Expressions of Gratitude In Cairene Arabic: Pragmalinguistic Study

Nagwa El-Zeini
Hilwan University

1. Introduction

Research on intra-cultural and inter-cultural variation in the use and realization of particular speech acts has focused on language functions by studying language use in different communities (Blum-Kulka 1982; Fraser 1985; Brown & Levinson 1987; and Rizk 1997). There has been considerable evidence that speech acts differ across cultures (Blum-kulka 1982; Scarcella 1979).

Some research on politeness and speech acts in Egyptian Arabic has been conducted. El-Sayed (1989) and El-Shafey (1990) deal with contrastive politeness; Morsey (1992) studies Arabic compliments and compares them with American compliments; Mazid (1995) investigates complimenting behavior in upper Egypt; and, finally, Hussein (1995) provides a descriptive analysis of speech acts in Arabic, including apologies, requests and expressions of gratitude (hereafter EOGs), among many others. However, research on speech acts such as EOGs, and their functions in Cairene Arabic, is still required.

2. Purpose and Scope of the Study

Expressing gratitude is a language function that has significant social value in the Cairene community. Since few studies have dealt with expressions of gratitude in Arabic, many aspects of this area still need further investigation. The present study is an attempt to investigate the

various EOGs and their functions in spoken Cairene Arabic (SCA) from the sociolinguistic and pragmatic perspectives. Results from this study can later be contrasted with the EOGs in other societies. Such contrastive pragmatic studies can reflect the linguistic diversity across cultures, an issue that challenges previous research characterized by its ethnocentrism (Wierzbicka 1991; Brown & Levinson 1978; and Pomerantz 1978). Ethnotcentrism is the tendency to generalize conclusions based on white AngloAmerican mainstream data and assimilate other lnaguage communities into these conclusions. (e.g. Wierzbicka, 1991).

This study will probably fill a gap in the literature concerning gratitude in Cairene society in particular, and add to the literature on politeness and contrastive socio-pragmatics in general. Moreover, identifying the language functions of EOGs in Cairene society is a step forward in the path to understanding its specific aspects, and relating them to language universals. Such cross-cultural research has been emphasized by Dechert & Raupach (1980) and its significance in designing activities in the foreign language (FL) curricula has been pointed out by Aston (1995). The relevance and implication of such studies in discourse analysis and production has been stressed by McCarthy & Carter (1994).

Operational Definitions

1. "Thanking" is defined here according to Leech (1983) as a convivial function whose goal of stating appreciation helps maintain a polite and social atmosphere. The current study is restricted to the verbal behavior of gratitude, rather than its non-verbal aspects.

2. Religious formulas, also termed supplications, according to El-Zeini (1996) , include any responses that satisfied the lexical and syntactic structures typical of supplications in Arabic. Lexically, supplications are characterized by having God's name: *Allah or Rabb* 'God' or 'Lord', and a vocative "ya". Syntactically, they could consist of a verb, which indicates wishing, and this verb could also be elipted. E.g. *sufra dayma* 'may your table always be laden'. These were used either as single speech acts or speech act sets which consisted of the combination of two or more acts.

3. Review of the Literature

Theoretical research has considered EOGs as speech acts within the framework of discourse analysis. Van Ek (1977) classifies thanking as expressing an emotional attitude. Leech (1983) describes thanking as a convivial function whose illocutionary goal (stating appreciation) coincides with the social goal of establishing gratitude and maintaining a polite and friendly social atmosphere.

Brown & Levinson (1978:67) discuss two principles of politeness: "negative face" (avoidance of imposition), and "positive face" (approval of the person). They classify expressing gratitude as a politeness strategy which is "face threatening to the speaker" and which they term "the degree of indebtedness" (1987: 247). They also argue that politeness strategies in general are motivated by the relative power, social distance and degree of imposition involved. They believe that thanking satisfies the negative politeness maxim "acknowledge the debt". The degree of familiarity (positive affect) and /or distance (negative face) both have an influence on the choice of politeness strategies, including EOGs (Brown & Levinson 1978, 1987; Slugoski & Turnbull 1988, Brown & Gilman 1989; and Wolfson 1989).

Although EOGs have received attention in some studies, they have not been singled out for investigation, except very rarely. In Mazid (1995) they occur as responses to compliments, whereas in Dogancay & Kamisli (1996) EOGs are treated as responses to disagreement among those of unequal status. Other studies,on the other hand,focus on EOGs as speech acts worthy of investigation in and of themselves. Some of these studies are qualitative, as that of Hussein (1995), whereas others are empirical, such as Rubin (1983), Eisenstein & Bodman (1986 & 1993), and Aston (1995). Hussein's (1995) study is the only one that describes EOGs as a speech act in Arabic. He analyses them among other speech acts, such as apologies, requests and refusals. He concludes that the linguistic formulas of each speech act are determined by social distance, formality of the situation, age, level of education, and status of the participants.
Coulmas (1981) draws a conclusion similar to that of Hussein, though not with respect to Arabic. He finds that expressing gratitude is subject to cultural variation, depending on the relationship between participants and

the object of gratitude, which determines the degree of gratefulness in a particular situation.

Eisenstein & Bodman (1986 & 1993) consider thanking as a matter of politeness that varies in use and realization. They study EOGs among native and non-native speakers of English and of different social backgrounds. Their study is an empirical one, based on questionnaires and observation, and they focus on situations that yield EOGs, such as receiving a gift, favor, reward or service. They conclude that gratitude is expressed in the form of speech act sets which vary in length according to the perceived need for thanking, as well as the social distance between participants. Speech act sets, according to Cohen & Olshtain (1981), are "groups of semantic formulae that together achieve the appropriate language for a particular situation". They identify some functions of gratitude such as organizing the conversation in sequential turns.

Rubin (1983) investigates the uses of "thank you" in Hawaii in various situations. She finds that "thank you" has different functions, such as expressing gratitude, complimenting, and closing service encounters. She also reports that the length of the EOG varies according to the effort and time utilized by the giver in order to help the recipient.

Aston (1995) investigates the pragmatic constraints on the use of "thank you" in conversational closings. He argues that the performance of speech acts is judged in terms of the requirements and expectations of that moment, which play a crucial role in the use of thanking. He concludes, through analyzing data from English and Italian service encounters, that the use of thanks differs across cultures, and that it plays an important role in conversational management. This final point was proposed earlier by Hymes (1971), who found that thanking may function as a formal marker of discourse structure rather than as an indication of gratitude. It was also mentioned by Sacks & Schegloff (1973), Rubin (1983), and Button (1990) that thanking can have the function of terminating a conversation.

Hypotheses:

The present study tests the following hypotheses:

   (1) The socio-economic status of the interlocutors, social distance/ familiarity between them, as well as their sexes are all variables that determine the use and variation of the speech act of expressing gratitude in Cairene society.

(2) EOGs, particularly in their lexical aspects and the address terms that accompany them, may help in indicating the social identity and rank of the speakers, as well as their ideology.

(3) EOGs fulfill certain social functions in Cairene society, namely:

a. Identifying identity and rank of the speakers

b. Maintaining social solidarity

c. Reflecting cultural values.

4. Data and Methodology

4.1. Participants

A total of 120 native speakers of Cairene Arabic, representing both sexes, participated in responding to the oral questionnaire. Their socio-economic status was determined by their level of education (Ed.), job, and area of living. To get results of contrastive difference, only 2 levels were identified: high educational level (H) and low educational level (L). H subjects (Ss) had a minimum Ed. level of university while L Ss ranged from zero to primary ed. H jobs covered doctors, university staff and engineers, in contrast with L jobs, which included servants, workers and janitors. A large number of L Ss were easy to access as they were regular visitors to social work centers. Ss from Zamalek, Heliopolis, and Mohandiseen areas were H, while L Ss came from al-Hussein, Boulaq, and Imbaba.

The minimum age of the Ss was 25 in order to guarantee that they had enough experience to answer certain items on the questionnaire (e.g. situation of boss / employee). However, some of the Ss were not working or were self-employed, so they did not have a boss. In such cases, they were asked to imagine what would have been said in this particular situation.

4.2. Data Collection

Data were collected in 3 ways:

(1) Observation both of naturalistic and elicited situations of EOGs (e.g. TV programs), either by audiotaping or note taking by the researcher. Natural observations of real-life interactions were made in different locations of Cairo: Zamalek, Mohandiseen,

Abbassia and al-Hussein (often in social work centers in order to have access to demographic data about LSs). Observation continued over a period of 4 months, in different areas of Cairo. Other examples of where natural observation took place are Helwan University in Helwan, and Faculty of Education in Zamalek.

(2)   Oral questionnaires containing situations that elicited EOGs. Questionnaires were administered orally because some of the L participants were illiterate. Moreover, the medium of the questionnaire was colloquial Arabic, which suits the nature and purpose of the study. Questionnaires written in modern standard Arabic tend to elicit responses in standard Arabic, which is not the level of language used in everyday personal interaction.

