own family.

Undoubtedly, such formulas have social implications in that the speaker tries to show a good level of education, so that the listeners would accept and respect him and respond to his request positively. In addition, through the intellectual use of words, he attempts to be more prestigious and highly influential. Such a variety of Standard Arabic is inevitably apt for such formal contexts of language use. Halliday (1978: 217) supports this claim by pointing out:

If a townsman does vary in his speech habits, the variation is normally not random, but relates to the context of situation. He may switch between a neighborhood dialect and some form of standard speech, perhaps with some intermediate degrees; but the choice, though probably entirely subconscious, is likely to depend on who he is
speaking to, what sort of occasion it is and what kind of environment they are in.

In concrete terms, this high variety of language is likely to be used in formal contexts rather than in the informal context of marital engagement. Linguistically, the interlocutors appeal to this variety for prestige purposes.

Another speaker, in another context, would opt for different pragmatic implications through the use of the high variety of Arabic. Consider the following example.

Example 55 the addressee: -?a∫∫ kurukum a∫∫ ukra al aziz maqru:nan bibalüg al-taqdi:r wa ilh:ti:a:m. lihusni istiqba:likum liha:dihi al:la:h. “I am very thankful to you. You have our high regard and respect for your decent welcoming of this “Jahah”.

The speaker here directs his thanks to the listeners through the use of Standard Arabic. The point that is to be made in this connection is that polite formulas are better exchanged in Standard Arabic for being more prestigious and showing a higher degree of deference to the others. Furthermore, it contributes to the speaker conservation of his positive face before his listeners. In other words, the choice of this high variety of Arabic reflects the level of education he has. Apparently, the speaker is very keen on the use of the formal adjectives and descriptions of address (i.e.
honorifics) such as “bibaiq” and “al ᵻāziːz”. Thus, he emphasizes the meaning and makes it more eloquent, or maybe he expresses solidarity and intimacy with his listeners. (c.f Ferguson 1954 and Zughoul 2007).

From the above discussion, we can say that the use of Standard Arabic in such contexts is of captive importance. Similarly, those who master it are given priority to talk even if they are younger than other attendants or invitees. Naturally, Standard Arabic is associated with prestige and esteem; it is sacred since it is the language of the Holy Qur'an. Educated people, who speak Standard Arabic, are likely to be university professors, Islam preachers, engineers, and teachers among others. Those educated people normally occupy high governmental or public positions, such as ministers, deputies, senators, tribal chiefs, officers in the army, or directors among others.

4.10 Sociocultural Factors (socioreligious)

There is no doubt that the speakers in these marital speech events are highly influenced by cultural norms. First and foremost, these speakers very often refer to some religious texts (i.e. Quranic verses and Prophet Mohammad's sayings) to support their points of view and get the addressee's acceptance of marriage proposal. In a nutshell, they might refer to verses from the Holy Qur'an or some sayings by Prophet Mohammad
(peace be upon him), relevant to the occasion of engagement and marriage. The following shows some of these sayings and verses.


(surat arru:m ?ayah22)

And among His signs

Is this, that he created

For you mates from among yourselves, that ye may

Dwell in tranquility with them

And he has put love and mercy between your (hearts):

Verily in that are signs

For those who reflect. Ali (1973:1056) al Roum Chapter, verse22)

The use of such a verse is highly influential and adorable by all the listeners as being said by Allah and directed to his worshippers.

Another example is a saying by prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

Example 57 addesser: -Ya: ma aba:b man ista a a minfakum alba:?ata falyatazawa ¢

"O young people! Whoever among you is able to marry, should marry."

Khan (1990: p.3 vol VII)
The use of these texts reflects the cultural beliefs of these addressers and their addressees, and mostly is an important factor in selecting them to be representatives of the families involved in the engagement events.

Not only does the use of the religious texts reflect a sociocultural background, but also demonstrates the use of the appropriate variety of language. Sometimes this kind of language makes the speaker deviate from the norm and talk about irrelevant topics to marital engagements in order to show his social and cultural background. This seems to be a superficial violation of Grice's maxim of relevance. Levinson (1983: 107) illustrates Grice's maxim of relevance as "make your contributions relevant": thus, whatever utterance in the conversation should be related to the topic in order to eschew obscurity, but this does not necessarily mean so in the following context. Consider the following example.


“O brothers! Today I am requesting your daughter’s hand… for our brother…. In this country, we are very sad because of what is going nowadays in Gaza. But at the same time, we must care about Jordan, too.”
Such a kind of talk is delivered by a former prime minister when was asking for a girl's hand in a marital engagement ceremony.

This piece of speech reflects the speaker’s concerns as well as his political background; it definitely shows that he is a politician. Certainly, his background qualified him to be his group representative as being the most noble-minded among them. Consequently, his political background is a crucial sociolinguistic factor that makes him the head of the 'Jahah'. Moreover, the speaker’s attitudes and cultural views are manifested through such kind of divergent request. Of course, there are certain socio-pragmatic implications that he is very much concerned about, but these are postponed to be tackled elsewhere in this chapter.

4.11 The Socioeconomic Variable

From the researcher's own observation of the engagement speeches, the economic status of the representatives of each party is not as important as the other variables, namely, age, cultural, and educational. In other words, most Jordanian people do not care about whether the speaker is a well-to-do person or not. This is not of prime priority to them. Yet, by virtue of being educated, or occupying a prestigious position whether a tribal chief, a minister, a senator, a deputy, a religious man, or a doctor among others, therefore, he is chosen by either party to speak on behalf of them.
To sum up, based on the researcher's observation, the economic status of the representatives does not affect the kind of language or the linguistic etiquette norms people ought to follow in North Jordan. Nobody has ever been elected to represent his own group or family just because of his wealth.
Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

Chapter one in this study provided a theoretical background, defining sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and linguistic etiquette. Additionally, it drew a special connection between these fields of study. It showed how the study of language correlated to the social situations and contexts they are expressed in. A full image of the marital speech events in terms of settings (i.e., where and when these speeches take place) has been presented throughout this chapter in terms of the cultural norms and traditions. It also denoted certain linguistic etiquette devices that exist in the speeches of engagement. In conclusion, the purpose of the study was stated as an examination of the linguistic etiquette devices, politeness, face, and the role of the certain variables that play a crucial factor in selecting the speakers.

Chapter two has been devised to explore the relevant studies to linguistic etiquette, from the earlier study of Geertz (1972) up to the latest study on the field carried out by Al-Natour (2004). It reviewed diverse studies on politeness theory right from Brown and Levinson (1978) and up to O'Driscoll (2007). Language and social contexts are interrelated; therefore, there have been studies describing the relation between these concepts right from the earlier work of Labov (1972) up to wardhaugh (1986). It was
worth reviewing studies concerning the relevant speech acts, these are namely, greeting, complimenting, and requesting. It considered works conducted on Arabic and other global languages. Moreover, there had been a necessity of reviewing some works in Arabic on speech events of engagement in Jordan in order to check there was any linguistic etiquette account tackled. The most notable of them were Al-Uzaizi (1974), Obeidat (1986), and Al-Tal (2006) which is the last to delineate the social contexts of engagement in Jordan. These studies investigated the speech events of engagement from social perspectives without giving an appropriate linguistic account of the speeches exchanged, which is manifested in the aim of this study.

Chapter three showed how the data of this study had been collected and analysed. The data had been collected via recording and note taking procedures. About 12 speech events of engagement had been recorded. Next, these recordings and notes were transliterated and translated into English. Then they were elaborated and considered linguistically.

Chapter four dealt with the appropriate linguistic analysis of the gathered data. It examined the main three speech acts of the speech events of engagement: greeting, complimenting, and requesting. First, greetings were divided into standard greeting formula and colloquial greeting formulas. Complimenting constitutes a considerable part of the speech event of engagement. It can be used to express various socio-pragmatic
meanings such as, solidarity, intimacy, and courtesy. Requests are the focal point in the engagement speeches. They can be mostly expressed in the plural form to show respect and deference. These requests formulas can be expressed in Standard or Colloquial Arabic, yet they are very polite.

Many other linguistic components have been presented included in the speech event of engagement. First, the religious texts exchanged were highly influential and acceptable by all the audience. Second, honorifics were classified into two types: honorifics with forms of addresss and situational honorifics. In this chapter, there have been marked certain expressions of solidarity and others of camaraderie. A plausible socio-pragmatic account of these speeches has been presented in this chapter.

Furthermore, chapter four dealt with the variables that determine who speaks or how to select the right person who is in charge of presenting his own family. First, age is one of the most important factors of selecting these persons. It showed that elderly men are prefrebly given the priority to speak on behalf of their families. Literacy was proved to be of prime importance, too. The sociocultural factors correlate to religion, political, social, and academic perspectives respectively. The socioeconomic variable had a weak contribution to the process of selecting these men.
5.2 Conclusions

The study came up with the following conclusions: the linguistic components of the marital speech events have been observed thoroughly. These are manifested in the speech acts of greeting, complimenting, and requesting, in addition to other linguistic components such as the religious texts, honorifics, expressions of solidarity, and expressions of camaraderie. The three speech acts of greeting, requesting, and complimenting are the primary linguistic components of the marital speech event. These three speech acts are meant to reveal politeness and positive face; besides, they involve other mitigating strategies like showing deference, veneration, and regard. Requesting and accepting the request are equally the most important parts of the speech event of engagement; since it has been noticed that these two speech acts abide by positive linguistic etiquette norms, which are unbreakable in this connection. Moreover, certain socio-pragmatic functions are associated with requests such as showing deference, prestige, and appreciation.

The use of the religious texts in the speech event is highly appreciated. These might be said to urge young Muslims to get married, to accept the request, or even to express the interlocutors' commitment to their religion, Islam. Furthermore, honorifics lend themselves to the speech event of engagement because they are instances of linguistic etiquette.
Interlocutors use honorifics to express politeness, deference, and consideration to one another and to the families concerned.

Similarly, expressions of solidarity and camaraderie were also exchanged on the speech event of engagement. Basically, these are meant to reinforce the social relations between the interlocutors. These expressions imply intimacy, courtesy, and friendship. They have been noted to be instances of linguistic etiquette and politeness in the speech events of engagement in North Jordan.

The study revealed that variables such as age, literacy, and socioeconomic and sociocultural factors have strong influence onto the process of selecting the interlocutors. Age factor is the strongest among them all, since people respect and appreciate old people in Jordanian speech. On the other hand, literacy was exhibited through the intellectual use of the Standard Arabic variety; which gives more prestige to the speakers and shows positive politeness and positive face. Regarding the sociocultural factor, most interlocutors delivered some relevant religious texts, whereas some others talked about a totally different subject to indicate their social status. The socioeconomic variable was not of prime importance to the process of selecting the representatives of the two parties.

It is worth mentioning that these variables are not arbitrary, but rather abide by the norms of linguistic etiquette, and pragmatic functions among which are politeness, consideration, deference, and respect. These
variables also contribute to the interlocutors' ability of preserving their positive face before the others.

5.3 Recommendations

The study calls for further research to be applied on the speeches exchanged in marital engagement occasions in North Jordan concerning the following:

1- It lends itself to the field of discourse and the discoursal devices (unity, coherence, cohesion… etc.) to be analysed thoroughly.

2- It is also recommended to investigate the diglossic situation that might exist in it.

3- Since the speeches are in Arabic, there is a need to conduct a study investigating the translatability of them into English in terms of equivalence and meaning.

4- The study is a field where the corpus analysis can be applied.
References


Great Britain: Penguin Book


Arabic References

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Appendices

1


almutakadi8 a88a:ni ašay3 abu… šay3 al ?a:ri:rah


Speaker 1 a senator in the parliament

By the name of Allah, the most gracious the most merciful. God's peace and Mercy be upon you. Allah Almighty said (And among His signs Is this, that he created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them and he has put love and mercy between your hearts): Verily in that are signs For those who reflect. Ali (1973:1056)

His Apostle also said to address and encourage young Muslims to get married “O young people! Whoever among you is able to marry, should marry”. Khan (1990:p.3 Vol. VII).

Dear brothers! Members of family…. You are really generous in addition to your brothers – in – law and relatives, headed by his Excellency tribal shaeikh Abu (father of) …. Our big brother! Our dearest brother in this province. I would like to greet you with the best greeting you deserve. God's peace and Mercy be upon you. I would like to express my best
thanks associated with appreciation and respect, for your warm welcoming of this assembly (Jaha). Members of family…, their relatives, their brothers-in-law, and friends have come to you today in order to ask for your daughter's hand miss… for our son Mr…. I would say truthfully that the suitor enjoys good manners, going well with others and religious commitment. In fact, dear brothers, as you know and we all know that friendliness, brotherhood, kinship, and neighborhood ties between our two families are deeply rooted and extended. I am very confident and hopeful that this affinity will strengthen and fortify these ties between our families, in this dear and adorable province, that we are all honored that we were brought up and spent our life in, in our beloved home dearest Jordan which we are proud of as we are proud of its victorious Hashemite leadership. I am also confident and hopeful with what I know about the girl's father and the man's father of good manners, makes me sure that your daughter undoubtedly is enjoying a decent life with her family. We hope that you reply positively to our request of your daughter's hand. God bless you!