(3)   Retrospective interviews, similar to Eisenstein and Bodman (1986), were conducted to get feedback and explanation from some of the participants concerning their responses. They were also helpful in verifying certain phenomena and interpreting some of the results.

4.3. Materials and Procedure

The study stemmed from observation of real life situations and TV programs (such as daily dramas) which triggered the use of EOGs. Based on the natural observation, a 10-item questionnaire was designed (see Appendix B). Each item consisted of a situation that requires an EOG as a response. The situations were based on Eisenstein & Bodman's (1986 & 1993), with modifications and additions. For instance, the situations of bus driver and cashier were excluded in this study, as they do not always elicit thanking in Cairene society. Marriage anniversary was also excluded, as it is not always celebrated in Cairo, particularly among LSs.
After conducting the questionnaire, only 5 items were selected and analyzed for the study as the others resulted in responses that were not actually EOGs, such as the occasion of the pilgrimage and childbirth, which resulted in compliments. The situations under investigation were reduced to the following five: 200 LE loan, helping someone out of a problem, invitation (for a meal), receiving a gift between husband and wife, and, finally receiving a favor from persons who vary in their relationships to and degree of familiarity with the receiver. The various relationships investigated in this final situation were (See Appendix B):

(1) colleague / colleague: same sex and cross sex
(2) brother / sister
(3) friend / friend: same sex and cross sex
(4) boss / employee

The above situations were selected because they provided data that were true representations of the variables under investigation, namely: socio economic status, social distance/familiarity, and sex. The received data were also enough to display the functions they play in Cairene Society.

4.4. Data Analysis

Observational data were analyzed qualitatively, since it was not practical to analyze them quantitatively. Such data were analyzed prior to constructing the oral questionnaire used in this study, and helped in designing the situations presented in the questionnaire (allowing them to be as natural as possible). The observational period, however, continued until after the oral questionnaire was conducted, thereby allowing for comparison between the natural observation and data elicited from the oral questionnaire.

Elicited data were analyzed quantitatively in terms of numbers and percentages. *All numbers concerning data results in this research refer to percentages.* EOGs were classified according to the speech act theory (Searle 1969, 1975) and within the framework of the models provided mainly by Eisenstein and Bodman (1986 & 1993), as well as others, such as Wolfson (1983) and Mazid (1995), with some additions and modifications where necessary. The responses to each situation were analyzed and categorized as a single speech act, or a speech act set (Olshtain & Cohen 1981).

The most frequent speech acts reported in all the situations under investigation were: thanking, expressing gratitude and appreciation, complimenting, expressing desire to reciprocate and wishing (using religious formulas or supplications). EOGs were also analyzed from the lexical aspect insofar as they reflected socio-pragmatic influence and helped draw conclusions about the influence of the variables under investigation on the linguistic performance of the speakers. Examples are the influence of ed. and sex on the linguistic EOGs.

The raw data were then categorized in table form and in numbers and percentages, indicating the frequency of each speech act among the four groups, of which each included 30 Ss: High Ed. Males (HMs), Low Ed. Males (LMs), High Ed. Females (HFs) and Low Ed. Females (LFs). The 5 tables have the four groups on the horizontal axis, and the speech act on the vertical axis.

EOGs are transcribed following Badawi & Martin (1985), (see Appendix A), with slight adaptations and modifications when necessary. Translations were also based on the same dictionary by Badawi & Martin (in the case of modification or adaptation, my translation is provided). The translation of some formulas is relatively literal, however, this is intended to reflect the source culture input. This is expected to help the target reader to percieve of the concepts and notions revealed in the expressions of gratitude, thus making him able to link such concepts with the conclusions drawn concerning the ideology of Egyptians.

5. Rresults

Lexically and pragmatically, observational data supported elicited data. The results here are based mainly on elicited data, which were quantifiable. However, some points were much clearer in real life situations, and some linguistic aspects appeared in the observational data and not in the elicited data. Such cases were mentioned in this study.

Tables present percentages of the various speech acts employed in expressing gratitude among HMs, LMs, HFs, and LFs (n=120). They ranged from the single speech acts of thanking, complimenting, and promising (to reciprocate) to speech act sets such as thanking + complimenting + wishing, and thanking + wishing. Supplications were classified here as a distinct category due to their significance and high frequency in the received data (an element missing in all the models described by all Western research in the speech act research).

5.1. Situation of Loaning

Table 1 shows percentages of the different speech acts expressing gratitude used by the 4 groups under investigation (HM, LM, HF and LF) in Situation 1: that of a 200 L.E. loan (see Appendix B).

Table 1 Situation of Loaning

speech act (set)	HM	LM	HF	LF
thanking + indebtedness	20.0	23.3	56.7	20.0
thanking + expressing	6.60	6.60	13.3	-
indebtedness + promising to repay thanking + wishing (supplication)	13.3	13.3	10.0	3.3
wishing + promising to repay	6.60	-	-	-
complimenting	16.7	-	-	-
wishing (supplication)	36.5	56.7	20.0	76.5

5.1.1. Lexical Aspects

At the lexical level, it was noticed that the same EOGs were used by HMs and HFs, in contrast with LMs and LFs, who also shared a large number of expressions. For instance, an expression used by HMs (13.3%) and HFs (16.7%) was:

(1) /ÃnÃ εÃÃgiz (1st person mas.) εÃÃgza (1st person fem.) Ean i∫-∫ukr

'I cannot thank you enough'

This was different from the expression used only by LMs (20%) and LFs(10%):

(2) gimiil-Ãk f-rÃ/Ãbt-i/ gimiil-Ãk EÃlÃ raas-i min foo/

'Certainly, your favor encloses my neck/ is on the top of my head'

Such an expression carries some exaggeration of expressing indebtedness, as the neck is a symbol of life, and the head of dignity. Furthermore, associating the debt with the head/neck was characteristic only of L Ss.
An expression that represented 20% of HF responses was:

(3) mirsii xaaliï, /ÃnÃ miS EÃÃrfa /aSkur-ak /izzÃy

'Thank you very much, I don't know how to thank you'

HMs used the same expression, with the exception of using the phrase *mutÃSÃkkir giddÃn* instead of *mirsii xaaliï*, but with a lower frequency

(6.6). Both HMs and HFs also used the formula (with the same frequency of 10%):

    (4) *Sukraan wÃ gÃzÃÃ -k allaah xayr-an*
        'Thanks; may God reward you'

This formula is a combination of *Sukr* 'thanking' and wishing by using a religious formula. HM Ss used one compliment (16.7%):

    (5) *miS PÃriibÃ iS-SÃhÃÃmÃ di minn-Ãk*
        'It is not strange to see your gallantry'

The word *SÃhÃÃmÃ* 'gallantry' did not appear among females. Religious formulas were also reported with different lexical aspects, for example:

    (6) *baarak allahu fii-k*
        'God bless you' (6.6%)

    (7) *rabb-i-n-a ywÃssÃE Eleek*
        'God grant you good fortune' (13.3%)

    (8) *kattar /Ãlf xeer-Ãk*
        'May God increase your bounty (literally, 'by a thousand times')'
        (6.6%)

This latter was used more as a compliment rather than a supplication, even though it is a religious formula / supplication in its underlying proposition.

Variation at the lexical level was very noticeable among LMs and LFs in contrast with HMs and HFs, particularly in the religious formulas used. The most frequent religious formulas used among L Ss were:

    (9) *rabb-i-n-a yistur-ha mÃEÃ-Ãk dunyÃ w-/ÃxrÃ*
        'May God protect you in this world and the next' (LM 20%, LF20%)

    (10) *rabb-i-n-a mÃ-yirmii-k f- diiqÃ*

'May God never put you in hardships (straits)' (LM 10%, LF 13.3%)

These religious formulas were not used at all by HMs and HFs.

5.1.2. Pragmatic Aspects

Education and sex were quite influential on the linguistic behavior of expressing gratitude. This was noticed in the speech function performed, as well as in the length of utterances used. For instance, HMs and LMs used almost equal expressions of indebtedness (20% and 23.3% respectively), as well as speech act sets of equal frequency; thanking + promising to repay (6.6%) and thanking + wishing (13.3%). Yet, they differed in two single speech acts: complimenting, which was used only by HMs (16.7%) and wishing (using religious formulas) (36% among HMs). Such wishing was used with almost double frequency among LMs (56.7%). LFs reported the highest frequency of religious expressions (76.5%) which is triple that of the HFs. As mentioned earlier, the religious formulas used were characterized by their length and their formulaic nature.

The influence of sex was evident in the EOGs by HFs, who reported the highest frequency (56.7%) of the single speech act of gratitude, which was almost triple of that used by HMs and LMs, and relatively higher than HMs (36.5%). LFs reported the highest frequency of wishing by using religious formulas (76.5%), which contrasted with LMs (56.7%), and with HMs (only 36.5%). HFs used more speech act sets of thanking + promising to repay (13.3%) than those used by HMs (6.6%). They used thanking + wishing (10%) at a lower frequency than that of HMs (13.3%):

> (11) *rabb-i-na mÃ yiHrim-ni minn-Ãk wÃ -lÃ min gÃmÃyl-Ãk*
> 'May I never lose (or deprive of) your favor'

Educational level was also influential on the length of the EOGs among members of the same sex. For instance, the wishing *kattar /Ãlf xeer-Ãk* 'may God increase your bounty' (literally, 'by a thousand times') (6.6%) was used by HFs, in contrast with *rabb-i-na yistur-hÃ mÃEÃ-Ãk dunyÃ w-/ÃxrÃ* 'may God protect you in this world and the next' (LFs 20%).

5.2. Situation of Helping out of a Problem

Table 2 shows percentages of speech acts and speech act sets used in expressing gratitude in Situation 2: A big problem someone helped you out of (see Appendix B).

Table 2 Situation of Helping With a Problem

speech act (set)	HM	LM	HF	LF
thanking + indebtedness	50.0	13.3	43.4	-
thanking + promising to repay	-	-	-	13.3
thanking + complimenting	3.3	-	-	-
wishing + promising	-	-	-	-
complimenting	-	-	-	-
thanking + wishing	13.3	-	23.3	-
wishing (religious formulas)	33.3	86.7	33.3	86.7

5.2.2. Lexical Aspects

Education seemed to be quite influential in this situation among both sexes. HM reported 50% expressions of indebtedness and gratitude. The most frequent expressions used among HMs were:

(1) *gimiil miS H-Ã nsaah /ÃbÃdÃn*
    ' A favor I'll never forget' (16.7%)

(2) */ÃnÃ mÃdiin lÃk il-Eumr kull-u*
    'I'm indebted to you for the rest of my life' (10%)

(3) *mutSÃkkir /Ãwi*
    'Thank you very much' (10%) and *Sukran* 'thanks' (13.3%).

The first two expressions carry a deep sense of gratitude and indebtedness reflected in the emphatic */ÃbÃdÃn* 'never' following the negative "not forget", and in the use of *kullu* 'all of it' following *il Eumr* 'my life'. EOGs in this situation were thus characterized by sincere, true feelings, unlike those routine /phatic expressions used in the invitation situation (Situation 3) of *sufra dÃymÃ* 'may your table always be permanent' and *nrud-a-ha - lak* 'may we have the chance to repay (your generosity)'.

Moreover, the use of the noun *gimiil* 'favor', and the adjective *mÃdiin* 'indebted', together with the presence of the first pronoun "I", implied in the "/" of the verb /ÃnsÃÃ 'I forget it' in the first, and the pronoun /ÃnÃ in the second, and the noun agent *mutÃSÃkkir,* intensified the receiver's feeling of indebtedness.

> (4) /ÃnÃ miS HÃnsÃ gimiil-Ãk dÃ /ÃbÃdÃn
> 'I'll never forget this very favor which you did' (16.7%)

Formula (4) was used in the same frequency by HMs and HFs, except for the different word order: fronting the object *gimiil* 'favor' by males and the presence of the pronoun /ÃnÃ 'I', which is in initial position in the case of females. Annexation of the clitic pronoun *k* 'your' to the word *gimiil* 'favor', which acknowledged the favor of the giver, was another difference that characterized female responses in this situation.
The other lexical items used were:

> (5) *mutÃSÃkkir-Ã giddÃn*
> 'I thank you very much' (10%, HFs; used at the same frequency by HMs.

> (6) *mirsii xaaliĬ*
> '(Merci)Thanks a lot' (6.7%, HFs, not used by Ms of both Ed. levels.)

The most frequent religious formulas used by HMs and HFs were:

> (7) *rabb-i-na yixÃlii-k*
> 'May God preserve you' (10% both)

> (8) *gÃzÃÃ-k allaah xayr-an*
> 'May God reward you' (10% both)

HMs differed from HFs in only one form of supplication/ religious formula. HMs used:

> (9) *kattar xeer-Ãk w-rabb-i-na yqaddar-ni /Ãrud gÃmÃy-lÃk*
> 'May God increase your bounty and enable me to return (give back) your favors' (13.3%).

HFs, on the other hand, used:

(10) *rabb-i-na mayiHrim-niiS minn-Ãk*
    'May I never lose you' (16.7%)

As for LMs, the same expressions used by HMs were used, yet with a low percentage (3.31%) each, and LMs used an additional one which was: *gimmiil-ak fi ra-/abt-i* 'your favor encloses my neck' (16.6%), which expresses a very deep sense of gratitude. LFs, in contrast, did not report any expression of thanking, yet they used thanking + promising to return the favor (13.3%):

(11) *Sukran bi-/i zn illÃÃh aEawwad-ha lak fi l-xeer*
    'Thanks, and God willing, I'll make it up to you later/ on good occasions'

Religious formulas used were similar among LMs and LFs:

(12) *rabb-i-na yistur-hÃ mÃEÃ-Ãk wa-la yirmii-k fi dii/Ã*
    'May God protect you and never put you in straits' (LMs 13.3%; LFs 16.7%)

(13) *kattar xeer-Ãk*
    'May God increase your bounty' (LMs 16.7%; LFs 13.5%)

(14) *rabb-i-na ykattar min /ÃmsÃal-Ãk*
    'May God increase those who are the like of you/ of your model' (LMs 20%)

(15) *rabb-i-na ma yiHwigÃ-k li-HÃd*
    'May God never make you in need for anyone' (LFs10%)

The lexical items related to the semantic field of *sÃtr* 'covering', 'protection' and 'shielding', *HÃwgÃ* 'need', and *diiqÃ* 'strait' were identified in the religious formulas of LM and LF Ss, and were absent among their HM and HF counterparts.

5.2.2. Pragmatic Aspects

The influence of education was very noticeable in the linguistic behavior of expressing gratitude in this situation (problem). For instance, HMs and HFs produced the highest frequency of the single speech act set of thanking + indebtedness (50% HMs; 43.4% HFs). Both also made use of the speech act set of thanking + wishing (13.3% HMs; 23.3% HFs). Interestingly, both HMs and HFs used the exact percentage of religious formulas (33.3%).

Only LFs produced the speech act set of thanking + promising to return. As for LSs in general, they employed the speech act of wishing as the most frequent strategy of expressing gratitude: 86.7% among both sexes. Thus, whereas educational level was influential on expressing gratitude in Situation 2 (Helping With a Problem), sex was not, as Ss reported the same frequency of language behavior.

5.3. Situation of Invitation

Table 3 shows the results of Situation 3: EOGs after an invitation (see Appendix B).

Table 3 Situation of Invitation

speech act (set)	HM	LM	HF	LF
thanking	36.3	-	56.7	-
thanking + complimenting	16.7	-	13.3	-
complimenting	-	33.3	-	30
complimenting + wishing	-	-	-	13.3
promising to reciprocate (comissive)	-	-	-	6.7
thanking + wishing (religious formulas)	16.7	-	-	-
wishing (religious formulas)	30.0	66.3	6.7	49.6

5.3.1. Lexical Aspects

The EOGs in Situation 3 (invitation) were often comments on the food itself, the cook or the house. Adjectives identified in the data describing food were *laziz* 'delicious' and *TiEim* 'tasty'. The word *sufra* 'table', a metonymic was used to refer to food itself and it was also described as *dÃymÃ* 'permanent'. The "hands" were a symbol for the cook and they

were endorsed by a wish using the verb *tislÃm* 'may they stay safe'. The "house" was always referred to by the masculine pronoun *h* 'it', described as *Eaamir* 'always prosperous'.

The most frequent expression of thanking among HMs (36.3%) was *Sukraan* 'thanks' or any of its derivatives: */ÃSkur-ak)* 'I thank you' and *mutÃSÃkkiriin* 'we thank you'. They were followed by the intensifiers - */Ãwi* 'strongly', or *giddÃn* 'very' and *gÃzyl-Ãn* 'abundant' which are roughly equivalent to 'very much', with the only difference being that *gÃzyl-Ãn* 'abundant' is more formal, as it is modern standard Arabic, in contrast with the other two, which are colloquial.
Among HFs, the expression "merci", borrowed from French), was the most frequent (43.4%), followed by the intensifiers *giddÃn*, -/*Ãwi*, or the less formal *xaaliǐ*, which also carries the same meaning of "very". *Sukraan gÃzyl-Ãn* was also used (13.3%).