The second speaker is the tribal sheikh.

You are welcome. In the Name of Allah, the most gracious, the most merciful. Dear virtuous brothers, our relatives and friends. At first, in this blessed meeting, I would like to say, on the behalf of the girl's father in particular and on the behalf of the whole tribe in general: we are very proud of having affinity between our two families. This affinity had been initiated a century ago. We warmly welcome you, with the best and the most beautiful greeting. In fact, we are linked by brotherhood and religion ties. Therefore, your request is accepted. Drink you coffee
a ?SSala:tu wa assala:m?ila nabyinna Muhammad annabi al ?frabi
?ala?ykum wa rahmatu Allah.

bism Allah arrahma:n arrahi:m wa bihi nasta?:i:n wa a ?SSala:tu wa
The first speaker (a former prime minister), currently a senator and a politician, very well educated.

"Allah's prayers and peace be upon our Arab Hashemite custodian Prophet Mohammad. Family … has truly honored me to speak on behalf of them today. We are coming to this generous assembly, to this generous family…. O brothers! We are here today to ask for your daughter's hand miss… to our brother Mr …. Today is very hard for us all because of what is happening in Gaza now. Our hearts are filled with sadness for what is happening in Gaza. But our hearts must care about Jordan, too. We should obey and follow our Hashemite leadership. This home defies all conspiracies. We hope that you accept our offer. This home is very strong by its men, by its institutions, and by its leadership.

(God's peace and Mercy be upon you).

The second speaker (a tribal sheikh, a retired officer in the Army, the oldest, and very well educated).

In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most merciful from whom use seek help.

Allah's prayers and peace be upon our Arab Hashemite generous Prophet Mohammad.

Your Excellency, chief and, prime minister and senator, his benevolent companions! You Excellencies! In all meanings of respect and deference I welcome you on behalf of my family… we hope that Allah protect our country, dearest Jordan and the Jordanian people. And may Allah preserve
safety, security, and repose for this home, under his wise and brave leadership, the leadership of the noble and Hashemite his Majesty King Abdullah, Son of the late king Hussein. Dear brothers! As his Excellency prime minister, the head of this "Jaha" has indicated, life goes on. Therefore, man should continue building this universe. I welcome you, as you are dear Jordanian citizens and generous "Jahah" that has honored us today. I would say on the behalf of the girl's father, my kinsman, general major..., that the "Jaha's request is accepted, and my cousin, assigned me to say that he agrees to marry his daughter to your son, according to Allah's and his Prophet's teachings.

3

∫∫ayx al ḥāli rah akba rahum sinan yaqra? wayaktub mu8a qaf


2- ra ḥu:l kabi:r mu8aqaf gayr ka:Šil ʿalla ʾaha:dah ḥa:mūyāh masa annu:r


Speaker 1 tribal sheikh

From God I seek refuge from the damned Satan. In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. Noble Jahah" Good evening May Allah reward you well for honoring us to attend this good assembly which Allah and his Apostle recommend. Allah Almighty says: And among his sign…).

Allah's Apostle (PBUH) says: (Get married and give birth, since I am going to boast you on the Judgment day. My brother! father of …! Good evening!

Speaker 2 (An old man, educated with a special disposition. He is not a university degree holder. Good evening.

1. The "Jahah", consisting of some of the families in Irbid province, is honored to be before you. We ask for your daughter's hand… for our son in accordance with Allah and His Apostle's teachings, we are very hopeful to accept our marriage proposal.

2. "If a person of acceptable religion or character presents himself for marriage, marry him".

1. May Allah reward you every thing good.

4

Alakbar sina:n bayna alkudu:r mu8a:qaf


al?akbar sinan gayir mut filim wa gayir mu8aqaf
110

**Speaker 1. (Uneducated, but literate able to read and write). The oldest among them.**

In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. Allah Almighty says: And among his signs is And among His signs Is this, that he created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them and he has put love and mercy between your (hearts): Verily in that are signs For those who reflect. Ali (1973:1056)

Bani…. Tribe! This is …. Family present among you today. We are asking your daughter's hand… to our decent son. You are still benevolent. Thanks before your coffee gets cold; nevertheless, the noble coffee never gets cold.)

**The second speaker ( the oldest among them, uneducated)**

Allah greet you. You are welcome. Drink your coffee on what you have come for. We are one family and we are honored to have a marriage relation with you.

5

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<tr>
<th>Sayx alSa?i:rah muta:Salim wa muSaqa:</th>
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The Tribal sheikh (a retired officer) very well educated the oldest among the audience, the most noble.

Dear virtuous brothers in … Town.

At the beginning of this meeting, I hope that you allow me to grant you my ample respect and gratitude. Dear brothers! We are sons of family… very happy to have affinity with you, family…. This respectable family that we have friendship, goodwill, and cooperation in different walks of life. Moreover, I am very proud to have affinity with all families in … town. On the behalf of the generous Jaha, we request your daughter's hand to our decent son… and we hope a positive reply. God bless you. God's peace and Mercy be upon you.

The second speaker 'sheikh' (Tribal Chief)

God's peace and Mercy be upon you, too. In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most merciful, Allah's peace and prayers be upon the
most honorable among the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). Dear brothers! Generous Jahah. Allah's peace…. At first we would warmly greet you. You are welcome. In your second village… with regard to your request, we accept it, and we bless it for the bride and the groom.

We pray to Allah to grant the couples successes and prosperity. Again we congratulate the couples. Drink your coffee, you are all blessed.

6

bayna alku:bu:r

al \ayi:bih elkari:mih inku tigbalu: \ala:bnna wu hu i:d binitku ... \ala
sunat Allah wa rasu:luh. Wa ih\nna ?ahil wa gara:yib wa hai mi\[ ?awa:l
marrah bi \Si:r biynana:sab

almutakdi8 a88a:ni ?akbarahum sinan gayr muta \J'im

-allah mhayi:k iff\rabu ga:hwitku w ibi:j \rru: billi: ?a\i:tu bi:h.

The first speaker (the oldest )

“Good evening. As you are good and generous, we are coming to you hoping you would accept our marriage proposal according to the teachings of Allah Almighty and his Prophet. This is not the first time we have a marriage relation. We had always been relatives and cousins- in-law”.

The second speaker( the oldest, uneducated)

“May Allah greet you. Drink your coffee and you will get what you have come for".
Speaker 1 (a supervisor of English, and an M.A holder)
"In the name of allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. Good evening! Allah almighty said: (O man kind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things). Dear brothers! Members of … family. We are coming for you today to ask for your daughter's hand… according to Allah and His Apostle Mohammad's teachings. We hope that you accept our proposal."

Speaker 2 (an old man, the girl's oldest cousin)
"You are welcome! We have had affinity for a long time. We have acquaintance with the suitor's family for a long time. They are good and decent, and we would never find a good family as such. On the behalf of my relatives and the girl's father, we would like to inform you we accept your proposal. You are very good and kind that can never be rejected. Remember always that the girl's is your responsibility, especially her husaband; you should care about and appreciate."
Almutakadi\textsuperscript{8} al?a:wal (ra ʤul muta\textsuperscript{8}\textsuperscript{a}lim mus\textsuperscript{aq}a:f gany ya[l ga:l man Șib kuku:mmi: kabi:r)


Almutakadi\textsuperscript{8} a88a:ni (؟akbar alku\textsuperscript{d}u:r sinan gayir mut ってしまった wa gayir mus\textsuperscript{a}qaf)
i[ra:bu gahwitku wa ib\textsuperscript{rr}u: ya: ?abu... tarra ilbinit ?ʤ\textsuperscript{a}:tkum

Speaker 1(an educated man, rich, and preoccupies a prestigious governmental position)

"Allah's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you! Allah almighty said in his book (the Holy Quraa'an) (And among His signs Is this, that he created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them and he has put love and mercy between your (hearts): Verily in that are signs For those who reflect. Ali (1973:1056). His apostle (peace be upon him) said " ("O young people! Whoever among you
is able to marry, should marry”. Khan (1990:p.3 Vol. VII). Therefore, our 'jahah' today of the suitor's family, relatives, and cousins, have come to your pure house to ask for your daughter's hand… for our son… thus, we accomplish our religion methods and teachings. We are very hopeful that you accept our offer in order to renew relations and affinity ties between us, in favour of the reform of this nation, under the rule of His Majesty king Abdullah II, son of late king Hussein. We are very hopeful again that you would accept our offer.

Speaker 2 (the oldest among the audience, uneducated and probably illiterate)

"Have your coffee father of… you have what you asked for."

Speaker 1 (one of the family's representatives, and the chief of the village)

"It's evening time. So good evening. We have the honor to ask for your daughter's hand… for our son on the dowry and the conditions agreed upon in advance".

Speaker 2 (the girl's father, an old man and uneducated)

"May allah greet you. You have what you asked for. Drink your coffee, and welcome again."


Almustakadi8 a88a:ni (wa:lid al ?aru:s ra ءو:ل kabi:r)

Speaker 1 (one of the family's representatives, and the chief of the village)

"It's evening time. So good evening. We have the honor to ask for your daughter's hand… for our son on the dowry and the conditions agreed upon in advance".

Speaker 2 (the girl's father, an old man and uneducated)

"May allah greet you. You have what you asked for. Drink your coffee, and welcome again."

bismi Allah arrahma:n arrahi:m qa:la ta:?i:la (wa min aya:tihi ?an 3alaqalakum min ?anfusikum ʔazwa:خان lita:skunu illi:ha wa ءو:ل ʕala


Speaker 1 (a religious man, and a preacher in the Islamic department)
"In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. Allah Almighty said: (And among His signs is this, that he created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them and he has put love and mercy between your (hearts): Verily in that are signs For those who reflect. Ali (1973:1056) we would like to thank you for such a
great welcoming which indicates your good origins and the good way your guests. We are one family, indeed. Islam defies monasticism because it contradicts the human instinct and tendencies of getting married. Allah's Apostle(PBUH) said: “Whoever is affluent should marry. If he doesn’t marry, he is not with me”. (http://ibnayyub.wordpress.com). Marriage preserves the human existence and breed. Allah’s Apostle(PBUH) said: "get married, since I will boast of you on the judgement day". Prophet Mohammad also urged people to marry their daughters. He said: “If a person of acceptable religion and character presents himself for marriage, marry him, otherwise, there would be widespread sedition and rampant corruption in the land”. (http://www.Islamonline.net). Allah Almighty said: (and women of purity are for men of purity)

You and your family are good and generous. We pray to Allah that you accept the offer according to Allah's and His Apostle's teachings and methods. Allah's peace and Mercy be upon you."

Speaker 2 (an educated man, preoccupies a high social position) a tribal chief

"Generous 'Jahah', you are welcome. Islam has urged marriage and prohibited excessive dowries. There is an Arabic proverb which says: 'A mare can be judged by its rein, whereas a woman can be judged by her sleeves.' Besides, your daughter enjoys good manners as well as immense pedigree apart from that she is religious. Your 'jahah' is highly respected that one would never say 'no' to you. You are welcome at our house which we consider yours, , and among our family which we consider yours, too. Drink your coffee and we accept your proposal of marriage. If Allah well."
Jordanian Wedding Invitation as a Genre: An Analysis of Rhetorical Structure and Linguistic Features

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ABSTRACT
The present study is an attempt to conduct a genre analysis of Jordanian wedding invitations. Drawing on the model of genre analysis proposed by Bhatia (1993), a sample of 200 Jordanian wedding invitation cards has been collected and examined to provide an overview of the main linguistic devices used in the texts and analyze to what extent such devices have a social purpose. The corpus analysis revealed that Wedding invitation cards go beyond announcing the wedding of two people to mirroring and deconstructing the social practices, values and beliefs of the Jordanian society that shape the construction of this genre. I hope that the results of this study will be of help in further raising cultural awareness.

1. INTRODUCTION
A wedding invitation is a letter asking the recipient to attend a wedding ceremony. It is typically written in formal, third-person language and sent out one to two weeks before the finalized wedding date. Like any other invitation, it is the privilege and duty of the host to issue invitations. The communicative purpose of a wedding invitation is to inform people that a wedding party is going to be held in a specific time and place and to call upon them to participate in this occasion by their presence. In Jordanian culture, as in all cultures, the written wedding invitation card is characterized by certain generic textual and linguistic features that distinguish from other types of written genres; it is a traditional text in which socio-cultural, as well as religious conventions play a huge role. Wedding invitation cards belong to a group of genres referred to by Miller (1984) as “homely discourse”, which includes, as Al-Ali (2006, p. 692) argues, announcement texts of everyday life such as birth, weddings, graduations, obituary announcements and the like. A wedding invitation card is a recognizable ‘homely’ discourse that is widely known to people all over the world. That is to say, its content is easily predictable in terms of the mention of the name of a bride and a groom, and the time and place of the wedding ceremony, etc.

In spite of their obvious prevalence and uniqueness, wedding invitation cards have long been understudied homely genres in comparison with other types of genres. This research attempts to unravel some of the mysteries surrounding this popular widespread communicative event from which individuals can learn the practices and rules of specific social groups in a society. Ventola (1987, p. 6) argues that “learning foreign languages is learning how to behave linguistically in cultures other than one’s own”; thus, this study will be useful for those people who are concerned with becoming familiar with and taking part in the social life of members from Jordanian culture. Moreover, this study serves as a useful resource about Jordanian society in terms of language use in a particular rhetorical context, as well as socio-cultural and religious background. In other words, this study is a window that provides a view into various aspects of Jordanian culture and a guide to the way through which Jordanian people construct and organize their wedding invitation cards and obituary announcements. The present paper seems to be an interesting enterprise, because while there is substantial body of research on the rhetorical structure of wedding invitations (Clynes and Henry, 2005; Al-Ali, 2006; Momani and Al-Refaei, 2010; Sharif and Yarmohammadi, 2013; Sawalmeh, 2014; Sawalmeh, 2015), it is difficult to think of a study in the existing literature devoted to the way that linguistic choices of a varying nature are related to the sociocultural and religious dimensions in wedding invitations. With this in mind, the present study is organised as follows. After providing an overview of the previous research that has explored rhetorical generic moves rhetorical functions and linguistic features in the organization of this genre, I shall discuss the practicalities of how the data collection was conducted, and the model taken to
data analysis. The fourth section will be dedicated to exploring the linguistic realizations of the rhetorical moves that characterize this genre, together with illustrative examples from the corpus. The conclusions obtained from the analysis will bring this study to an end.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND
The present study draws on Bhatia (1993) genre analysis. The concept of genre has been discussed by several researchers from different fields such as literature, rhetoric, writing, linguistics, and anthropology. One of the most influential definitions of genre has been given by Bhatia (1993). He has proposed a comprehensive definition of genre:

It is a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs. Most often it is highly structured and conventionalized with constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional value. These constraints, however, are often exploited by the expert members of the discourse community to achieve private intentions within the framework of socially recognized purpose(s) (P.49).

Accordingly, Bhatia (1993) conceives of genre analysis as a means to account for not only the way text is conventionally structured but also for the way it is interpreted, used and exploited in specific contexts to achieve certain goals. In the field of linguistics, genre analysis is used to describe the structure and stylistic features of texts (Coffin, 2001). What is of great significance in genre analysis is the proper identification of the communicative purposes of a text as well as the use of language within institutionalized settings controlled by communicative conventions created by a group of individuals in a defined discourse community (Bonyadi, 2012, p. 87). So, in this study, the analysis of wedding invitation cards will focus on the main linguistic choices associated to the generic moves, and the socio-cultural explanations for the choices of structure and linguistic features.

In the past few years, two studies investigating the discourse of wedding invitation cards have been carried out in Jordan (Al-Ali, 2006, Momani & Al-Refaei, 2010). In a study which explored written wedding invitations, Al-Ali (2006) used a genre and critical discourse analysis to examine religious affiliations and masculine power in the texts. He found that religious affiliations and masculine power played a crucial role in shaping the overall component moves, and coloured the naming practices and lexical choices in the genre. His analysis of a large dataset of 200 Arabic written wedding invitation cards, for instance, revealed that this genre opened with verses from the Holy Qur’an in the form of formulaic and ritualistic quotations which promote marriage in Islam. Masculinity and patriarchal kinship culture then ran through the ritualized invitation text. For example, the “Heading” move began with stating the names of the couple’s tribes, and such social forces kept on dominating the representations of the wedding inviters, the guests, the couple and even the time and the place of the wedding ceremony.

In another study carried out in Jordan, Momani and Al-Refaei (2010), using model of analysis proposed by Holmes (1997) and a modified version of the model outlined by Clynes and Henry, investigated the generic structure of Jordanian wedding invitation cards in order to find out what components Jordanian inviters employ to articulate the communicative purpose of these invitations. They also investigated the effect of socio-cultural aspects on the generic structure of wedding invitation cards through surveying many Jordanian people’s opinions using a questionnaire and interviews. The sample of the study consisted of 55 invitation cards from a collection of 150 cards covering the periods from 1979 until 2006. They found that the wedding invitation card genre in Jordan was built around obligatory and optional moves which communicate a lot of information about socio-cultural values and norms in Jordanian society that affect the structure of such genre. Obligatory and optional moves were: (1) “Opening”; (2) “Identifying the celebrating families”; (3) “Stating the names of people issuing the invitations”; (4) “Inviting the guest”; (5) “Identifying the bride and groom”; (6) “Ceremonial arrangements”; (7) “Closing”; and (8) “Notification”. Even though Al-Ali and Momani and Al-Refaei’s studies have on the whole yielded excellent and interesting results, they do not have a number of shortcomings. Firstly, they concentrated only on the common generic text structures or components of the Jordanian wedding-invitation genre. And secondly, they did not provide in-depth analysis of the linguistic patterns which characterize the moves of wedding invitation genre. The present study takes a wider perspective to genre analysis, focusing on the sociolinguistic discourse variability and dynamics in light of the underlying academic, social and institutional motives and forces. Moreover, Al-Ali’s and Momani and Al-Refae’s studies were conducted
in 2006 and 2010 respectively, and it will be very interesting to see if the language of wedding invitation card has changed in the eight years that separate these studies, as examining this genre over a longer period of time might reveal new structural and linguistic differences, and show how such genre can evolve and develop over time under the impact of social and religious forces that affect the linguistic and textual choices of the genre.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Corpus
Prior to collecting the sample, the researcher checked different types of written wedding invitations. From this preliminary linguistic check, it was observed that there were no significant differences in the generic structures of these invitations. Thus, a sample of 500 Jordanian written wedding invitation cards, covering the period from 2000 to 2018, were selected randomly for the present study from several sources. Some of the wedding invitation cards were collected by visiting some local card stores based in the area where the researcher lives, while other wedding invitation were accumulated from within the circle of the researcher’s family, colleagues, friends, neighbours and relatives who were asked to provide the researcher with as many wedding invitation cards as possible.

As a Jordanian, I am very active in attending many wedding ceremonies in the Jordanian society; therefore, through personal observation and taking part in several Jordanian wedding events, I have been able to observe how the weddings are carried out by Jordanian people who have different customs and habits. Moreover, as a member of the Jordanian discourse community which constructs and produces the wedding invitation texts, I already have the experience and background knowledge of the Jordanian community and the communicative conventions related to it. This in turn provided me with the necessary information needed about the effect of religious and socio-cultural practices and norms on the wedding invitations.

3.2 Procedures
The theoretical assumptions on which the present paper relies are mainly derived from Bhatia’s (1993) genre analysis approach. This socially and linguistically-oriented approach goes beyond the language analysis of texts and relates the linguistic patterns and elements found in wedding invitation cards to the social conventions of the wedding rituals. In other word, the strength of this approach lies in the fact that it goes far beyond the examination of patterns of text organization and lexicogrammatical description of language use in a given genre text (thin description) by incorporating the social context and the communicative purposes of the genre under study (thick description).

As far as the analysis of micro-linguistic features of the genre under study, it was divided up into meaningful units, essentially on the basis of linguistic clues, and then it was analysed for the purpose of investigating the salient lexicogrammatical choices and strategies which characterize each identified rhetorical move; that is, to look into their linguistic features from syntactic and rhetorical.

Arabic language is very rich in rhetorical and stylistic devices which are utilized to perform specific rhetorical functions in their context through invoking meaning that goes beyond the lexical meaning of words (El-dali, 2012; Abdullah et al., 2016). It is not surprising, therefore, to find out that the genre of Arabic wedding invitation cards constitutes a fertile ground for the proliferation of such linguistic and literary devices (Fernandez, 2006; Bressler, 2009). The microlinguistic features examined in this study are considered the most common ones used in the genres of wedding invitation cards. The choice of these linguistic features was not at random. Rather, certain moves of the genres, apart from their rhetorical functions, are characterised by specific distinct stylistic features associated with them. For example, some rhetorical features (e.g., alliteration, rhyme, simile, metaphor, consonance, and assonance) in wedding invitation cards are very specific to the “Opening” move which is characterised by denoting different types of poetry. These rhetorical devices make the writing impressive, vivid and interesting. Therefore, the bride and groom use them to make their wedding cards impressive and arouse the potential readers’ interest of reading the wedding invitation card and thus encouraging them to attend the wedding ceremony, which is the main communicative purpose of the genre.

In addition, specific nouns and adjectives with positive connotations are among the most common syntactic features realized in the genres of wedding invitation cards. For example, in wedding invitation texts, nouns and adjectives of semantic field of love have been employed by the couples in the “Opening” and “Deferred ending” move to express the romantic feelings and emotions; and promote love, peace and harmony between them. These nouns and adjectives which were found to be specific to certain moves include happiness, wishes, perfume, flower, moon, prince, diamond, happy, prosperous, generous, to mention but few.
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before examining the linguistic features of the genre under study, it is of significance to initially present the generic structure (moves) of the wedding invitation genre. The elements in a typical wedding invitation card appear in the following order: Opening, Identifying the celebrating families, Identifying the inviter of the wedding, Requesting the presence of the guests, Identifying the bride and groom, Stating wedding ceremony arrangements, Deferential ending, and Notifications. This section traces and explores the micro-linguistic features of this genre with the intention of seeing how Jordanian brides and grooms organize their wedding invitation cards. It focuses on salient syntactic and rhetorical properties.

4.1 Syntactic Features

This section presents the prevalent syntactic features in the wedding invitation text such as sentence length, sentence complexity, verb tenses, nouns, adjectives, prepositions, ellipsis, etc.

Sentence Length

Sentence length, in this study, is going to be determined by calculating the number of words for each move in the wedding invitation card corpus by hand, i.e., to find out how many words constitute each discoursal move in the wedding invitation card genre. The analysis of the data indicated that there is variation in sentence length across wedding invitation cards. More specifically, wedding invitation cards have many short sentences in comparison to long sentences.

A close examination of the data showed that the “Identifying the celebrating families” move, “Identifying the inviter of the wedding” move, “Identifying the bride and groom” move, “Deferential ending” move and “Notifications” move are characterized by short sentences, while the other moves; namely, the “Opening” move, “Requesting the presence of the guests” move and “Stating wedding ceremony arrangements” move are characterized by long sentences.

In the light of what was mentioned above, it can be argued that Jordanian brides and grooms, as members of a discourse community, seem to show a clear preference for short sentences when constructing their wedding invitation card text, perhaps due to the fact that they want to reduce the cost of such wedding invitations for economic reasons. Put in a different way, they are trying to save space and money because words cost a lot of money when writing the wedding invitation in Jordan.

The objective of the corpus analysis is to figure out the preferred verb tense used in each move of the wedding invitation cards. In general, the analysis of the data suggested some variation as far as the tense choice and frequency of occurrence among the moves were concerned.

The data showed that the present tense and the past tense were the preferred tenses in Move 1 (Opening) and Move 7 (Deferential Ending), and that the present tense was used more frequently in these two moves. One thing worthy of note is that the present tense was the only tense restricted to Move 4 (Requesting the presence of the guests) and Move 8 (Notifications). It is interesting to note, however, that the other moves, viz., Move 2 (Identifying the celebrating families), Move 3 (Identifying the inviter of the wedding) and Move 6 (Stating wedding ceremony arrangements) do not contain any present, past or future tenses at all.

The results of the study revealed that the present simple tense has proved to be the mostly used tense in the wedding invitation card genre. The main reason for the predominance of the present simple tense in the moves results from the fact that it expresses the future. That is, the bride and groom, who are responsible for issuing the wedding invitation card, try to tell readers of the invitation that the wedding ceremony is going to happen in the near future, hence using the simple present tense to express the future most frequently. Consider the following illustrative examples:

- **tabda? ŋalsahra masa? yawm ŋalxami:s**
  (The evening party starts on Thursday evening)

- **yatafarafa:n bidaqwatikum lihuḍur haʃlaʃ zaʃaʃf**
  (X and Y request the honour of your presence to attend the wedding ceremony)

Nouns

A careful analysis of the data of the present study yielded the result that nouns in these wedding invitation cards are abundant and plentiful. A close look at the “Opening” move shows that it includes nouns such as “happiness” (سرور suru:r); “love” (الحب ȋlḥub); “wishes” (املات ȋmlaṭaːt); “longing” (شوق ʃawawq); “fondness” (الآدابة Ɂalwud); “tranquillity” (الرومة Ɂarhmah); and “mercy” (الرحمة Ɂarhmah). The Jordanian couple want their marriage to be filled with love, happiness, serenity, and contentment; they want it to be a source of joy and fulfillment their whole life long; therefore, they use these nouns in their wedding invitation cards to express their romantic feelings and emotions for the happy occasion of marriage.
The groom tends to express his great love, appreciation, and romance for his soon-to-be wife through describing her as being similar to someone or something else. For example, he compares his wife using one of the following nouns: “princess” (أميرة ے) ے; “flower” (زهرة زهرا); “moon” (قمر مكرم); “sun” (سمىء بحر بحر); “gold” (ذهب ذهب); “diamonds” (الماس اللؤلؤ); “knight” (فانتاسية فانتازيا); “treasure” (كنز كنز). The “Identifying the celebrating families” move is mainly characterised by the extensive use of proper nouns such as “Al-Omari الأمري”; “Al-Sawalme بلال”; “Al-Khateeb الخطيب”. These proper nouns represent the names of the couple’s families. They use the family name to reflect their solidarity, pride and belongingness to their tribes.