Certain religious formulas of gratitude appeared among LMs and LFs such as:

(1) *nÃÃkul w-intÃ gay min EÃnd ir-rasuul*
   'May we come and eat after you visit the Prophet' (LMs 6.7%)

(2) */ilÃÃh-i yigEÃl-u EÃÃmir bi Hissu-ku*
   'May our God make your house prosperous' (LMs 26.4%; LFs 10%)

(3) *yÃ rabb yiddum il-Eizz*
   'May you always have plenty' (LMs and LFs 6.7%)

Certain other formulas were used only by HMs or HFs:

(4) *dÃymÃn EÃÃmir*
   'May your house always be prosperous' (HMs 16.7%)

(5) *ɛu/bÃÃl mÃ -nÃÃkul fil-farH*
   'May we eat on your happy occasions' (HFs 10%)

(6) */afTara EindÃ-kum Ãǐǐ Ãa/im-uun w -/akala TaEmaakum l-/abraar wa tanazalla-t Ealy-kumu l-mÃlÃ/ikÃ*

'May those who are fasting break their fast at your place; and may those who are righteous eat your food; and may the angels descend upon you (HMs13.3; LMs 6.6; HFs 6.6 LF3.3).

Formula (6) is a form of religious supplication, which emphasizes the significance of religiosity among Egyptians. This point is discussed later in this research. Other religious formulas dealt with the idea of wishing to be invited on happy occasions:

(7) *nÃÃkul yoom faraH-ik*
    'May we eat on your wedding day.

5.3.2. Pragmatic Aspects

The variables of education and sex resulted in variations of the linguistic realization of EOGs, which was manifest in the functions they expressed as well as in the length of the utterances themselves. For instance, HMs used a single speech act function of thanking (36.3%) whereas LMs reported no such act. Wishing (by using religious formulas) was reported by 30% of HMs in contrast with 66.3% among LMs. LMs produced relatively longer religious formulas of gratitude than HMs. Moreover, they were quite longer compared to the simple thanking act represented.

Comissives were accompanied by the use of */in SaÃ/ allaah* 'God willing', which reflected the subjects' intention to reciprocate (e.g. *Euzuma marduuda /inSaÃ/ allaah* 'invitation to be repaid, God willing'). Comissives in the form of promising to reciprocate were also noticed at the percentage of 6.7% among LFs only.
In addition, more compliments were reported by LMs (33.3%) and LFs (30%) in comparison to none among HMs and HFs. The use of the speech act set of thanking +complimenting was reported with similar percentages among HMs and HFs (16.7% and 13.3%, respectively), but was completely absent among LSs. Complimenting + wishing was not used by HSs; however, they appeared with a frequency of 13.3% among LFs.

Religious formulas were also used with a higher frequency among LFs (49%) in contrast with HFs (only 6.7%).

5.4. Situation of Husband and Wife

Table 4 shows the percentages of EOGs by husbands and wives of both H and L social status.

Table 4 A Gift From Husband/ Wife

speech act (set)	HM	LM	HF	LF
thanking + endearment terms	20	13.3	23.1	-
thanking + supplication	16.7	13.3	30.0	20.0
thanking + complimenting	20.0	23.1	10.0	6.7
desire to reciprocate	10.0	20.0	-	-
supplication	19.9	30.0	30.2	73.3
Complimenting + religious formula	3.3	-	6.70	-

5.4.1. Lexical Aspects

Using the French "merci" 'thanks' by HFs (16.7%) was noticeable in this situation as in the previous ones. Another lexical feature was the use of address terms like *papa* and *mamma* by HFs and HMs when addressing husband and wife, respectively (13.3% both) *Ya xoya* ' O my brother' was also used to address the husband by LFs (10.0%).

The use of endearment terms, such as *Habibi* / *Habibti* 'my love', as well as of nicknames, also characterized HM and HF responses (50.0%). Such terms were more frequently used by husbands addressing their wives (30.0%) than by wives to their husbands (16.7%). Using the first name of the wife was reported among HMs (20.0%) In contrast, LMs used nicknames when addressing their wives (30.0%), as well as the word "mother' or "father" + the name of the first child, particularly the male child (13.3%). Using the first name of the wife by LMs was also noticed (40.0%), yet L wives reported a relatively small percentage of first names when addressing their husbands (10.0%). They also used the title *si* + *il/ustaz*, roughly 'Mr.', which was not found among the H Ss.

The vocabulary used was in the semantic field of gratitude and thanking (e.g. *Sukran* 'thanks', */alf Sukr* 'a thousand thanks'. The supplications addressed the fields of blessing (6.7% HMs) and preserving and saving the partner's life (23.0% HMs; 30.0 HFs%). Common supplications / religious formulas used by LMs and LFs were in the semantic field of preservation, covering, and protection against disease:

(1) *rabbi-na yixallii-k*
'May God preserve you' (13.3%)

(2) *rabb-i-na yistur-ha maEaa -k dunya w -/axra*
'May God cover you in this world and the next' (13.3%)

(3) *rabbi-na yikfii-k Sar il -marad*
'May God protect you against disease' (10.0%)

Another supplication used by LFs was:

(4) *rabbi-na yxalli Hiss-ak f-iddinya*
'May God keep your voice in this world' (6.7%)

The word *Hiss* 'voice', was an example of metonymic use to indicate the
life and survival of the person.
The superlative adjective */aHsan* 'the best' characterized the compliments
used by HMs when addressing their wives (6.7%). Verbs which were in
the semantic field of happiness were also used in complimenting the
wife's behavior, like the verb */asEad-tii-ni* 'you made me happy' (6.7%
HMs).

5.4.2. Pragmatic Aspects

Pragmatically, EOGs between husband and wife were characterized by
their informality. This informality was reflected in the use of address
terms and endearment terms *Habib-i /Habib-ti* 'love' as mentioned above.
These terms accompanied the speech acts of thanking, complimenting,
and supplicating, particularly among H Ss. Such terms of endearment
were found in a low frequency by LMs (6.7%), in contrast with
nicknames, which were used in a higher frequency by this group (30.0%).
Nicknames by HF were reported (16.7) in contrast with none by LFs. This
reflects the influence of status on expressing gratitude.

Another significant pragmatic aspect in this situation is that the speech
act of wishing to reciprocate was reported at the percentages of 10 and 20
by HMs and LMs, respectively, in contrast with zero by females, both H
and L. This has its implications of the sex variable in the family life of the
Cairene society. As in the previous situations, religious formulas received

the highest frequency in this situation, particularly by LFs (73.3%) in contrast with their HF counterparts (30.2%) and HMs (19.9%).
Length of the EOGs was noticed in this situation, which also reflects its informality as well as the influence of closeness / familiarity on the EOGs. Length was evident in the speech act sets of complimenting + thanking (20.0% HMs; 23.0% HFs), as well as in the use of supplication (usually more than one) by LFs in particular.

5.5. Impact of the Degree of Familiarity

Table 5 shows the influence of the degree of familiarity/ distance between participants on the use of EOGs (see Appendix B). Five different relations were investigated: colleague/ colleague, same sex; colleague/ colleague, opposite sex; friend/ friend, same sex; sister / brother; and finally boss/ employee. The item concerning friends of opposite sexes was dropped from the tables as all respondents said that they do not have "friends" from the opposite sex due to constraints on cross-sex relationships in Islam.

5.5.1 Lexical Aspects

The lexical aspects of the EOGs used in responses for item 3 which dealt with the degree of familiarity between participants were more or less the same as those reflected in the previous situations, with a few exceptions. Examples of the exceptions are the appearance of address terms and titles: *bey*, */afandim*; honorifics: *Hadrit-ak* and *siyaadt-ak* 'your lordship'; endearment terms: *Habibt-i* 'sweetheart' or */oxt-i* 'sister' and finally, the use of nicknames. Adjectives like: *gamiil* 'beautiful' and */amar* 'moonlike' were also used, particularly between female friends.

Most of the lexical items of such religious formulas were reported the same in all the previous tables for LM and LF interaction. However, the following formulas were also used:

      (1) *rabb-i-na yTawwil Eumra-k*
         'May God let you live long'

      (2) *rabb-i-na yixlif Ealeek bil Halaal*
         'May God compensate you well for it'

Another case is the act of apology + address term. These, in addition to the use of address terms and titles mentioned above, represented the marked use of expressing gratitude in the interaction of boss/ employee. Using any of these address terms in the wrong place in the conversation breaks the rules of discourse, namely, the appropriateness maxim in Grice's taxonomy (1975).

Table 5 Impact of the Degree of Familiarity

Speech act (set)	Sex	colleague/ colleague same sex	Colleague/ colleague opposite sex	friend/ friend same sex	sister/ brother	boss/ employee
Thanking	HM	33.3	50.0	46.7	26.7	19.8
	LM	19.8	19.8	23.1	10.0	13.3
	HF	53.2	50.0	26.6	26.6	20.0
	LF	13.3	16.7	13.3	10.0	10.0
Thanking	HM	10.0	3.30	-	-	53.3
+ address	LM	-	-	-	6.70	16.7
Term	HF	6.70	13.3	20.0	13.3	26.6
	LF	6.70	10.0	13.3	-	-
Wishing (religious	HM	30.3	20.0	33.3	26.7	-
formulas)	LM	59.9	46.7	46.7	33.3	56.6
	HF	20.0	23.1	20.0	13.3	16.7
	LF	56.6	59.9	63.3	50.0	59.9
thanking +	HM	13.3	16.7	13.3	6.70	23.1
Wishing	LM	13.3	26.7	16.7	-	-
(religious	HF	20.0	13.3	23.1	-	16.7
formulas)	LF	16.7	13.3	10.0	-	3.30
desire to	HM	13.3	10.0	10.0	6.70	3.3
Reciprocate	LM	6.70	-	13.3	10.0	-
Thanking + Complimenting	HM	13.2	16.7	13.3	6.70	23.1
Thanking +	HM	-	-	-	-	-
Promising	LM	-	-	-	-	13.3
	HF	-	-	-	-	6.7
No response;	HM	-	-	-	33.3	-
Refusal	LM	-	-	-	40.0	-
	HF	-	-	-	46.7	-
	LF	-	-	-	33.3	-

5.5.2. Pragmatic Aspects

Overall, responses to this item were similar to those presented in previous items in that they confirmed the hypothesis that education and sex influenced the linguistic behavior of the speaker. Thus, the formulas used in expressing gratitude in all the speech acts presented in this table are more or less the same ones used by each group in other situations. However, the outstanding feature of this table is that the higher the degree of familiarity, the less formal the EOG, and likewise, the more distant the speakers, the more formal the linguistic behavior. In other words, there is an inverse relationship between the degree of familiarity between participants, and the level of formality of the EOG.

The least formal relationship (and accordingly EOGs) was that between sisters and brothers of the same family. The most formal EOGs were, as expected, used between bosses and employees. Thus, the order of presentation of the EOGs under investigation on a continuum of less formal vs. more formal is as follows: sister/ brother (or vice versa); friend/ friend, same sex; colleague/ colleague, same sex; colleague/ colleague, opposite sex; and finally, boss/ employee.

Formality was reflected in two aspects: 1) the address term, or title that accompanied the EOG, and 2) the length of the EOG. The address term/ title used with the EOG reflected the level of formality. For instance, in the less formal relationship, the terms /oxt-i 'my sister', and /axuya 'my brother' were used between sisters and brothers in addition to the thanking expression. Among males, the elicited data did not include any nicknames or terms of endearment in male/ male interaction, although observational data included some such terms. Intimate male friends used the common nicknames, e.g. Hassan would be called *Abu Eali* ("father of Ali"). Other address terms used in thanking between male/ male colleagues, do not actually carry specific content and are not emotionally loaded, such as *ya sidi* 'my friend', literally: 'my master'. The address terms /oxt-i 'my sister' and /axu-ya 'my brother' were also used in colleague/ colleague interactions of the same and opposite sexes, yet they indicated a closeness in the relationships (or were used phatically) rather than describing blood relationships. Such titles accompanied both the thanking and the supplication speech acts in particular. Use of honorific terms like *Hadrit-ak, siyadt-ak,* and *saEadt-ak* was also typical of employee/ boss gratitude

interaction, in both the elicited and observed data. This was evident in responses by all groups under investigation, particularly in the speech act sets of thanking + address terms (53.3% HMs, 16.7% LMs, 26.6% HFs, zero LFs) and thanking + supplication + address terms (23.1% HMs, zero LMs, 16.7% HFs, and 3.3% LFs).

Length of the EOG was the second feature or aspect when measuring formality. Again, there was an inverse relationship between the degree of familiarity and the length of the EOG. The more formal the relationship, the shorter was the EOG, except in the case of LFs, who reported highest length in using supplication and address terms. Thus, the shortest expressions were those used by employees addressing their bosses, particularly by HMs and HFs (19.8% and 20.0% respectively), which was evident in the single speech act of thanking, in contrast with L Ss (LM 13.3%; LF 10.0%). The expression was also short in the speech act of thanking (*Sukran, Sakriin il /afdaal*) + address term (*bey, /afandim*), which received the highest frequency among HMs (53.3%) and its lowest by LFs (zero).

The longest EOGs, as mentioned above, were those reported by LF participants, in general, when addressing their boss in particular. This was manifest in the use of religious formulas by LFs (59.9%) in contrast with their HF counterparts (16.7%). Although LMs used religious formulas as well, they were much shorter than those used by HMs. Both LMs and LFs used the same lexical items of the religious expressions, yet LFs made them longer by employing more than one supplication at a time.

Another pragmatic aspect of the verbal EOGs in employee/ boss interaction was manifested in the introduction of certain speech acts that did not appear in the data of the other tables. An example is thanking + address term + promising;

(1) *Sukran ya fandim /in Saa/ allaah Hakun Eand Husn zann Hadrit-ak*
'Thank you, sir, I will be as you expect, God willing.'

This was used by young M and F employees in particular (for HMs and HFs, 13.3% and 6.7%, respectively). Another speech act was that of apology, reported only by HFs in addressing their boss:

(2) */ana /asfa litaEab Hadrit-ak ya fandim*
    'I'm sorry for tiring you, sir') (13.3%).

This EOG reflects the formality of the interaction manifested in the choice of apology itself rather than other speech acts. This also occurs in the use of the honorifics *Hadrit-ak* and */afandim*. This emphasizes the great social distance between the addresser and addressee, as well as the power of the addressee over the addresser (cf. Fairclough 1989).

6. Discussion

This research investigated EOGs among Cairene Egyptians. The hypotheses stated in the introduction are confirmed through analysis of the data elicited by way of oral questionnaires as well as observation.

6.1. Influence of Education, Sex, and Familiarity

Results show that education is more influential on the variation of the EOGs, both lexically and pragmatically, than sex.
Education influences the use of EOGs in terms of lexical as well as pragmatic levels. This is apparent when comparing responses of the lower and higher status Ss (of which education was a main determiner). For instance, certain EOGs (such as *rabb-i-na yiEmir beetak* 'may your house become prosperous')* are associated only with LSs, and when used by H equals result in laughter or humor, yet when used by H to L may even indicate irony.

LSs also report the highest frequency of religious formulas performing the single speech act of wishing, in contrast with HMs (who report approximately half of the percentage of use of this speech act by their female counterparts).
At the lexical level, the expressions *Sukran*, *mutSakkirriin*, and *mersii* are the most frequent among HSs of both sexes, particularly in invitation. All three expressions are often followed by the intensifiers: *giddan* / */awi*, *xaalii*, or *gazyl-an*.
The main sex influence on the use of EOGs is noticed among HMs (36.3%) in contrast with HFs (56.7%) in expressing gratitude using the single speech act of thanking. Sex is also a significant variable in modifying the use of EOGs in Cairene society. This is manifest in various

ways. First, it is evident in the refusal of respondents in answering Situation 5, Item 3 (they did not accept the term "friend" for someone of the opposite sex), which in turn dictated its exclusion from the study. Second, is the appearance of certain address terms (e.g. *Habibt-i* 'my love') and nicknames among F/ F that are not reported in F/M interactions, neither in the elicited nor the observational data, particularly by friend/ friend. These two points reflect social constraints within cross-sex interaction in Cairene society. They also reflect religiosity as a social value in the society.

Sex differences in the use of EOGs are revealed also in terms of the length of the expression itself. LFs in particular report longer religious expressions than their male counterparts. They also vary in the use of certain lexical items more frequently than their male counterparts, as in the frequency of "merci" by HFs in contrast with its absence among males of both statuses.

Cross-sex interactions also result in a degree of variation in the verbal behavior of gratitude between members of the opposite sex. For example, in observational data, instances in which males use 'merci' are those in which they address HFs. Males report that they do so as a kind of adaptation to the feminine nature of the woman. In contrast, in M/ M interaction, 'merci' is not reported because it is considered to be effeminate.

Degree of familiarity is also found to be a significant variable that results in the variation of the EOGs between interactants. As indicated in the data analysis, the more familiar the participants, the less formal the EOG, and vice versa. The more formal EOGs are those used by employee/ boss, which are characterized by the use of special address terms that reflect social distance and social control (e.g.: */afandim* and *bey*). The less formal are those used by friend/ friend and sister/ brother, particularly among females, whose use of endearment terms (e.g. *Habibt-i* 'love') and nicknames are the outstanding features. Using such family relationships as address terms with non-family members is typical of Egypt at large, usually among the uneducated. *Ya /omm-i* 'my mother' is used when addressing older women, particularly for youngsters addressing elders, and sometimes by elders addressing youngsters. *Ya buya* 'my father', is used by youngsters in addressing old males, yet elders also use it to address children, regardless of their sex. *Eamm* 'uncle' is used to address

elder men, as well as people low on the social scale, such as janitors and salesmen. The term *Habibt-i* 'my love', was used by sisters addressing each other as well as by female friends, and it was often accompanied by non-verbal behavior of touching and kissing. Another term utilized by females was the vocative *ya* 'O' followed by the adjective *gamiil* 'beautiful' which is actually a masculine adjective. Cross addressing is a phenomenon typical of Cairene society, particularly for intimate relationships and in addressing the beloved and small children (see Wilmsen 1996). Thus, *Habibti* characterized the female/female interaction when the subjects were very familiar or intimate with one another. However, such terms were heard only in observational data.

At the other end of the continuum, address terms or titles were used in boss/employee interactions. The address term *ya fandim* 'my boss' was the most frequent, particularly among HSs addressing the boss (although it was also used by LSs addressing higher ed. bosses). Titles such as *bey*, *rayyis, baaSa* roughly 'boss' characterized LM and LF interactions with their bosses (For more information on address terms cf. Parkinson 1985).

Using nicknames was another familiarity marker that characterized the EQGs among close females, whether sisters or friends. Thus, terms of endearment and nicknames were female sex marked according to the data, which in turn supports the hypothesis that sex also has an influence on EOGs.

6.2. Function 1: Religiosity

The recurrence of formulaic religious formulas or supplications as a strategy of expressing gratitude as seen in the tables is a phenomenon worth attention. The formulaic nature of thanking has been indicated earlier by Manes and Wolfson (1981:123): "compliments are formulas as much as thanks... ." First, these expressions are more frequent among LSs in contrast to their H counterparts. A possible explanation for this phenomenon might be that LSs are more tightly related to their cultural and religious heritage since they are at a distance from the influence of Western cultures. Another possible reason is that most LSs come from rural areas in which religiosity is relatively stronger. This is supported by Gheith (1986). Second, it is necessary to reflect upon the type of supplication used with respect to different variables or situations. For instance, supplications used by HSs focus on asking God to save the

giver's life, to reward him, or to increase his luck such as: *kattar xeerak* 'may God increase your bounty'. In contrast, supplications which prevail more among LMs and LFs emphasize certain social values and religious concepts in the Cairene community. For instance, the supplication *rabb-i-na yi kattar min /amsaal-ak* 'may God increase people of your type' by LMs reflects the speaker's wish for the spread of good models (those who aid or do good favors) in the society. The supplications *rabb-i-na ma yirmii-k f- dii/a* 'may God not put you in straits' and *rabb-i-na yikfii-k Sar il-marad* 'may God protect you against disease' reflect the speaker's psychological attitude of dislike and fear towards hardships, adversities and disease.

Refusal to accept the noun *Iadii/a* 'female friend' by males, and *Iadii/* 'friend' by all Ss (Situation 5) who answered the oral questionnaire is another verbal behavior that presents religiosity as a remarkable aspect of the Cairene identity. Five HMs, who are considered religious (by their outer appearance, e.g. beard, and through close contact with them) argue that this item has to be excluded since in Islam men can have relationships with women only as wives. Some HFs also say that they do not have male friends and they would not allow strange men to visit them at home.
The supplication *rabb-i-na yistur-ha maEaa-k* 'may God cover you in this world and the next' by LFs in situations of loan (Situation 1) emphasizes the concept of "*satr*" or covering / protecting, and its significance in this life and the next. Such supplications have their roots in the Prophetic Hadith:

> *"wa man satara musliman satarahu allahu fi ddunya w al /aaxirah"* "Whosoever shields a Muslim , Allah will shield him in this world and the next'" (Ibrahim & Johnson-Davies 1976;114)."

On the occasion of invitation (such as Situation 3), supplications focus on asking for the host's house to be always open generously to everyone, or the wish for the host to invite them on the occasion of coming back from visiting the Prophet (a symbol of making the pilgrimage). A typical supplication, which is used in expressing gratitude on invititations, is the ritualistic prophetic one which says :

> */afTar Einda-kum aïïa/im-uun w -a/akala TaEaamakum l-*
> */abraar wa tanazzalat Ealay-kum al mala/ika*
> (Al-Daremeyy,1987, vol.2, chapter 51, Hadith no. 1772).
> 'May those who are fasting break their fast at yourplace; may
> those who are righteous eat your food; and may the angels
> desend upon you' (My translation)

Such religious formulas or supplications emphasize the significance of religion in the ideology of Cairenes. Retrospective interviews support this point of view as many Ss indicate that Muslims are required to thank each other. Both H and L Ss endorse this belief by providing a number of Quranic verses and Prophetic Hadith. The following Hadith intensifies the significance of thanking in Islam:

On the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Prophet peace be upon him said:

> *La yaSkuru allaaha man la yaSkuru nnaas*
> (Al-Azdi 1988,vol.4: Hadith no. 4811, Kitab al-'Adab)
> 'He does not thank Allah he who does not thank the people'. (My translaion)

These religious expressions sometimes lose their marked religious use and become part of theroutine that characterizes social interaction. However, the intention of the speaker and other contextual clues are the essential factors that determine whether or not the supplication is used phatically.
These results are consistent with what has been said earlier by Rugh (1985), Parker et al. (1986), Gheith (1986), Mustafa (1992), and Mazid (1995). Mazid says"…it adds to the central place of religion in the ideology and discursive practices of Egyptians (1995: 99). Rugh (1984: 205, 206)"says: "Religion is such a pervasive factor in Egyptian life that it is impossible to discuss family life without noting its significant influence... Religion in Egypt is not something that affects only a minor portion of a person's life. Thus, the use of supplication or religious formulas reflects a deep sense of religiosity among Cairenes as social behavior, ranging from a ritualistic behavior to a personal creative use depending on the character of the supplicant as well as on factors such as intention and context of the situation.

An additional point concerning religious formulas is that although most of them are expressed in colloquial Egyptian Arabic, (e.g. *rabb-i-na yixallii-k* 'may God preserve you') some of them are Prophetic sayings, which is considered by Mazid (1995) as a type of code switching to another level of language (modern standard). An example of this is *gaza-ak allaahu xayr-an* 'may God reward you'. Although Mazid considers such formulas as switching to the level of modern standard Arabic "which may be taken as borrowed formulas (1995: 46)", The current researcher tends to classify them as quoting Prophetic supplications / sayings (therefore placing them in the level of classical Arabic, not modern standard) that are recommended in Islam for use in various situations. This is referred to the fact that Muslims are urged to follow the Prophetic Sunnah (The Qur'an 33:21), of which supplications are an example of its verbal aspects (cf. Badawi 1979). For instance, the following hadith urges Muslims to use the supplication *gza-ak allahu xayr-an* as a way of thanking others:

> *Man ÏuniEa /ilay-hi maEruufun fa qaala li faaEili-hi jaza-ka*
> *allaahu xayr-an fa qad /ablaPa fi -QQanaa/*
> *(Al-Tirmizeyy (n.d.), hadith no. 2035).*
> He who receives a favour and then says to its doer "mayAllah reward you" has thanked him enough. (My translation).

6.3. Function 2: Social Identity and Rank

The hypothesis that EOGs reflect the speaker's social identity is also confirmed. Observational data, however, are more revealing in this respect. The speaker's identity is denoted in the formulas used as well as in the address term that accompanies them. Examples of these formulas are: *rabb-i-na yiEmir beet-ak ya beeh* 'May God make your house prosperous, bey' and *rabbi-na yistur-ha maEak* 'May God cover you'.

The address terms/titles usually used are: *bey, doctor, /afandim*. These terms mark the speaker's status as low and acknowledge the receiver's power over him/her (see Fairclough 1985 & 1989). They also reflect the social distance between the speaker and receiver. Because they are low status markers, when used among H equals, they are ironic or humorous. Low status is displayed not only in the tone of speaking, but also through nonverbal aspects such as posture, clothing, and metalinguistic factors peculiar to the speaking situation. Omission of initial sounds and/or words also mark low status linguistic behavior. For example, the omission of the

"/" in the supplication: /inSalla yxallii-k 'May God preserve you' was typical of LFs, as noticed in the observational data.

Although certain supplications and religious formulas are class marked, others cross class boundary. In other words, they are not markers of social status. These include formulaic Prophetic formulas such as *gaza-ak allaahu xayr-an* 'may God reward you'. They are used by H and L Ss of both sexes. However, Ss who use them are categorized as religious, based on their outer appearance, their way of clothing (e.g., Hijab by females and beard by males). As such, these expressions may be identity markers, rather than status markers. Yet, this needs further investigation.

The fact that HFs switch to the French "merci" can be interpreted as a prestige marker, or as a marker of femininity. Fasold (1984) interprets such phenomenon as an example of borrowing rather than switching. The researcher attributes this to the influence of the social environment in which the women are raised. The very small percentage of "merci" among HMs (6.6%) in contrast with that for HFs (43.4%) can be interpreted in terms of sex constraints in the Cairene community. In retrospective interviews, many men reported that they avoid using "merci", particularly with the same sex, as it is considered to be effeminate. When using it with females, they indicate that it is an adaptation strategy to match the feminine nature of women, or to communicate with women using the lexical items they prefer.

Absence of the expression "merci" among LSs can be interpreted in several ways. First, these Ss may not be looking for prestige, or second, they may not be accustomed to saying it when interacting with their peers. A third reason could be that such Ss are at a distance from the influence of Western cultures, as well as the members of the upper status group who use such foreign words. Fourth, many LSs come from rural areas or upper Egypt, and they may perceive the maintenance and adherence to their own language (Arabic) as an identity marker. Or, they may simply be more class conscious and associate "merci" with the upper classes. A combination of the above reasons could also be possible.

However, in observational data, the use of "merci" by LSs was noticed in rare situations between non-equals, particularly by LFs interacting with HFs. The only interpretation that seems possible here is the desire by such Ss to be acknowledged as belonging to the higher status of the addressee.

Use of a short single speech act of thanking by HFs can be interpreted in terms of social norms concerning the behavior of women in Cairo. In retrospective interviews, HFs indicate that women should not talk much to men, particularly in formal situations where the degree of familiarity with the other speaker from the other sex is minimal. It can also be related to the issue of prestige: verbosity with members of the other sex may lead to encouraging a sequence of speech acts, something which a highly prestigious woman should avoid (unless for a real need to communicate).

The use of "papa" and "mamma", and father/ mother + name of first child, as address terms between spouses of H and L families is also quite common in Cairene society and reflects social identity. The argument behind this, as explained in retrospective interviews, is that couples avoid using their first names and endearment terms in the presence of their children or non-family members. Parents have their special respect in Egyptian families in general, and use of their first names is not recommended by Egyptian social norms, particularly among L status families.

A possible explanation is that young children usually imitate the parents, so parents refrain from modeling the use of first names so that the children do not also address their parents by the first name, a behavior that is considered inappropriate in Egyptian families, in contrast with Western cultures. Another explanation for LSs using "father + name of first born is that the this formula affirms the male's ability to have offspring, a very important aspect of the role of the male in Egyptian community.

The use of *si* and */ustaaz* 'Mr.' is typical of very old women (50- 70 years old) in addressing their husbands. Contemporary families, even L levels, rarely use such titles. This is a difference that shows generation effect, as such titles were commonly used with husbands in the 1950's in Egypt. Addressing the husband with the first name at that time was almost a taboo. Old Egyptian films support this phenomenon.

6.4. Function 3: Reflecting Social Values

From the point of view of expressing social functions, EOGs help maintain social solidarity among members of the community. Doing favors to others results in creating a feeling of indebtedness to and appreciation of the giver's behavior, which makes the receiver willing to reciprocate to the giver. Such willingness to reciprocate results in

strengthening the social relationship between the giver and the receiver, and in turn in giving a feeling of love and closeness among interactants. When the favor is negatively received, by being underestimated or totally ignored, the receiver is held ungrateful, which leads to weakening or breaking of the social relationship.

Indebtedness is reflected in the emotionally loaded expressions as well as in the lexical features which characterize them (e.g. *gimiil* 'favor', *madiin* 'indebted'), along with the receiver's desire to reciprocate. The importance of this value of being indebted to the giver is felt when the receiver does not thank the giver or express his gratitude to him, which is a sign of meanness and low descent, and which classifies the person as low on the social scale. Arabic Poetry and Egyptian proverbs attest to this phenomenon, e.g. the proverb: "*Eaamil zay il quTaT yaakul w-yinkir*" literally: 'He's like cats: he eats and denies that he does'. This proverb is used in Egyptian Arabic to describe someone as being ungrateful. The closest English proverb to this one would be 'He bites the hands of those who feed him'.

Social solidarity is also reflected in the situation of brother/ sister, in which the informality and social solidarity is manifested in the new category of responses "no need for thanking my brother or sister." The reason provided by most respondents is that receiving a favor from family members does not require thanking, since they are expected, by social norms, to help each other, and it is *wagib* 'duty' for family members. This reflects solidarity among members of the Egyptian family as well as the social value that sisters and brothers must be cooperative.

The relationship between husband and wife in Cairene society is similarly characterized by its informality, as is reflected in the linguistic behavior of gratitude. Familiarity can be noticed and traced in the use of endearment terms and nicknames, particularly by HMs and HFs. Absence of endearment terms by LFs addressing their husbands in the available data may be interpreted as characteristic of LF interaction with their spouses which stems from the image and concept of "male" or "husband" in the ideology of LFs in the Cairene family, which is that of respect and reverence. Using nicknames and endearment terms is considered to be appropriate in addressing females, but effeminate when addressing males. The appearance of such terms by HF in addressing their husbands may be

referred to the influence of Western culture, which they encounter through foreign films and Western literature.

The willingness to reciprocate, especially among males, illustrates the ideology of respect and reverence of the males. The relatively high percentage of willingness to reciprocate by MSs contrasted with its absence among Fs of both levels, is not without implications. It is in the ideology of females that males are responsible for financial support and expenses, hence, when they receive a gift they feel happy and thank their spouses, but they do not feel the obligation to reciprocate. In contrast, when females offer a gift to their spouses, they themselves acknowledge the husband's debt and they feel that the husband is committed to reciprocate. This reflects the sex role of the female in the family in Cairene society.

This commitment is reflected in the husbands' use of certainty discourse markers like /in Saa/allaah 'God willing', which precedes their wish to reciprocate. The double percentage of this act among LMs vs. HMs reflects the deep-rooted sense of responsibility towards the wife in this ideology. This sense of responsibility can be attributed to have its origin in religion (Islam) which states this clearly: "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because God has given the one more [strength] than the other, and because they support them from their means (The Quran: 4: 34). This point in turn supports the hypothesis that EOGs reflect the religiosity of Cairenes. The decrease in the percentage of the act of wishing to reciprocate by HMs might denote a slight change in their ideology reflected in actually accepting a gift from the wife, a phenomenon not common in the Egyptian families of 3 or 4 decades ago.

As LSs tend to show the above social values in higher percentages than H Ss, this may support the concept that the L status are the carriers of the true identity of a certain nation, as they are removed from Western influence due to their somewhat isolated society. Moreover, L status Ss tend to be more careful and proud of maintaining the traditions and norms of their families, which facilitate the preservation of their original identity. That the EOGs reflect certain social values is consistent with Hyde who argues that "discourse patterns seem to grow out of and reflect the values or latent beliefs of a given society at a particular stage in history (1994:300)". On the other hand, ideology influences language change: "But because ideology influences language change, we must pay

more systematic attention to it (Haeri 1996: 188)." This shows that discourse and ideology are interrelated.

6.5. Other Functions

The study also displays other social functions of the EOGs in Cairene society, apart from reflecting social identity and rank, solidarity, and social cultural values such as religiosity. These functions include directing the speakers' turn in the conversation and closing conversations.
Using EOGs to close conversations, particularly prematurely due to time limitations, is typical of conference presentations and discussions. Whenever a presenter of a paper exceeds the time limit, the chairperson of a session resorts to thanking him, which is actually face threatening, and which has the illocutionary function of closing the session or ending the speaker's talk, rather than expressing gratitude. This is supported by Hymes (1971) who suggests that thanking may function as "a marker of discourse structure than as an indication of genuine gratitude". EOGs in Cairene society also have an influence on directing the speaker's turn in conversation by triggering a specific response, which allows the interactant to take his/her turn in the conversation (Hymes 1971). Also included is a phatic function which is manifest in thanking and complimenting for providing information at service encounters; passing a message to the listener; answering a request for the direction to a place, and similar situations. This function has been described by Rubin (1983) as "the bald thank you", although in Cairene society, lexical items other than "thank you" are used depending on the variables of sex, familiarity, and situation, as the present study shows.

Another function of expressing gratitude in Cairene society, which is revealed through observational data, is mitigating criticism. In order to criticize someone higher in rank, EOGs are used to mitigate the force of this criticism, since direct criticism is face threatening. Starting the interaction with thanking helps the speaker succeed in achieving his pragmatic goals. Moreover, it is more polite to use thanking as a pre-opening in such interaction than starting directly with criticizing the person e.g. "Thank you doctor for this interesting lecture, yet, we would like you to give more examples."