The “Identifying the inviters of the wedding” move and the “Identifying the bride and groom” move were characterised by the use of many common nouns such as “doctor” (الدكتور دكتور); “teacher” (الإساتذة الأستاذ); “engineer” (المهندس المهندس); “lawyer” (المحامي المحمي); “judge” (القاضي القاضي); “pilot” (الطيار الطيار); and “pharmacist” (الصيدلاني الصيدلي). These common nouns, which represent professional and academic titles, are used by the inviters and the couple to demonstrate that they occupy high social positions and are of high social statuses in the Jordanian society.

Adjectives

The results of the analysis showed that the adjectives are employed in four moves only, viz., the “Opening” move, the “Stating wedding ceremony arrangements” move, the “Deferential ending” move and the “Notifications” move.

A detailed analysis of the “Opening” move, the “Deferential ending” move and the “Notifications” move in the present corpus revealed that the issuers of the wedding invitation card tend to indicate the significance of Jordanian wedding by using some verses of the Holy Qur’an, extracts of Prophet Mohammed’s prayers or invocations, or a few lines of Arabic poetry to bestow blessings on the bride and groom for the wedding journey. Therefore, when constructing their wedding invitation card, the bride and groom use one of the following key lexemes (adjectives) that reflect the religious importance of wedding: “good” (صالح صالح); “complete” (مكتمل مكتمل); “happy” (سعد سعيد); “generous” (كرم كريم); “prosperous” (عابر عامر عامر); “prosperous” (عابر عامر عامر); “prosperous” (عابر عامر عامر). Ellipsis

Ellipsis is one of the prominent linguistic phenomena found in the Arabic language, in both written and spoken forms. Ellipsis can be defined as the omission of unnecessary words or phrases from a sentence. A careful examination of the wedding invitation card genre revealed that there are four types of ellipsis. These types include verbal ellipsis, nominal ellipsis, prepositional phrase ellipsis and vocative particle ellipsis.

The date of the farewell party starts on Thursday evening at 5 o’clock)
contraction of words as an economic way to save words and spaces, but it is attention-grabbing and arousing for the readers.

4.2 Rhetorical features

Alliteration
Alliteration can be defined as the repetition of the initial consonant sound or letter in two or more words in close succession, as in this illustrative example taken from Leech (1966, p. 187): “Built Better by Burco for you”. Analysis of the data revealed that this rhetorical device occurs in four moves; namely, the “Opening” move, “Stating wedding ceremony arrangements” move and the “Deferential ending” move. However, the alliteration does not occur in the other moves of the wedding invitation cards. Consider the following examples:

الله بارك لنا وبارك عليها واجع بينهما في خير
allahuma ba: riff lahuuma wa ba: rik s:nayihima: wad: maq bainihima: fi sayr
(May Allah grant blessings to them and bind them with harmony and goodness)

Rhyme
Rhyme refers to the repetition of the similar or identical sound or sounds of two or more words, especially at the ends of lines of poetry. The most common rhyme pattern used by poets is called “end rhyme”. This pattern simply means that the end words of lines of poetry rhyme together. It is clear that effective rhymes can be an important device in wedding invitation card genre. Analysis of the data revealed that rhyme was used in the “Opening” move only, most often in poetry produced by the bride and groom. Examples of this rhyme can be found in the following examples from the “Opening” move:

بشير أحبابي وأهل موذي وكل قريب يريد مسرتي
ba: rif ʔabiba: ʔi wa: θahl mawadati wakul qari:b yuri:d masaratii
(Convey good news to my loved people, and every relative who wants my happiness)

Simile
A simile is one of the most popular techniques used in Arabic poetry. It can be defined as a figure of speech in which a comparison between two unlike elements is made, often marked by use of the words “like”, “so”, “as”, “as if”, “than”, or a verb such as “resembles”. A close examination of the data showed that this figure of speech was used in the “Opening” move only, especially in poetry. Consider the following example:

ها أنا يا أمريتي أيتتك من آخر الأوطان وأحفظك على حسن
ka:nfar:san

4.3 Metaphor
A metaphor has been defined as “a word or phrase used in an imaginative way to describe sb/sth else, in order to show that the two things have the same qualities and to make the description more powerful” (Longman dictionary of contemporary English). Unlike simile, metaphor does not use the words “like”, “so”, “as”, “as if”, “than”, or a verb such as “resembles” to indicate the comparison. Obviously, appropriate application of metaphor, in wedding invitation card genre, plays an important role, which can render wedding invitation cards picturesque, fabulous and attractive. This figure of speech usually creates a comparison between the bride and another thing or between the groom and another thing. On thorough examination, the corpus analysis disclosed that this figure of speech was utilized in the “Opening” move only, most often in poetry. Consider the following example:

حقق لي الأماني ونلت كنزًا قد حرى كل الدور
ha: qaq li: ʔa:lamani: wanilt kinzan qad hawa kul ʔwil durr
My wishes have been come true and I obtained a treasure that has encompassed all pearls.

In this example, the bride is compared directly to a treasure without the use of the words “like”, “so”, “as”, etc. More specifically, the groom compares his wife with a precious treasure which contains many pearls in it. The metaphor, in the above example, not only has an interesting value but also stimulates the curiosity of the readers (wedding invitees) to continue reading the whole wedding card.

Euphemism
Euphemisms are words or expressions which can be used to avoid those expressions which are deemed to be taboo in a polite, indirect, tactful, mild and implicit way. In other words, they are used to soften or conceal unpleasant, hateful or embarrassing words and expressions. Euphemisms act as a veil, and they substitute these words and expressions with more delicate, pleasant, inoffensive and less shocking ones.
A number of writers have provided some definitions for euphemism. Rabab’ah and Al-Qarni (2012, p. 730), for instance, define euphemism as “a polite or indirect way of saying a tabooed term”. For Abrantes (2005, p. 86), euphemism is “a word or a phrase used in a specific linguistic and extra-linguistic context to soften or conceal something unpleasant”. Similarly, Hudson (2000, p. 261) describes euphemism as “the extension of ordinary words and phrases to express unpleasant and embarrassing ideas”.

A close examination of the data obtained from the wedding invitation cards revealed that the use of the phenomenon of euphemism occurs in one move only, viz., the “Notifications” move. The euphemistic expressions below bear witness to this phenomenon:

**ewishá biyú:tuha:**

Children’s paradise is their house


(The wedding hall does not permit accompanying children at all)

**Assonance**

Assonance can be defined as a repetition of the similar or identical vowel sounds in two words or more than two words, often in poetry to create rhythm. The results of the study revealed that assonance as a rhetorical device occurred in three moves of the genre of wedding invitation cards, namely, the “Opening” move, the “Stating wedding ceremony arrangements” move and the “Notifications” move. Consider the following illustrative examples from the data:


(Come on birds of good utter trilling cries of joy, and warble upon the forehead of women believers)

(Our wedding has a pleasant fragrance, with roots watered from the Sunna of women)

**Parallelism**

Parallelism is a common phenomenon used in Arabic language and is connected to rhymed prose as it gives the construction or structure a clear musical effect. Simply, parallelism is a device in which two sentences (phrases or clauses) have the same structure. Cook (1989, p. 15) defines parallelism as "a device which suggests a connection, simply because the form of one sentence or clause repeats the form of another".

Jordanian wedding invitation writers tend to use parallelism in the structure of the wedding invitation for creating musical effects and encouraging the

Words. Here are some examples in which the consonant sound is repeated two or more times in the words:

1- Slither and slather
2- Litter and batter
3- Sent and went
reader to continue reading the whole wedding card. Mehawesh (2013, p. 260) argues that parallelism “draws the ear; listeners are naturally attracted to its pleased sound. Thus, parallelism not only emphasizes an idea but also adds rhythm to a work and making it pleasing to hear or read”. A careful look at the data revealed that this device is widely noticed in the “Opening” move, especially in the Qur’anic quotations, prophetic prayers or invocations and poetic verses. Examples of parallelism in Arabic are exemplified by the following phrases taken from the wedding invitation cards:

بارك ليما وبارك عليهما واجمع بينهما في خير

May Allah grant blessings to them. grant blessings on them and bind them with harmony and goodness

بالطيب والورد فلاكلكم وبالحب والخير نشكر تهابكم

We welcome you with perfume and roses and we thank you with love and goodness for the Congratulations you offered

In example (1), it is clear that parallelism is repeated by means of the same structure. The sentences “grant blessings to them” (May Allah grant blessings to them) and “bind them” (bind them with harmony and goodness) are placed with similar forms, hence having the same structure. In example (2), the structure or the form of the two sentences, i.e., “We welcome you with perfume and roses” and “we thank you with love and goodness for the congratulations you offered” is repeated. More specifically, the sentences bear the same grammatical structure and the words have the same order in succession.

5. CONCLUSION
Wedding invitation cards are not limited to merely announcing the wedding of two people; rather, they mirror Jordanian people’s ideas and judgments, depending on many factors such as economic standing, religious beliefs, cultural practices, customs, etc. They are characterized as ceremonial genre texts generally constrained by socio-religiously motivated practices and conventions.

More specifically, in the light of the present research, the analysis of the wedding invitations has revealed interplay between social and linguistic choices which can be summarized in five main points. First, wedding invitations primarily achieved a social purpose. In fact, the explicit reference to academic and professional titles, which are written in bold-face with different sizes of font, reinforces socio-cultural values and reflects that the bride and groom belong to high socio-economic statuses in the Jordanian society. Second, religion played a prominent role in wedding invitations. The linguistic lexical choices reflected in different communicative moves of the corpus display many features of the influences exercised by religious beliefs of the bride and groom in the texts. Examples of the religious lexical choices and phrases used by the producer of the wedding invitations are “Al-haj”, “Paradise”, “mosque”, “Allah”, “Most Gracious” and “Most Merciful”, “church”, “God”, “Christ”, and “Heaven”. Finally, the producers of wedding invitation cards; namely, the bride and groom employ a set of rhetorical devices (alliteration, rhyme, parallelism, metaphor and simile, euphemism) which have made the wedding invitation card genre look very eye-catching and persuasive for readers. They aimed at not only informing the readers, i.e., the invitees of the topic of wedding invitation card genre but also expressing their ideology achieved through using these rhetorical devices.

I hope to have demonstrated how this genre text is structured and interpreted to serve the communicative purposes agreed upon by members of Jordanian community who constantly take part in this genre and very aware of their social conventions. It is also hoped that this study has offered a rich account of the generic linguistic features of the genre text in relation to religious and socio-cultural values and practices of Jordanian society.

This study aimed to make a significant contribution to the study of genre of Jordanian wedding invitation cards with the objective to analyse the linguistic features and communicative purposes practiced in these genre to determine specific conventionalized purposes which are associated with different socio-cultural, as well as ideological backgrounds that Jordanian people practice in constructing and interpreting this genre. What is more, this study drew on the importance of contextualized genre analysis and explained that style, culture and religion, as well as norms determine the overall structure and linguistic features of this genre. Thus, it is also hoped that this study will serve as a window through which non-Jordanians can improve their knowledge of the nature of these genres and can learn the rules and practices of specific social groups in Jordanian society.
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The Chivalric Tradition in Sir Garwain and the Green Knight
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ABSTRACT

In Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Sir Gawain continuously proves his knightly virtues and code of honor. Chivalry includes bravery, honor, and courtesy. He proves that he is in fact a "real" Knight. He shows his bravery by shying away from nothing and no one. He proves his honor and courtesy to everyone he meets by showing respect to all whether he receives it back or not. In this poem, romance is largely judged by itself. The poet allows the unfolding of the story to lead us to look beneath even the attractive surface of chivalry, a Chaucerian method. Comment from the poet-narrator is kept to a minimum, and one is not aware of a strong narratorial personality. If his few interventions have anything in common, it is that they direct the reader to serious implications, like the comment at the end of the first fitt (487-90). The poem may be thought of as focusing on three figures, each of whom represents a distinct thematic element: Gawain, Bertilak (and his household), and Arthur (and his court). Much of the poem's meaning is generated from the interrelation of these three elements, and they are the source of the three judgments offered on Gawain's conduct. I shall attempt an exploration of the chivalric qualities of this rich romantic poem.

KEYWORDS

Sir Garwain and the Green Knight, Chaucerian Method, Chivalry, Knight

1. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

This paper is underpinned theoretically by the literary theory of criticism. Literary criticism in simple terms is the reasoned consideration of literary works and issues. It applies, as a term, to any argumentation about literature, whether or not specific works are analyzed. Plato’s cautions against the risky consequences of poetic inspiration in general in his Republic are often taken as the earliest important example of literary criticism.

More strictly construed, the term covers only what has been called “practical criticism,” the interpretation of meaning and the judgment of quality. Criticism in this narrow sense can be distinguished not only from aesthetics (the philosophy of artistic value) but also from other matters that may concern the student of literature: biographical questions, bibliography, historical knowledge, sources and influences, and problems of method.

Critic will here be taken to cover all phases of literary understanding, with particular emphasis on the evaluation of the Early English Romantic literary work Sir Garwain and the Green Knight.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This article is a critical study of the chivalric tradition which anchors the Early English Romantic poem Sir Garwain and the Green Knight. Knighthood in early English Romance is intensely manifested in chivalry and I seek to explore this theme from all angles. Sir Garwain’s character, symbolism, the three judgments as well as the knighthood of Sir Garwain are the key angles in reference here.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW: THE PLEXUS OF CHIVALRY

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, written by an anonymous fourteenth-century poet in Northern dialect, combines two plots: "the beheading contest, in which two parties agree to an exchange of the blows with a sword or ax, and the temptation, an attempted seduction of the hero by a lady" (Norton p.200). The Green Knight, depicted as a green giant with supernatural powers, disrespectfully rides into King Arthur's court and challenges the king to a Christmas game -- a beheading contest. Sir Gawain, a young, brave and loyal knight of the Round Table, acting according to the chivalric code, takes over the challenge his lord has accepted. The contest states that Sir Gawain is to chop off the Green Knight's head, and in one year and a day, the antagonist is to do the same to the hero. The whole poem is constructed in a way that leads the reader through the challenges that Sir Gawain faces -- the tests for
honesty, courtesy, truthfulness. Throughout, we see his inner strength to resist the temptations.

Lines 566 through 634 portray the hero as he dresses up and gets ready to go to find the Green Knight on November first, almost a year after the beheading contest in the king Arthur's court. Remembering the beheaded Green Knight on the horse with his head under his arm, King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table try to talk Sir Gawain out of going on this dangerous and, possibly last, mission, but the hero, keeping his part of the bargain, acts as the true and honorable knight should act: he goes to find the villain.

The first stanza depicts the protagonist who orders his armor to be brought to him. A rare and expensive carpet is brought and spread on the floor. Then the hero is dressed in the "coat of Turkestan silk" (Norton, p. 214, l. 571), "kingly cap' ados ... with a lustrous fur" (Norton, p. 214, l. 572-573), steel shoes, plates to protect the knees "affixed with fastening of the finest gold" (Norton, p. 214, l. 577), protective plates for the arms, gloves, "sharp spurs to prick with pride" (Norton, p. 214, l. 587) and "silk band to hold the broadsword" (Norton, p. 214, l. 588-589). The hero's helmet, "embellished with the best gems" (Norton, p. 214, l. 609) and "with diamonds richly set" (Norton, p. 214, l. 617), has been made by many women who had to work for seven years in order to create such beauty. Besides being very heavy, the knight's suit is also described as being composed and decorated with the most lavish and expensive materials such as silk, gold and diamonds. This strikes the reader as being odd. When we first meet him, Sir Gawain describes himself as poor, humble, insignificant and the weakest of all the knights, and, yet he has such goodly clothes and armor. This little detail could be overlooked (because, after all, the hero is King Arthur's nephew), but it makes the contemporary reader realize that the things in the King Arthur's court are not always what they appear.

Sir Gawain "heard the mass and honored God humbly" (Norton, p. 214, l. 593) before the long journey. The word that captures the reader's attention and has important meaning and significance in relation to this passage as well as to the poem as a whole is "humbly." The hero thinks of himself as being humble and courteous (and he is proud of it), but the development of the action brings the protagonist to realize that he might not have been as humble as he once thought himself to be. The testing of his honesty and truthfulness by the baron Bercilak reveals at the end the true nature of Sir Gawain: he is a human with the desire to preserve his life, and for that, he even hides the truth. At the time the hero sets out to leave the Camelot, he is sure of his strength. Parting with his uncle and his comrades, he courageously departs from his home.

The knight's relationship with his horse has always been a very special one. On his journey, Sir Gawain's horse, Gringolet, is his friend and comrade. To honor and to show respect to the horse, Gringolet is also dressed up in very expensive armor. Moreover, the horse is the only companion for the knight on his long trip and his only support in the battles with evil and mysterious forces.

Sir Gawain's shield has the greatest significance in this whole passage because of the hero's emblem, the pentangle, portrayed on it. In fourteenth-century England, the pentangle (or the five-pointed star) is also called the endless knot because it could be drawn without taking the pen from the paper. King Solomon devised this sign to be "a token of truth" (Norton, p. 215, l. 626). As Brian Stone points out in his article "Gawain's Eternal Jewel," "truth in the sense of good faith remains the chief concern of the hero" throughout the entire poem. Therefore, the emblem is an essential part of Sir Gawain's apparel as truthfulness is an essence of his character. The pentangle's symbolic significance lies in the number five:

"It is worth emphasizing the 'fiveness' of the multiple concept of 'truth':
the five wits and five fingers make up
the spiritual and physical human self
which can practice virtue or vice;
the five wounds of Christ and
the five joys of the Virgin
stand for the heaven's grace and
power in man's moral and spiritual life;
and the 'pure five' virtues
[liberality, brotherly love, purity of mind
and manners, courtesy and compassion]
make up the 'truth' of which the whole
pentangle ... is the emblem" (Stone).

This truth is established as the knight's symbol immediately before he sets out on his quest.

Sir Gawain tries to live by high standards. When he shames himself by not telling the truth to the Green Knight, he faces the painful reality: he is not the courteous, truthful and humble knight he thought himself to be. The fact that his peers do not understand Gawain's desire to wear his baldrick as a mark of shame makes it even harder for him to bear his shame. The passage from lines 566 to 634 brings
forth the idea of truth, from which the rest of the poem's action evolves; it remains the central concern of the adventures and of the poem itself. As Sir Gawain leaves Camelot to search for the Green Knight, he sets on the quest to "retain his self-respect as a virtuous and religious knight" (Stone), which gives the poem its "final and only discernible shape" (Stone).

4. ANALYSIS THE CHIVALRIC DIMENSIONS IN SIR GARWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT

Chivalric Tradition: The Character of Sir Gawain

In Sir Gawain and The Green Knight, the character of Sir Gawain is skillfully brought to life by the unknown author. Through the eyes of numerous characters in the poem, we see Gawain as a noble knight who is the epitome of chivalry; he is loyal, honest and above all, courteous. As the story progresses, Gawain is subjected to a number of tests of character, some known and some unknown. These tests tell us a great deal about Gawain's character and the struggles he faces internally. I will explore the various places in the poem where we learn about Gawain, either through others or through the tests he faces. By the end of the poem, we sense that we have come to know Gawain and have ventured a peek at his human side. However, we also realize that nothing short of perfection is acceptable to him.

Our first glimpse of Gawain occurs when the Green Knight suddenly appears at the New Year's celebration at Camelot. He offers a challenge for anyone to come forward and strike him with his ax. Twelve months and a day later, he will return the blow. No one steps forward to accept the dare. Embarrassed by his knights' lack of response, King Arthur accepts the challenge himself. At the fateful moment when Arthur is about to strike the blow, Gawain jumps up and says:

Would you grant me the grace,
To be gone from this bench and stand by you there,
If I without discourtesy might quit this board....
I am the weakest, well I know, and of wit feeblest;
And the loss of my life would be least of any;
That I have for uncle is my only praise;
My body, but for your blood, is barren of worth;
And for that this folly befits not a king,
And 'tis I that have asked it, it ought to be mine,
And if my claim be not comely let all this court judge,
in sight. Norton, 209

In this first meeting, through Gawain's own words, we begin to see him as the noble knight he is. Gawain has cleverly chosen his most courteous words to release Arthur from this predicament and restore the reputation of the knights of the Round Table. We cannot imagine a more courageous action than Gawain offering his life for his king nor a more polite offer to take the game.

We are able to draw further clues about Gawain's character from the description of his arming when he sets out a year later to meet the Green Knight. In this passage, we learn that Gawain's shield has gold pentangle on it. The author tells us the pentangle "is proper to that peerless prince" because it is a "token of truth," and he is most true to his word and a "most courteous knight." (Norton, 215) He goes on to say:

The fifth of the five fives followed by this knight
Were beneficence boundless and brotherly love
And pure mine and manners, that none might impeach,
And compassion most precious--these peerless five
Were forged and made fast in him, foremost of men.
Norton, 215-216
We have no reason to disbelieve the author nor his praise of Gawain.

Our next chance to understand Gawain occurs at Bercilak's castle where the household is overjoyed that the holiday guest is Gawain of King Arthur's court. They whisper to each other that Gawain has "courage ever-constant, and customs pure," he is "the father of fine manners." and his "displays of deportment" will dazzle their eyes. (Norton, 221) Through these words we see that Gawain is generally well respected for these characteristics; it is not just his fellow knights who feel this way. At this castle Gawain undergoes many tests of character, yet he is unaware that he is being tested. An unknown test is perhaps the best test there is, since the individual cannot prepare for it.

Bercilak's wife tries to seduce Gawain, but he is able to dodge her advances with clever defenses. On the first day after being told she would marry him if she could he says, "You are bound to a better man, yet I prize the praise you have proffered me here." (Norton, 228) On the second day, the author tells us "Thus she tested his temper and tried many a time, whatever her true intent, to entice him to sin, but so fair was his defense that no fault appeared." (Norton, 234) As the days progress, we see how increasingly difficult it becomes for Sir Gawain. We read:

So uncommonly kind and complaisant was she,
With sweet stolen glances, that stirred his stout heart,
That he was at his wits' end, and wondrous vexed;
But he could not rebuff her, for courtesy forbade.
Norton, 236
Throughout these tests, the author allows us to glimpse what Gawain is thinking, and we see that he sometimes works hard at being courteous and loyal. These scenes give us insight into how hard he tries to be as perfect as possible. A lesser man would have easily given in, yet Gawain holds himself to a higher standard. One the third day of the bargain, Gawain does not fare so well. We are told that Bercilak's wife:

Made so plain her meaning, the man must needs
Either take her tendered love or distastefully refuse.
His courtesy concerned him, lest crass he appear,
but more his soul's mischief, should he commit sin
and belie his loyal oath to the lord of that house.
Norton, 238

He is successful at avoiding her continuing advances. However, Gawain is concentrating so hard on being courteous and remaining true to Bercilak that he is tricked into taking a girdle of green silk from her and thus betraying Bercilak. She persuades him to accept the girdle and keep it a secret by telling him that if he wears the girdle "no hand under heaven...could hew him down, for he could not be killed by any craft on earth." (Norton, 240) That night he does not tell Bercilak of the gift. With this simple omission, he has betrayed his host, lied to him, and compromised his own standards. On the way to the Green Chapel, there is yet another test, and Gawain passes it easily. His guide offers him a last chance to avoid his meeting with the Green Knight. Gawain answers that if he were a coward, he could not be excused. He must go to the Chapel to test his luck for "The Lord is strong to save: his servants trust in him." (Norton, 246). It is this never-ending quest to do what is right that enables us still to feel good about Gawain even after we know he has been untrue.

Finally Gawain arrives at the Green Chapel and faces the Green Knight for the return blow. The Green Knight explains that he is Bercilak, and he has been testing Gawain all along. Gawain is embarrassed and reacts uncharacteristically brusquely. The Green Knight says, "She made trial of a man most faultless by far of all that ever walked over the wide earth" and "Yet you lacked, sir, a little in loyalty there, but the cause was not cunning, nor courtship either, but that you loved your own life; the less, then, to blame." (Norton, 250) It doesn't matter to Gawain that the Green Knight forgives him or understands why he did what he did. In his own eyes, he has failed.

### Chivalric Tradition: The Three Judgments

The first judgment, which is tolerant of Gawain's fault but not blind to it, comes from the Green Knight, who decides that Gawain "lakked a lyttel" in accepting the green girdle from his wife, but is nevertheless "on J3e fautlest freke {)at euer on fote 3ede" (2363). The second judgment is that of Gawain, who is mercilessly hard on himself when he hears the Green Knight's explanations, accusing himself of throwing away all his knighthood in one weak moment. The third judgment, delivered implicitly by the court when Gawain rides home, appears to be diametrically opposed to Gawain's. The king and the court comfort the knight, laugh at his solemn explanations, and decide that they too will all wear green baldricks, not as a badge of shame, as Gawain wears the girdle, but out of respect for him and as a mark of honor (2519-20). It is difficult not to conclude that the court, whether it sees fault in Gawain or not, is determined to acknowledge only virtue. The poet lets the three judgments, that "Gawain has failed in part," "Gawain has failed completely," and "Gawain has not failed at all," stand against each other, and gives no sign as to which one we should accept. Critics have shown that any one of the three may be justified as the right one, depending on the way we read the poem. But the fact that the poet gives no guidance in the matter suggests that he does not intend us to see one of the judgments as carrying more weight than the others, but rather wants us to weigh the issues for ourselves: he presents alternatives for us to consider. By supplying, without comment, three different judgments, he avoids telling the reader what to think, and leads the reader to assess for himself the nature of Gawain's fault, the behavior which leads to it, and, ultimately, the whole romance world of which Gawain is a part.