6.6. Other Strategies of Expressing Gratitude

The EOGs *Sukran, mirsii /awi,* and *mutaSakkir xaalii* are multifunctional and can be used in all situations. Yet, they are not emotionally loaded, although the tone used in saying them sometimes reflects the speaker's feelings of appreciation or debt. Therefore, in situations where the favor is great and the giver sacrifices or aids someone a great deal (such as Situation 2: helping with a problem), the EOGs is longer and emotion-laden, as it expresses more indebtedness and a deeper sense of gratitude. Expressions of this type (which did not appear in the elicited data) in which the expression was characterized by exaggeration (cf. Damen 1986; Tannen, 1989) are literally: "I am impotent or incapable of thanking you; I'm totally indebted". This reflects the speakers' sincere appreciation of the favor. This applies to both sexes.

The use of words like *ya salaam* sometimes accompanies the EOG. Such words carry an emotional emphasis and are characteristic of informal discourse, and they can be threatening if used in a formal context (Brown & Levinson 1978; Leech & Svartvick 1975). Moreover, epistemic meta-discourse certainty markers (Crismore et al 1993) such as *Ha/i/i* 'really' or *bigadd* 'truly' appeared only in real life situations in observed data. They function as assertives and emphasizers of the subject of gratitude. Repetition (Tannen 1989), e.g. *giddan giddan* or */awi /awi,* is another speech act commonly used by Arabs to reflect sincere emotions in thanking.

Quantification (Ferguson 1976) is another strategy that is employed by Egyptians to express gratitude. Quantification refers to using numbers preceding the EOGsto indicate more indebtedness and sincerity in wishing or thanking. The number */alf* 'thousand' is the only one that collocates with the thanking *Sukr* 'thanks'; in Arabic, */alf Sukr* 'a thousand thanks'. Yet there are usage constraints on this strategy as it cannot apply to all thanking behavior. It is also not possible to use other numbers to precede *Sukr* in Arabic. For example, it is not possible to say *miit Sukr* 'a hundred thanks' in Cairene Arabic, in contrast with the expression of *miit marHaba* 'a hundred welcomes' which is quite acceptable. This quantification strategy characterizes other expressive speech acts in Arabic, such as greetings, farewells, and congratulations (El-Zeini 1985).

7. Conclusions

(1) The EOGs in Cairene society vary according to the influence of the variables of education, socioeconomic status, sex, and degree of familiarity between the participants.

(2) EOGs, through the use of certain lexical items and address terms, can help indicate the social relationship between speakers as well as their social rank and identity.

(3) Expressing gratitude in Cairene society varies due to sex constraint in cross-sex interaction.

(4) The use of supplications and religious formulas is an important stratey employed by Cairenes to express gratitude.

(5) Religiosity, indebtedness, and social solidarity are values that are reflected in the verbal behavior of expressing gratitude in Cairene society.

(6) Some of the functions performed by EOGs in Cairene society are: indicating social rank and identity through the lexical aspect and address term used, maintaining social solidarity, reflecting social values, closing conversations, directing certain turns in conversation, and mitigating criticism of others.

(7) The lexical aspect of EOGs varies in length and effectiveness according to the significance of the favor or offer received. The more significant the offer, the deeper the sense of gratitude, the longer the response or expression, and the more emotionally loaded it is.

(8) EOGs are usually longer among LFs incontrast with low Ss.

(9) EOGs are usually reticent, to use Eisenstein & Bodman's expression (1986), in formal situations, such as between boss and employee, particularly by HMs and HFs. Yet, they are longer only by LF even in formal situations.

(10) Pragmatically, speech act sets characterize EOGs, particularly when the offer is great and the giver expects to be thanked.

(11) Phatic EOGs are usually shorter and void of emotional conten or load.

(12) Quantification (Ferguson 1976) is a strategy that is employed by Cairenes to express gratitude to indicate more indebtedness and sincerity in wishing or thanking. The number */alf* 'thousand' is the only one that collocates with the thanking *Sukran* 'thanks'; in Arabic, */alf Sukr* 'a thousand thanks'. Repetition (Tannen 1989), e.g. *giddan giddan* or */awi /awi*, is another strategy commonly used by Arabs to reflect sincere emotions in thanking.

7.1 Limitations of the Study

The study excluded participants under the age of 25, as previously mentioned, which means that students of all levels did not participate. The variable of religion was also controlled: all participants were Muslim. (There were only 5 Christian respondents to the questionnaire, and these were excluded as they weren't sufficient enough to lend valid results.) Education, sex and familiarity, were the focus of the study, however, they were not researched in depth. Therefore, future studies could include such variables in order to contrast generation affect as well as ethnographic difference inn expressing gratitude.

7.2. Implications

Speech act models, particularly of expressing gratitude, need to be modified so as to account for the strategy of religious formulas that is typical of the verbal behavior of Egyptians and Arabs in general. "To apply the already existing theoretical models should not lead to neglecting the data that do not 'fit' or to 'forcing' them to fit and thus reducing new research populations into carbon copies of the population of the chosen model (Mazid 1995: 124)." This is a contrastive difference between Arabic EOGs and those of Western societies. Such expressions need to be integrated in books of teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language in order to guarantee appropriate language use in communicative contexts.

Learners of Arabic need to know restrictions on the use of expressive acts, of which gratitude is one, in order to avoid producing unacceptable formulas due to generalization. Such errors in contrastive differences are likely to produce pragmatic failure (Thomas 1983).

The features and strategies of expressing gratitude in Cairene Arabic have significant bearings on cross-cultural pragmatic studies, as they challenge the concept of the universality of speech acts across cultures, and support the notion of speech act diversity (Frazer 1985). This study also lays the basis for future contrastive research on EOGs. It is also a step further in the way to developing pragmatic competence among AFL learners.

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Appendix A

Transcription Symbols (adapted from Badawi & Hinds, 1985: XVII)

(1) consonants

ʔ	ء	d	د (also ذ)	t	ط	l	ل
b	ب	r	ر	Z	ظ/ض	m	م
t	ت (also ة)	z	ذ/ز	ɛ	ع	n	ن
θ	ث	s	ث/س	ɣ	غ	h	ه
g/ j	ج	ʃ	ش	f/v	ف	w	و
ħ	ح	ş	ص	q	ق	y	ى
x	خ	d'	ض (also ظ)	k	ك		

(2) vowels

    a (fatHa muraqqaqa) low/ open and front
    a (fatHa mufakhkhama) low/ open and back
    i (kasra xaaliǏa) high/ close and front
    e (kasra mumaala) middle/ half-close and front
    u (damma xaliǏa) high/ close and back
    o (damma mumaala) middle/ half-close and back

Appendix B

Questionnaire (translated from the Arabic version):

Demographic data:

- name
- area of residence
- place of work

- male / female
- job
- educational level

(1) You find yourself in need of money- LE 200.00. You mention this to a friend, who immediately gives you the money. How would you thank him?

(2) You have a serious problem. You are very worried because you can not solve it. Somebody (friend/ neighbor) offers to help you out of this problem. What would you say to him?

(3) You have been invited for lunch at your friend's house. The food was delicious and the hosts were very nice. You wanted to thank them for their invitation. What would you say?

(4) Your husband / wife gave you a nice gift. How would you thank him / her?

(5) You received a favor from any of the following people. How would you thank each of them?
     (a) your female colleague
     (b) your male colleague
     (c) your female friend
     (d) your male friend
     (e) your brother / sister
     (f) your boss.

(6) You were very sick and a lot of people visited you. How would you thank them?

(7) You were looking for a certain place which you did not know. You have the address written on a paper. Someone comes to you and accompanies you to that place. What would you say to him?

(8) Today is the wedding of your sister/ daughter. People come to help you arrange things for the party. How would you thank them? Would you say this to your boss, if he comes on this occasion?

(9) You returned from the Pilgrimage to Mecca. People come to congratulate you. How would you thank them?

(10) You have a new baby. Friends come to congratulate you and they have a lovely present for you. How would you thank them?

Situations 1-5 were the ones selected for this study. The rest were excluded as they triggered responses that do not fit as EOGs.

Departments of English at Arab Universities and the Challenge of Globalization

Majid Al-Quran
Hashemite University

1. Introduction

Realizing that the world has shrunk and that a global perspective is deemed vital for one's citizenry to obtain, it is time as we are stepping in the third millenium to reconsider how the humanities, including languages, can contribute to this new and enlarged view of the world. Language is one of the major disciplines of humanities, which are concerned with human self-expression. It is in their languages that the people of this universe preserve for subsequent generations the tradition of their thought and wisdom, both secular and religious. Writers and poets record the wide range of human experiences, which serve as the basis for the common bond for all mankind. This includes love and passion, selflessness and egotism, loyalty and betrayal, the joy of living, the agonies of aging, the existential fear of dying, the humility of man, fear and courage, and the ultimate greatness of man. It is doubtless that the sum of all thinking, of chronicles and feelings is carried by language and thus, the humanities are all said to be language centered.

The present paper is an attempt to shed light on the new demands that the departments of English at Arab universities should meet in the light of the worldwide move towards globalization. This eventually entails including and investing elements of global education as a means to further English