A provoking two-sidedness is already present in the two stanzas of introduction with which the poem begins. They establish its Arthurian credentials by sketching the traditional Arthurian history of Britain, in which Arthur's lineage is taken back to Brutus, legendary founder of Britain, and beyond him to Aeneas. There is a traditional romance emphasis on high nobility: "Ennias pe athel, and his highe kynde" (5), "riche Romulus" (8), "Jris burn rych" (20), "Ay watz Arthur f>e hendest" (26); on wonders (16, 23, 28); and on the high antiquity of the story: "with lei letteres loken, / In londe so londe so lange" (35-36). These intimations of a noble tale to come are, however, somewhat undermined by other details. The poet chooses to remind us, in the very first lines, that "Ennias ?>e athel" was also a traitor, a not uncommon medieval view of Aeneas.
Britain is described as a place not of heroic exploits only, but of "bojye bylyse and blunder" (18). Some of the words used have at least a hint of negative implication. Romulus builds Rome "with gret bobbaunce" (9), but "bobbaunce" is usually derogatory, meaning "vanity" or "vain display." The story told in the poem is referred to first as "an aunter in erde" (27), where "in erde" probably has simple intensive force, "an outstanding adventure," but then as "an outrage awenture" (29), where one cannot dismiss the derogatory coloring of the adjective. With these preliminary hints that all is not entirely well with Arthur's Britain, there is likely to be at least a mild disturbance of comfortable assumptions on the part of the reader. The story proper begins in the third stanza with an extended description of Arthur's court, one of the three component elements of the poem which I identified earlier. The court is in the middle of its Christmas revels, which last for fifteen days. The knights and ladies are young and well-favored, and the scene is a kind of epitome of the pleasures of courtly life: the knights joust, and with the ladies they sing and dance and play high-spirited games. The jollity is supremely civilized. The high point of the scene is the description of the meal, and here the emphasis is on splendor, ceremony, and order, with a detailed description of the richness of the high dais (75-80), the naming of those who sit there (106-13), and the description of the service of the food accompanied by extravagant musical flourishes on trumpets and pipes (116-20). The attractiveness of the picture is a matter for superlatives (50-59). There is one stanza, however, which is different, more penetrating, in which the superlatives applied to Arthur in the lines just quoted are qualified. The stanza explains why it is that Arthur does not signal the beginning of the feast by eating first himself. The first reason given is that he will not eat until all the others are served (85).

We would expect Arthur to be motivated by courtesy in this, but, surprisingly, the poet links it to his restlessness (85-89). It appears that Arthur does not wish to be seated at the table for any longer than necessary, and indeed a few lines later (107-08) we see him standing in front of the high table talking, while the others are already seated.

There is a hint of criticism in the poet's language: "childgered" may not mean precisely "childish," but there is nevertheless a derogatory implication that he is not yet fully adult in his ways, and "brayn wylde" suggests thoughts which are over-impulsive. These lines then color his second reason for not eating, which is that on great festival days he wants to hear of an outstanding feat of arms, or see one take place, before he eats. The poet assures us that this whim arises out of a noble nature (91), but it is hard not to connect it with "his brayn wylde" and to see at least a touch of noble folly here. We are reminded that lives may be at risk because of the king's whim (96-99).

In this stanza a negative side to the youthful exuberance of Arthur, and by implication the court and the romance ideals they represent, is indicated: a potentially damaging carelessness, a lack of stability and responsibility. This is not, however, the dominant tone of the scene. The hint of criticism is brushed aside as the serving of the food proceeds on its splendid way. When, as if in answer to Arthur's wish, the Green Knight rides into the hall and issues his challenge, it is understandable and in one sense admirable that Arthur should be so quick to respond, for he thinks that the honor of the court is at stake (316-18). But the rashness of his action, even if it is admirable rashness, is manifest. The kind of adventure he had anticipated was a joust between two evenly-matched knights. He finds instead that the Green Knight, a frightening super natural figure, wants to play a deadly and one-sided game. There is at least the theoretical possibility of Arthur's declining such a challenge with honor. He recognizes the foolishness of the game he has under taken when he says to the Green Knight (323-24).

But anger at the Green Knight's insulting tone ("He wex as wroth as wynde" [319]) overrides any sense he may have that he is risking a lot for no good reason. Nevertheless, although he may be criticized from one point of view for his youthful impetuosity, he acts with directness and courage, and from the best motives. The rest of the court come less well out of the situation. They can hardly be blamed for being stunned into silence when the Green Knight first rides in, but, in a comment of Chaucerian two-edgedness, the poet draws attention to their fear and notes that they leave it to the king to speak (244-49). The comment leaves a large question mark, to say the least, over the courtiers' "cortaysye" as motive for their restraint. From now on, they seem to forget the courtly code of behavior and make little attempt to control their responses. They take their lead from others and give way to basic emotional reactions. When the king gets angry, so do they (319). When Gawain offers to take over from the king, the noble courtiers agree that this should be done (362-65).

When the Green Knight has been decapitated, courtiers kick the head so that it rolls along the ground (427-28), but they revert to fear, understandably, of course, when the trunk picks up the head again and remounts, and the head speaks. When the Green Knight has gone, Arthur and Gawain
laugh and try to make the best of it (463-64), and
Arthur conceals his amazement (467-68), but the
court talks of what has happened as a wonder (465-
66). When, ten months later, Gawain prepares to set
out to keep his bargain with the Green Knight, the
courtiers are sorrowful for him (540), and when he
finally rides off they fall to criticizing the king for
allowing Gawain to be placed in a situation where he
is apparently facing certain death (682-83). Their
words draw attention to the king's rashness, but they
have the wisdom of hindsight, and they come
inappropriately from people who were presumably
present when the Green Knight issued his challenge
and who did nothing to prevent Gawain becoming
involved, if they did not actually encourage it.
Clearly the courtiers, like Arthur, prefer their lives
to be light, and are better at enjoying themselves than
they are at coping with a hard situation. They behave
true to form at the end of the poem, when, on
Gawain's return from his ordeal, they welcome him
joyfully, and make the green girdle into a mark of
honor. But their cheerful response is also heedless.
They laugh at his agonized account of his failure
(2514) and appear to take very little interest in what
happened to him. The suggestion is that the court's
gaiety, attractive as it is, reflects only a shallow view
of life, in which such things as pain and guilt are
ignored. Strange as the figure of the green challenger
is, he is nevertheless a knight. The poet entertains the
idea that he is an ogre (136-40).

But then he comes down firmly on the side of
humanity, seeing him as a man of formidable but (in
spite of his greenness) pleasing appearance (141-46).
The passage goes on to describe his dress, and the
trappings of his horse, in terms of finery appropriate
to a knight of the highest rank. At several points the
description anticipates that of Gawain and Grygolet
at the beginning of the second fitt. In particular, the
silk embroidery work, with its figures of birds and
butterflies (164-66), is like Gawain's visor covering
with its silk hems, embroidered with figures of birds
and true love knots (608-12). Such details suggest
courtly interests, and in this they look forward to the
Green Knight's other guise, Sir Bertilak de Hautdesert,
who is without obvious manifestations of other worldliness and whose court is evidently the
equal of Arthur's for luxury and splendor. In some
respects, the Green Knight/Bertilak and Arthur are of
the same temper. Both are men of action. We are told
that Arthur does not like "auer to longe lye or to
longe sitte" (88), and Bertilak appears to be most in
his element when out hunting. When they speak both
are brisk and direct, with little interest in the niceties
of polite speech.

The first words of the Green Knight to the court
(224-25), and Arthur's reply, though
courteous, is to the point and without flourish (252-
55). Bertilak speaks in the same direct style. He
welcomes Gawain to his castle (835-37). Gawain,
in his reply, is more elaborate, taking two lines to say
"thank you": "Graunt mercy," quoj? Gawayn, "Per
Kryst hit yow for3elde." (838-39) The poet sets up a
contrast between Arthur and the Green Knight/
Bertilak on the one hand, who favor actions rather
than words, and Gawain on the other, who is more
words than actions; part of the point of the contrast is
to emphasize how devoted Gawain is to "cortaysye."
But in one significant respect the chivalry of the
Green Knight/ Bertilak is set against that of Arthur
and Gawain. Arthur's court is young, but Bertilak is
described as "of hyghe eldee" (844), which must
mean "in the prime of life" (Davis, Cawley), or "of
mature age" (Waldron).

The Green Knight refers to Arthur's knights as
"berdlez chylder" (280), which, unless it is no more
than an expression of contempt, indicates his
consciousness of the difference between their ages
and his. The difference has important implications.
Bertilak is more authoritative than they are, more
authoritative even than Ar ther. In his castle, he is
recognized at once by Gawain as one fitted to govern
a large household (848-49). In John Burrow's words,
"The castle of Hautdesert has, for all its fairy
appearance, a solid reality as Bertilak's house and
home: 'hys lef horne.' Here he figures very much as
the 'chef de maison,' presiding as host over the
Christmas festivities and as huntsman over the sport
in his home woods." Bertilak has a maturity, stability,
and control which Arthur and his court lack. This is
not to say that he does not have the same taste for
courtly pleasures. Christmas festivities are as lively at
Hautdesert as they are at Camelot. The difference is
that Bertilak pays more attention to rules and
procedures; he embodies the idea of chivalry as a set
of forms. Whereas Arthur's "brayn wylde" may take
him off at any moment in an unpredictable direction,
events at Hautdesert proceed in a well-ordered
sequence. When Gawain arrives, his every need is
impeccably attended to. Bertilak's concern with
procedures is most obvious in the hunting scenes. One
of the main points of the lengthy descriptions is to
show that Bertilak observes all the rules of hunting
and of cutting up the carcases of the animals
afterwards as they are set out in the hunting
manuals.10 The hunts go so much according to the
book that they amount almost to a paradigm of the art
of hunting in the Middle Ages, with Bertilak the
perfect hunter. The three hunts are carefully
intertwined in the narrative with the three bedroom
scenes, in which the lady of the castle, Bertilak's
wife, comes to tempt Gawain, making it harder and
harder for him to refuse her offer of sexual favors on
each of the three successive days. The significance of this juxtaposition is problematical, but one obvious point is that it draws attention to a parallel between the activity of Bertilak and that of his wife, suggesting that she too is a hunter, with Gawain the quarry. There are of course no rules to instruct a lady who wishes to provoke a young man to make love to her (Gawain's predicament is precisely that she has thrown the rule book away by taking the initiative), and there is a clear contrast between the straightforward activity of the hunt and the subtle parry and thrust of the exchanges in the bedroom. But Bertilak and his wife are alike in that, despite flight or resistance from the hunted, they control their respective situations and gain their desired ends; faced with such singleness of purpose and calculated precision of action, the victim in forest or bedroom has little chance. Both the outdoor and indoor hunts are tied in to the exchange of winnings agreement made between Bertilak and Gawain at the end of the St. John's Day festivities, and renewed on the two following nights, whereby each is to hand over to the other everything he gains during the next day. This agreement in turn is tied in to the beheading agreement made between the Green Knight and Gawain in Arthur's court, though the link between the two agreements is not made manifest until near the end of the poem, when the Green Knight indicates to Gawain that the outcome of the beheading game depended on his performance in the exchange of winnings. Both of these agreements, with their formal, legalistic features, are proposed by the Green Knight/Bertilak. At the climax of the poem's action, the Green Knight carefully strikes three feinted blows at Gawain's neck, one for each of the three days in the castle, and equally carefully explains Gawain's fault to him, casting himself in the role of a priest confessing a penitent. Form and artifice lie at the heart of Bertilak's chivalry.

Many critics have noted the importance of games in the poem, and the Green Knight/Bertilak is the poem's game player par excellence. The knights and ladies of Arthur's Court also play games, such as their kissing game (if that is what it is [66-70]), but these are simply an expression of youthful high spirits. Their decision to wear the green baldric in honor of Gawain may also be seen in such terms, preceded as it is by laughter (2513-18). Bertilak's games, though equally zestful, are altogether less innocent, in that they all have a serious or potently serious outcome. Physically, Bertilak is both attractive and alarming, the welcoming host and the supernatural challenger, a physical symbol of the two-sidedness of the chivalric code which, as seen preeminently in Malory, at once gives life and destroys. The actions of Bertilak and his household, that is, the games they play, convey this dichotomy sharply. In the most straightforward of these games, Bertilak's hunting, one can only respond positively to the qualities Bertilak displays his skill, his courage, above all his overwhelming delight in what he is doing (1174-77). Taken together, the descriptions seem both to define the art of hunting and to sum up its pleasures. It would be absurd to import into our judgment of these scenes any of the attitudes of the modern anti-hunting lobby. Nevertheless we may note that the poet does not shirk the fact that hunting leads to killing (an emphasis particularly evident in the account of the deer hunt), and that it accepts killing in an unemotional way, making it into a matter of ritual; the extended and minutely detailed descriptions of the cutting-up of the deer and the boar may be partly explained in terms of the poet's desire to bring out this aspect. In the parallel action in the bedroom, the lady is similarly unemotional as she pursues Gawain. It comes as no surprise when we learn later (2360-62) that she is acting under instructions. She talks of love, but gives no sign of being attracted to him; there is no equivalent in her of the "wi3t wallande joye" which warms Gawain's heart (1762). Her self-possession is what enables her to remain in command of the situation: she charms, banter, teases, and plays little games with a skill which has Gawain, famous though he is for "luf-talkyng," on the defensive from beginning to end. Gawain is in trouble because his feelings are engaged, and they pull him towards her at the same time as his sense of propriety holds him back. The lady shamelessly plays on his reputation for courtesy, which gives him another problem: how does he refuse her while still maintaining his reputation? The wooing scenes are amusing, but the lady is a slightly chilling figure nevertheless. It is significant that the Green Knight/Bertilak and his wife always initiate the games they play with Gawain and then keep the initiative. In addition, they know what is at stake, while Gawain does not, and there is an element of trickery and pretense in their behavior, evident for instance in the way that Bertilak first presents the exchange of winnings to Gawain. Gawain has courteously remarked that he is at his host's disposal for as long as he stays in the castle (1081-82), and Bertilak seizes on this to get Gawain to agree to his proposition in advance (1089-92). He then suggests that, while he goes hunting, Gawain should rest the next day and be looked after by his wife, on the grounds that he needs to recover from the hardships of his journey (1093-1102). Only then does he suggest that they should exchange their day's winnings. Thus it seems that concern for Gawain's welfare is uppermost in his mind, and that the arrangement is no more than an amusing afterthought, which is the way Gawain takes it (1110-11). In reality, as we and Gawain learn later, the
arrangement is what matters to Bertilak, and it is far from innocent. Bertilak's court represents another, soberer side of chivalry compared with Arthur's, one in which the spontaneity of youth is replaced by rationality and rules. It is a world in which everything is worked out, well suited to testing and judging. At the same time it conveys a sense of otherness, even when things seem to be normal. The Green Knight/Bertilak is a supernatural figure who inhabits a kind of never never land somewhere on the edge of reality. He rides into Arthur's court out of nowhere, his castle suddenly materializes out of nowhere, and, near the end of the poem, he rides off "whiderwarde-so-uer he wolde" (2478). There is a sense of aloofness about the inhabitants of this world. Their characteristic voices are without warmth, brisk, amused, teasing. Arthur's court is less well-ordered, but shows more feeling. Bertilak's judgment on Gawain, that he is not a perfect knight but an excellent one, seems fair, and seems as such to be an expression of Bertilak's mature outlook. The problem with it is that it is both easy and impersonal; it does not probe Gawain's failing, as Gawain himself does to excess, and it shows no understanding of him as one who has been through a shattering experience. The courtiers' judgment at Camelot may also be easy, but at least they welcome him back warmly, and their decision to wear the green baldric is a gesture of support for him. Whereas both Gawain and the court give the girdle a moral significance, in that for Gawain it is a sign of how badly he has done, and for the court a sign of how well he has done, Bertilak asks Gawain to regard it as no more than a souvenir of an adventure (2395-99). It is no wonder that Gawain refuses Bertilak's invitation to return to the castle with him, conscious as he is of being "koyntly bigyled" (2413) by people whom he had trusted.

The validity of Bertilak's position is further called in question by his revelation that the whole episode of the beheading game was instigated by Morgan le Fay, who sent Bertilak to Arthur's court to test the renown of the Round Table (2457-58), and also to shock the court and frighten Guinevere to death by the apparition of the green man speaking with his head in his hand (2459-61). Bertilak has evidently been carrying out Morgan's instructions just as his wife has carried out his, implying that neither has any real involvement in what they do; and their whole operation, apparently so rational, is seen to rest on arbitrariness and malice. Like Saturn in the Knight's Tale, Morgan is the malevolent genius in the background who gives the lie to any appearance of order in the lives of those who are under her sway. The poem therefore does not allow us to accept Bertilak's moderate judgment of Gawain as the right one without first leading us to weigh several significant negative factors, and as we do this, we are led to question the kind of chivalry which Bertilak represents. Ultimately the poet is asking us to consider the idea of chivalry as code or game. On the one hand, chivalry as such is polished and confident, on the other hand it is arbitrary and amoral. The poem seems to suggest that, just as Bertilak himself is not fully human, so codes of behavior, however apparently honorable, are likely to have a dehumanizing effect on those who practice them. When Gawain is first introduced he is merely a name in a list of names of those sitting at the high table (109). We are first aware of him, then, as part of the court. He too, no doubt, is young, and enjoys the festivities as much as anyone else. But from the moment he first speaks he is set apart from the court and he remains so; it is as an individual, not as a representative of the court, that he undergoes his trial and is judged. His first speech (341-61) shows him to have a courage and a feeling for the honor of the court which none of the other knights demonstrates. He is, it seems, made of sterner stuff than they are. This speech, with its elaborate attention to courtesy and tact, has an individual quality of expression; and the arming scene also, while it marks him out as a paragon of knighthood, draws particular attention to the personal and unusual symbol of the pentangle on his shield. The Green Knight makes the beheading game a matter between Gawain and himself, not the court and himself, and Gawain accepts it in these terms. Later the Green Knight passes judgment on Gawain, not on the court, and indeed draws attention to the superiority of Gawain over other knights (2364-65). Finally, Gawain blames himself for his failure, not the chivalric system, and when he returns to the court he finds himself out of sympathy with its easy optimism. Gawain is both the center of the poem and a distinct element in it. The fundamental quality which sets Gawain's chivalry apart from that of the court and Bertilak is his idealism. The pentangle passage points to his sense of chivalry as a kind of secular religion, offering as it does a way of perfection on earth. He takes religion itself less seriously than chivalry; like the courts of Arthur and Bertilak, he is rather perfunctory in his religious observance. As he rides through the forest on Christmas Eve he calls on Christ and Mary to direct him to some house where he might hear mass (753-62). There is an effective simplicity about his prayers, but this is because they are elementary prayers. He recites his pater, ave, and creed (757), all of which he would have learned as a child. He makes the sign of the cross, accompanying it with the phrase "Cros Kryst me spede," as a child would do in school before saying the alphabet. ID There is nothing here to suggest that his desire to hear mass arises out of anything other than the most elementary religious
faith and a sense of custom and duty. When he does go to Christmas Eve mass, in the chapel of Bertilak's castle, he is more interested in the people who are there, especially Bertilak's wife, than in the religious service. The chapel becomes a venue for the exchange of courtly politenesses (970-76). Gawain's view of the relation between chivalry and religion is conveyed symbolically by the description of his shield. His devotion is particularly to Mary, who is called "quene of cortaysye" in Pearl. Her image is painted on the inside of his shield, but this is for practical reasons rather than religious ones, when he looks at it, his courage in battle is strengthened (644-50). The reference to the image of Mary is incorporated in the description of the pentangle, which, though there is overlap between the religious and the chivalric, is primarily a symbol of the ideals of knighthood?"trawfe" (626) and the five chivalric virtues of "fraunchyse," "fela3scypn," "clannes," "cortaysye," and "pit?" (652-54). The pentangle passage is itself part of the lengthy description of Gawain's putting on of his armor, which symbolically establishes him as everything a knight should be, both inside and out.

The language strongly emphasizes the brightness of the armor: "glent" (569), "policed ful clene" (576), "bry3t stelrynges" (580), "wel bornyst brace" (582), "lerned of golde" (591), "glemed fulgayly" (598), "bry3t golde" (600), "tat al g of pe sunne" (604), "diamauentes . . . bry3t and broun" (618), "schyr goulez" (619). The effect is to give Gawain a new-minted quality; even the pentangle is "nwe" (636). Here is a knight, the whole description suggests, of still untarnished ideals, one who shares the court's youth, but who has the highest aspirations. Of course events prove Gawain's aspirations to have been impossibly high. This is brought home by the contrast between his confident behavior in the first scene in Arthur's court and his less assured performance with the lady in the bedroom. In both his intervention with Arthur and his conversations with the lady he has a problem of tact: in the first situation, how to offer himself in place of Arthur without running the risk of slighting king and court by implying that he is better able to meet the challenge than they are, and in the second, how to avoid being discourteous to the lady while at the same time putting aside her advances. In both situations his powers of courtesy, the virtue for which he is most renowned and which is at the center of his chivalry, are put to the test. He passes the first test without difficulty, remaining in perfect command of the situation, as, in a speech of extraordinary syntactical intricacy, he threads his way between the various pitfalls. But in the second test he is much less convincing. When the lady first enters his bedroom, he is immediately driven to feign sleep while he tries to work out what is going on. In conversation he manages for a long time to find resources of courtesy to enable him to keep the lady at bay, but it is she, not he, who is in command, and he is made to look a little ridiculous. In the end, his defense of courtesy fails him, as he succumbs to the temptation to take the offered green girdle. What has happened is that Gawain's ideal of courtesy has been brought up against two powerful physical drives. Against the first of these, sexual attraction, it survives with difficulty; but the second, fear of death, overcomes it. Now Gawain pays the price for the absoluteness of his idealism, so well conveyed by the pentangle figure. The pentangle stands for "trawjse," which may be translated as "integrity," implying perfect wholeness, and the poet emphasizes the fact that the figure is all of a piece (627-29). The poet goes on to list the five pentads which the pentangle symbolizes, and which, we are told, make up Gawain's knightly qualities. In a striking sentence, he refers to the pentads as linked together in Gawain just as they are in the pentangle (656-61). The implication of this is that, like the pentangle, Gawain's knight hood cannot be broken up into parts. If there is failure in any one area, the whole structure fails; it is not possible to have a partial integrity. In the story, the breach occurs when Gawain accepts the girdle from the lady with the thought that it might help save his life. Immediately his integrity is compromised in various hard-to-pin down ways. Should he, a Christian knight, put his faith in something which supposedly has magic properties? Is he guilty of cowardice and/or covetousness, as he accuses himself later? In trying to protect himself by magic, is he breaking the terms of the beheading-game agreement? From this starting-point, the ambiguity of his moral situation continues to increase. Amongst other things, it is not made clear how far, if at all, he is aware of doing wrong. He promises the lady that he will not tell anyone else about the girdle (1865-66), and this implies that he intends to break the exchange-of-winnings agreement. Before he goes to the chapel to make his confession, he finds a place to hide the girdle, with the intention of reclaiming it later. Is this because he does not want to have it about his person when he confesses? We are told that he confesses fully and receives full absolution in return. This suggests that, for whatever reason, he does not confess to taking the girdle, for if he had done so we would expect the priest, before granting absolution, to ask him to make restitution by giving it back again. It is possible that he does confess the girdle, is asked to restore it, and then later fails to do so. Either way, there is a new dimension of ambiguity: if he has not confessed or not restored the girdle, he has now offended against a sacrament of the Church. Possibly, given the earlier evidence of the elementary nature of
his faith, he does not understand his obligations in the professional. When he fails to hand over the girdle to Bertilak that evening, he also completes his offense against the exchange-of-winnings agreement. Later, as he rides out towards the Green Chapel, the fact that he has the girdle with him casts a shadow over his brave protestations that he will not make himself "a knyt kowarde" (2131) by accepting the guide's suggestion that he should slip away quietly and not keep his tryst with the Green Knight. It reflects on his courage again when he bows his head beneath the Green Knight's axe. The green girdle has thus thoroughly clouded Gawain's moral situation, which was formerly so clear; as the description of the pentangle implied, one mistake brings about a general diminishing of "trawjse." Gawain's reduced moral state is conveyed symbolically by the description of his dress at the beginning of the fourth fitt, which invites comparison with the earlier arming scene. The girdle, called "ladies gifte" and "drurye" (love-token) is extensively described, and one has the impression that it has taken over from the pentangle in Gawain's thoughts: "Pat [the girdle] forgot not Gawayn for gode of hymseluen" (2031). It is ironic that Gawain has compromised his knighthood for something which is, on the evidence, useless, for the girdle does not protect him from the nick in the neck, and presumably would not have protected him from more serious harm, had the Green Knight been so minded. The Green Knight's explanations devastate Gawain, and he falls to vehement self-accusation. Here we see the other side of his idealism. He has become a broken pentangle, without coherence. His own understanding is that he has failed totally, and to begin with he is speechless with mortification. When he speaks, his self-criticism divides into three parts: First he accuses himself of moral failings, principally "cowarddyse" and "couetyse," which have brought down all his knight hood (2374-88). In the second part he shifts the blame to some extent from himself to "wyles of wymmen," invoking the homiletic examples of Adam, Solomon, Samson, and David (2411-28). In the third part he takes a more religious view of his failure, seeing it in terms of the weakness of fallen man. He uses penitential language as he talks of wearing the girdle as a reminder to him in his pride of the frailty of the flesh (2429-38); the phrase "teches of fylj)e" is reminiscent of Cleanliness. For the first time his language suggests a sense of sin. Nevertheless it is his failure as a knight which most concerns him. The closest parallel I can find to the kind of dramatic reversal he under goes is that of Piers after he has torn God's pardon near the end of the visio section of Piers Plowman (A and B texts), when he states that henceforth he will not be so concerned about working for his living. Both Piers and Gawain are in a highly charged emotional state; Piers tears the pardon "for pure tene." But whereas Piers looks forward to a new way of life (20), Gawain does not get beyond his strong sense of failure; when he returns to the court, this is still all he communicates. He has paid the price of his idealistic philosophy of chivalry, which leaves no way out for failure. The poem thus gives us the materials for a thoroughgoing examination of the validity of the ethos of chivalry. The brilliant surface of chivalry is everywhere, and the poet describes it enthusiastically. Chivalry is high civilization. But we see that the social chivalry of Arthur's court leads to superficiality, that Bertilak's codified chivalry is inhumane, and that Gawain's moral idealism is unworkable. None of the three judgments of Gawain's failure is adequate because all are based on inadequate premises. In the end, the poem suggests, chivalry is a limited system, which achieves its brilliance only at the cost of a distortion of natural life. It is primarily a social and ethical system, and as such cannot cater for the whole range of human needs. In particular, it cannot cope with the fact of mortality. Chivalry does not properly confront time and death, and it largely ignores the deeper morality which is founded on a sense of human frailty. As such it is a castle built on sand. It is Gawain's sense of his mortal vulnerability which finally destroys his attempt to maintain a perfect chivalry in his duel with the lady. If death is present in the poem as the focal point of the main story line, time is presented more obliquely, in a way which suggests an ongoing process to which everything in the poem is subject. The famous passage on the passing of the seasons at the beginning of the second fitt is a warning especially for Gawain and the court (495-99). The passage describes the passing of a single year, but, as we read how one season merges imperceptibly with the next, we have a sense of an endlessness which makes the pleasure-centered lives of Arthur and his knights seem temporary and hollow. In the powerful image of the ugly old woman leading the beautiful young woman by the hand (941-69), the poet indicates that Bertilak's court, too, despite its seeming assurance, is at the mercy of time. For all her magic, Morgan le Fay cannot prevent time taking its toll on her, and in her we see what the younger woman will eventually become. The beginning and the end of the poem set Gawain's adventure in a great sweep of time, so that it becomes but one of many marvelous events which have taken place in Britain since the country was founded. Once again the effect is diminishing: time reduces and eventually annihilates individual works of chivalry, as it does all purely human endeavor. By its evocation of a sense of the passing of time, the poem places chivalry in a disturbing perspective. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is not a religious poem like Pearl, Cleanliness,
and Patience, but nevertheless the doctrines of Christianity loom behind the poem, and every reader knows that the Christian faith offers a means of understanding and coping with time, death, and human weakness in a way that chivalry can never hope to do. The last two lines may be meant as more than a closing formula (2529-30).

**Chivalric Tradition: The role of Symbolism**

The first symbol in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight that I will discuss is Sir Gawain’s knightly shield. On Gawain’s shield is a pentangle, the five points on this pentangle represent the five virtues of the perfect knight: piety, friendship, generosity, chastity and courtesy. Each of the five virtues is tested on Gawain throughout the poem creating an emphasised importance on the shield’s representation and meaning. “Now alle þese fyue sypez, for sope, were fetled on þis knyȝt, And vchone halched in oþer, þat non ende hade. And fyched vpon fyue poynyte, þat fayld neuer” (SGGK, 656-8). This quote tells of the pentangle’s design, how each line of the pentangles composition is endlessly linked to one another, suggesting that each virtue depends on the other in an interrelated form. The sequence of the lines in this quote stresses the similar fashion in which each virtue continually flows to the next. Moreover, the pentangle’s five points create a structure for the poem to follow as ‘its five points fall at significant junctures of the poem’ (Derrickson, 11). Therefore, Gawain’s shield fashions an important symbol in the poem Sir Gawain and the Green Knight as the pen tangles five virtues form the journey that Gawain embarks on in the poem. The use of the literary device of symbolism that is seen here, gives the poem its shape and a structure to follow, and assimilates the events in the poem.

Secondly, the colour green in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is another important symbol used in this poem. The colour green is evident in the character of the Green Knight and in the green girdle that Gawain accepted of Lady Bertilak. The connection between the colour of the Green Knight and of the green girdle can be seen as a symbol of the inevitable failure of Gawain. As Gawain accepted the girdle he failed to keep his word to Bertilak and the Green Knight and also failed two of his knightly virtues, chastity and courtesy. The colour green therefore can be seen as a symbol of Gawain’s betrayal in the poem. “Pis is þe token of vntrawpe þat I am tan inne, And I mot nedez hit were wyle I may last; For mon may hyden his harme, bot vnhap ne may hit” (SGGK, 2509-11). This quote discusses the girdles meaning to Gawain once he arrives back to Arthur’s court. It is described as a ‘token’ of dishonesty and Gawain believes he must now wear it forever as he cannot erase his misdeed. The wearing of the green girdle symbolically destroys Gawain’s reputation as a knight. The manner, in which the green girdle is worn by Gawain, across his body, disrupts the colours of gold and red that was initially associated with Gawain. The colour green separating and interrupting the original colours of Gawain’s uniform is ‘emblematic of Gawain’s broken word’ (Derrickson, 12). Thus, the symbolic meaning of the colour green in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight adds depth and meaning to Gawain’s ultimate failure in the poem. In addition, the antagonist of the poem, the Green Knight, has symbolic meaning in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. The Green Knight proposes the challenge to Arthur’s court and it is Gawain who accepts the challenge and creates an agreement with the Green Knight. It is this challenge and agreement between Gawain and the Green Knight that forms the plot for the poem, thus making the Green Knight an important symbolic figure. The Green Knight brings out the antagonist in Gawain and makes Gawain see his faults, and therefore be a better person. “I may be funde vpon folde, and foch þe such wages, As þou deles me to-day before þis doupe ryche.” (SGGK, 396-7). Here the Green Knight confirms to Gawain the covenant that he has now agreed to and must fulfil. The reference to this agreement as an exchange of payments, “wages”, connects with the exchange of winnings game that is seen further on in the poem. Conversely, this agreement between Gawain and the Green Knight could be seen as unfair to Gawain as his “adversary was in effect invulnerable, because of magic” (Schmidt, 162). Seen as the Green Knight is the same person as Bertilak the notion of magic is involved, as this is impossible in the natural world. Therefore the Green Knight knew all along that Gawain was going to fail his test and break his agreement and receive punishment, all the while the Green Knight was untouchable and invulnerable. In this manner, the Green Knight serves as an important symbol in the poem Sir Gawain and the Green Knight as it is him who constructs the agreement in which the plot is centred around.

The third symbol is the exchange of winnings game/hunting. The exchange of winnings game is a new agreement between Bertilak and Gawain. The hunt and the characteristics of the three animals hunted mirrors the characteristics of Gawain towards Lady Bertilak on each day. “At þe last bā a littel dich he lepez ouer a spenne, Stelez out ful stilly bī a strothe rande, Went haf wylt of þe wode with wylez fro þe houndes;” (SGGK, 1709-11). This quote tells of the hunt of the fox on the last day. The fox is quick, cunning and difficult to catch; the fox is most aggressive of all the animals that were hunted. The
fox’s attitude parallels Gawain’s on the final day. On the final meeting Lady Bertilak is more aggressive than ever with her attempts to seduce Gawain. Gawain refuses her seductive ways just as the fox refused to be prey. However, in the end the fox gets killed, this killing corresponds with Gawain’s acceptance of the girdle and his neglect of the agreement. Furthermore, the fox and Gawain share similar positions, “as the fox resorts to a bit of trickery, and that trickery is the very cause of his undoing” (Savage, 6). Similarly, Gawain’s acceptance of the girdle is the only cause of his knightly dishonour. Accordingly, the symbolism of the exchange of winnings game/the hunt is of significance to this poem as it brings about the definitive failure of Gawain. It is this betrayal that makes this poem different to other heroism poems of the past.

The three strokes of the axe is the fourth important symbol in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight as it imitates Gawain’s behaviour in Lord Bertilak’s house. The two games between the Green Knight/Bertilak and Gawain are combined in this part of the poem. The first two strokes represent mock blows that cause no harm to Gawain, as on the first two days he was faithful and kept his word. However, “Trwe mon trwe restore, Penne þar mon drede no wæþe. At þe þrid þou fayled þore, And þerfor þat turn arrives.” (I, 292) Sir Gawain took this turn in the game/the hunt is of significance to this poem as it brings about the definitive failure of Gawain. It is this betrayal that makes this poem different to other heroism poems of the past.

The Green Knight taunts with "Anyone with the nerve to try it, take this ax, here. Hurry, I'm waiting! Take it and keep it, my gift forever, And give me a well-aimed stroke, and agree to accept another in payment, when my turn arrives.” (I, 292) Sir Gawain took this burden and took the ax from the king who was prepared to do this deed. Gawain knows full well that he would receive a blow in return and would have to find the Green Knight in order to receive his blow. He accepts these terms and gives the Green Knight his blow with no haste. Time passes and it eventually is time for Sir Gawain to start to look for his fate and find the Green Knight and his chapel. Starting his crusade, Gawain was given a feast and many thought he would never return again, as some of the knights would comment, "Better to have been more prudent, to have made him a duke before this could happen. He seemed a brilliant leader, and could have been." (II, 677) Gawain knows all of this that on his travel he would be put to death, he still went on this final crusade, to his death with utmost bravery. Sir Gawain also shows his honor often in accepting the Green Knight's challenge he shows his honor to the whole court. Now, set on his crusade Gawain was to prove his honor to the Green Knight. Though many adversities he faced, he still went on “In God: he could have died a dozen times over” (II, 725) All to fulfill his promise to the Green Knight. His honor and faith would lead him to a castle of splendidous qualities in an unknown wood. Gawain courteously asks for shelter and tells the castle's court of his crusade. The king of this court says that he knew of the Green Knight and his chapel and told Gawain it was very close. Gawain pleased, made merry with the king.

**Chivalric Tradition : Sir Gawain as the True Knight**

In Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Sir Gawain continuously proves his knightly virtues and code of honor. Chivalry includes bravery, honor, and courtesy. He proves that he is in fact a "real" Knight. He shows his bravery by shying away from nothing and no one. He proves his honor and courtesy to everyone he meets by showing respect to all whether he receives it back or not. Sir Gawain shows his bravery the first moment he has the chance to, when the Green Knight enters King Arthur's Court. The Green Knight taunts with "Anyone with the nerve to try it, take this ax, here. Hurry, I'm waiting! Take it and keep it, my gift forever, And give me a well-aimed stroke, and agree to accept another in payment, when my turn arrives.” (I, 292) Sir Gawain took this burden and took the ax from the king who was prepared to do this deed. Gawain knows full well that he would receive a blow in return and would have to find the Green Knight in order to receive his blow. He accepts these terms and gives the Green Knight his blow with no haste. Time passes and it eventually is time for Sir Gawain to start to look for his fate and find the Green Knight and his chapel. Starting his crusade, Gawain was given a feast and many thought he would never return again, as some of the knights would comment, "Better to have been more prudent, to have made him a duke before this could happen. He seemed a brilliant leader, and could have been." (II, 677) Gawain knows all of this that on his travel he would be put to death, he still went on this final crusade, to his death with utmost bravery. Sir Gawain also shows his honor often in accepting the Green Knight's challenge he shows his honor to the whole court. Now, set on his crusade Gawain was to prove his honor to the Green Knight. Though many adversities he faced, he still went on “In God: he could have died a dozen times over” (II, 725) All to fulfill his promise to the Green Knight. His honor and faith would lead him to a castle of splendidous qualities in an unknown wood. Gawain courteously asks for shelter and tells the castle's court of his crusade. The king of this court says that he knew of the Green Knight and his chapel and told Gawain it was very close. Gawain pleased, made merry with the king.
The king liked him very much and made an agreement with Gawain. Gawain would prove his honor to this agreement that the king proposed, "Whatever I earn in the woods will be yours, whatever you win in exchange will be mine." (II, 1106) While in the castle Gawain would receive kisses from the lady of the castle, the king's wife an in loyalty and honor to the king and the agreement he would give the king his kisses that he received in exchange. Sir Gawain is very courteous in all he does especially while in the company of the king. He is tempted daily by the king's wife. The lady would be aggressive for Gawain's love yet still giving all control of the situation to Gawain for him to make the mistakes. The lady flirtatiously says, "You're far too strong to accept a 'no', if anyone were boorish enough to deny you." (III, 1496) Gawain shakes off the ladies temptations yet still gives her everything she asks for in a courteous polite manner. "And Gawain was so gracefully evasive that he seemed always polite, and nothing happened but happiness." (III, 1551). Everyday, when the king would come home Gawain would exchange what he received, kisses, for the king's earnings of his daily hunt. Everyday the king would be proud because the king knew of what his lady was doing to Gawain while he was away; it was all a test. Gawain passing it marvelously with his chivalric acts. Gawain is tested throughout the story on his chivalric qualities. Every Time passing without any trouble. He proves his hero to King Arthur, the court, and the Green Knight throughout the story. All the while being brave and courteous. Gawain is a true knight because he is human and he makes mistakes, but he doesn't deny these mistakes. He acknowledges them and learns from them. All the time chivalric, as almost a natural quality, not learned or taught, but natural. His honor is unmatched in the story, his bravery unsurmounted and his courtesy like no other.

5. CONCLUSION
In conclusion, through the Green Knight's tests, we see that Gawain is not the perfect knight he strives to be. Neither we, nor the Green Knight, nor his fellow knights of the Round Table hold him to this standard of perfection. We read about the turmoil Gawain experiences thinking about his impending death at the hands of the Green Knight, and we understand why he accepts the girdle. We know he remains true until his fear of death overrides him. All this proves he is only human. Yet Gawain only sees that he has been inconsistent in upholding the chivalric code, and this means failure to him. This is an indication of the standard Gawain has set for himself, and we see why he has the reputation he has. Despite all that has happened, Gawain is still a loyal, noble, honest and courteous knight.

REFERENCES

Quotations from: