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Congratulation Strategies Employed by Jordanians in an Academic Setting: A Socio-Pragmatic Study

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ABSTRACT

Congratulation speech is one of the most linguistic aspects that is performed by people in general and among Jordanians in particular. Understanding the Jordanians' congratulation helps people from different cultures to understand them adequately. This study aims to investigate the congratulation strategies written in the graduation notebooks for undergraduate students at Jerash university. The writers of congratulations, typically the students' friends, classmates, and professors, are requested by the graduated students to pen their congratulations in their graduation notebooks after they completed their bachelor studies at the English language and literature department. To analyze the data, the congratulation strategies will be identified and then classified. A qualitative method involving observations and memos was used to collect data from 10 congratulatory notebooks. The study revealed that the students employed various congratulatory strategies, including congratulatory statements, happiness clauses, compliments, good wishes, and the ability to attach presents. It also suggests a potential area for future research, which could investigate the students' reactions to the congratulatory text to evaluate the perlocutionary act of the students. Another suggestion for future research is that compering the Jordanians strategies of congratulation with other society strategies of congratulations to shed the light to the similarities and differences between them.

Keywords: Speech Act; Congratulation; Undergraduate; Jordan

1. Introduction

Congratulations is one of the speech acts that has occurred many timesat various events around the world. Examples of these events that require congratulations are a new birth, birthday, marriage, graduation, and buying a new house or car. these events are often analyzed by researchers in previous research based on the spoken discourse as they appeared directly by the speakers; they know the event that needs congratulations from them to another party. This study concentrates on the written discourse of the writers of congratulations once they want to congratulate their graduated students after they are listed in the university graduation for convocation.

At Jerash University, the graduated students coordinate with their head of department to appoint a day to open the congratulation notebook to announce that they have completed or approximately completed their studies at the university. They want all their friends, classmates, and professors to write congratulations in their notebooks to have a nice memory that reminds them of such a great day in the university. So, they request that others write their congratulations directly or indirectly. As noted in this event, the students put their pictures on the covers of the graduation notebooks and leave a pen inside them to remind all of the community in their setting about themselves. They enjoy getting congratulations from the writers and are happy about them.

Some writers write very simple sentences, others write a full sheet, and others write one word and attach a present for the students. This means that the writers express their happiness in various strategies that attract the graduated students to be happy with them. From this observation, this research sought to investigate the exact meaning of these texts of congratulations and look for the precise strategies used by the writers of congratulations.

2. Previous Studies

Mohammad Mahzari[1] in turn, explored congratulatory strategies that Saudi Facebook users utilized. The researcher distinguished 23 classes of verbal reactions. Among them, "congratulations," "expressions of good wishes," "praise," and comments stating the aptness of the situation were used most often. By using Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices, IFIDs, proverbs, and sayings, Yasser Al-Shboul et al.[2] investigated congratulation strategies in Jordanian Facebook interactions for a Royal Birthday post, finding that Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices, IFIDs, "received the highest frequency while proverbs and sayings were less frequent. Within this trend, Ammari et al. conducted research in (2024)[3] on congratulatory ways among Jordanian social media users. They showed that IFIDs, wishes of good concord, and/or expressions of delight were the most common, often including "Allah" and prayers for the addressee cultural and religious tradition.

Ekechi Jemimah Ogechi[4] discussed the sociolinguistics of congratulatory messages in Nigerian newspapers. As her research mentioned, English as a second or official language takes some particular cultural role within the framework of Nigerian society. The social usage in this context highlights status and role rather than solidarity. Another example is that Alemi et al.[5] have discussed the congratulation strategies of English and Persian on a computer-mediated social network. The results revealed significant differences among the groups concerning some categories of congratulation.

Shena Fiosa Nofendralova and Ni Wayan Sartini[6] studied the impact of culture on congratulatory speech strategies in Javanese and Sundanese. They concluded that expressions of surprise were the most frequent, followed by Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices. The frequency of divine remarks from both interlocutors in congratulatory speech acts testifies to the fact that Islamic culture influences them overwhelmingly in Indonesia. A related study of the congratulatory practices among Iraqi undergraduates identified seven main strategies to wit: congratulating, wishing, being happy for one's good news, using humor, mentioning the occasion, requesting information, and complimenting or encouraging. Besides, M. Luz Celaya et al.[7] conducted research into congratulatory language within the EFL context, noting that younger and less proficient learners tend to focus more on themselves within their responses, while older and more proficient learners address the interlocutor more directly, as usual for this speech act.

These studies have also highlighted that various cultural backgrounds, traditions, and situational contexts play a major role in the choice of congratulatory strategies. This trend has encouraged the researcher to closely examine specific strategies Jordanians use within academic settings for

undergraduate students at graduation events. Therefore, this paper will analyze written congratulatory messages to understand why they are frequently used in students' graduation notebooks.

Griggio et al.[8] designed a study using emojis to communicate congratulatory messages. They established that "participants preferred the Preview design over the Alert option because it left more room for subjective interpretation of accessible messages." In a somewhat different direction, Saleem and Yasmin[9] studied "the verbal and non-verbal congratulatory expressions in joyful Facebook posts of Pakistani English and Urdu speakers.". They found that users expressed happiness and warmth effectively, reflecting a strong adaptation of language to cultural norms, especially with the prominent use of English. Pakistani users used various congratulatory techniques; among them, Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices played an important role in enhancing self-image and acknowledging success.

Maliki and El Ghazi[10] explored the sociocultural dynamics of compliments and criticisms within Moroccan Arabic, noting that cultural backgrounds significantly influence the interpretation and expression of these speech acts, offering deeper insights into the interplay between language, culture, and social interactions among Moroccan Arabic speakers. Meanwhile, Saydumarova[11] examined the lingua-pragmatic aspects of greeting and farewell expressions in Uzbek, Arabic, and English cultures. Notably, eleven participants provided specific responses, with nine using "مبروك الزواج" (mabruk azzawaj) to say, "congratulations on the wedding" and two responding with "يتمم عليكم الله" (Allah ytamem alaikum), meaning "may Allah bless you."

In the study by Hambali, Risdianto, and Rahma[12], they found seven expressive speech types within fifty-one comments. Indeed, they found 26 for sorrow, four for congratulations, two for gratitude, 13 for praise, four for happiness, and 1 each for blame and regret, respectively. Another similar study by Al-Nasrawi[13] noted that pragmatic markers aid in explaining the ambiguities of phrases, which a non-native speaker would not easily understand without analysis. Contributions in this direction were made by Bouchard and Neveux in 2024 and also by Mohd Khatatbeh.

Azam and Saleem[14] analyzed Punjabi EFL learners' congratulatory strategy use as compared to that by British En-

glish speakers. In this case, they refer to Elwood's[15] taxonomy of congratulatory speech acts. The findings showed that in their L2 production, Punjabi EFL learners used strategies different from those produced by British English speakers. In another study, Can[16] explored the cultural differences in the conceptualization of congratulation in British culture and tebrik and kutlama in Turkish culture via a corpus-based analysis supported by the Natural Semantic Metalanguage Approach while developing the cultural scripts of these terms. The study has revealed cultural differences and similarities in the contexts and strategies of congratulatory expressions across those cultures.

3. Theoretical Framework

Congratulations is one type of illocutionary act that features, according to Searle[17], and there are four particular rules.

1. Propositional Content Rule: This rule indicates that something must be happening or occurring and is usually directly related to the listener.
2. Preparatory Rule: This involves something related to the listener's concerns and which the speaker deliberately knows.
3. Sincerity Rule: This depicts the speaker's earnest joy regarding the incident.
4. Key Rule: This means that the speaker shows their pleasure in honor of the occasion.

In this act, the hearer is the focus, but he does not control the event celebrated. Searle and Vanderveken[18] describe congratulation as an acknowledgment of good fortune given to the hearer. The speakers in this event want to inform the hearer about his/her feelings about such a great event as Wierzbicka[19]. In this research, the analysis will divide the congratulation text into three parts, which are the opening, body, and closing text, to be able to classify the congratulations that are related to each other and to be able to shed light on their exact meaning which could be related to the student's culture, traditions, religion that performed in a specific context. This study followed Elwood's[15] study on analyzing congratulation speeches and Searle's[20] study. The congratulatory texts are divided into the opening, body, and closing of the message of congratulations. Culture, tra-

dition, context and setting, and religious socio-pragmatic variables are considered in the analysis based on previous studies on congratulations and their impact on the writers of congratulations. All the terms, words, sentences, and expressions are analyzed based on the Jordanian culture and the academic setting of the events. The following **Figure 1** explains the stages of analyzing the data and socio-pragmatic variables that are considered in the analysis:
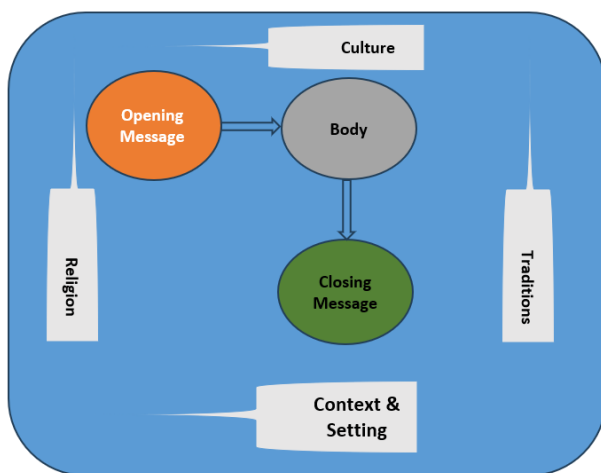

Figure 1. The Processes of analyzing the congratulation texts.

4. Methodology

This qualitative study uses observations and memos to gather data from graduation notebooks. Musante and De-Walt[21] recommend that observers focus on understanding what occurs and the reasons behind it, distinguishing regular activities from irregular ones, and noting variations to gain a comprehensive view of the event from multiple perspectives. Observers should also identify negative cases or exceptions. When behaviors align with the study's theoretical objectives, they should seek similar instances for observation, planning systematic observations of these behaviors or events. The quantitative data revolved around the number of strategies used in the students' congratulation notebook. There are six processes followed to apply the observations and memos methods which are:

1- Getting permission to collect the list of graduate students in 2024 from Jerash University.
2- Randomly select ten students from the list of graduates to collect data from their congratulatory notebooks.
3- Contact the students and get their acceptance to collect

the data from their congratulatory notebooks.
4- Collect the congratulation texts from their notebooks by applying the observation to the texts and
5- Write memos to help the researcher classify the congratulation strategies used by the writers of congratulations. As Sankaran, S.[22] suggested, the memo tool can be utilized by researchers in qualitative research to improve reflection during an action research project.
6- List the similar strategies in a table based on the opening, body and closing strategies.
7- List the examples and the strategies to be analyzed by the researcher in details by following Searle[17] speech act theory and Elwood[15] IFID classification of Congratulations Strategies.

The congratulations strategies were classified based on Elwood's[15] classification of congratulations. The analysis involved a corpus analysis to determine the exact meaning of the congratulation strategies used by the students. To obtain an in-depth analysis, this study concentrated on other variables that affected the students' use of congratulation strategies, such as culture, tradition, context and setting, and religion.

The ten graduating students from the list of fifteen graduate students in the English department signed consent forms that gave the researcher permission to collect congratulatory messages from their notebooks. The participant number was limited by the small size of the graduating class; however, data collection proceeded until saturation was achieved. According to Creswell, saturation occurs when, in qualitative research, additional responses given by other participants yield no new insight. The sample was representative of this research because 70% of the graduating students contributed to this sample. These congratulatory texts were divided into categories according to the authors' strategies, and every message was analyzed to disclose the meanings intended by their sender.

5. Analysis and Findings

The congratulatory texts are analyzed by dividing them into three parts: the opening, body, and closing. Each of these parts was analyzed in detail to shed light on the various strategies that were used by the writers of congratulations.

5.1. Opening Text

Table 1 explains the opening congratulation strategies used by the congratulation writers in the graduated students' notebooks.

Table 1. The opening congratulation strategies.

NO.	Opening Congratulations Strategies
1	Using religious expression
2	Student name
3	Diminutive forms
4	Direct congratulate terms
5	Salutation

5.1.1. Using Religious Expressions

Using religious expressions were used in most of the congratulation's notebook pages. The reason for using these religious expressions was related to their conviction to keep track of their prophet's recommendations to open all speeches with some religious expression such as ' بسم الله الرحيم الرحمن', which means ' *in the name of Allah, the most gracious and the most merciful*'. The understanding of this opening strategy by the students was to get more blessings from Allah. Sometimes, they shorten this expression by writing ' بسم الله,' which means 'in the name of Allah.' Moreover, they wrote ' الحمد لله', which means 'Praise be to Allah'. The following examples represent their usage of these expressions.

NS1: بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (*in the name of Allah, the most gracious and the most merciful*)

NS4: بسم الله 'in the name of Allah'

NS7: الحمد لله 'Praise be to Allah'

NS8: بسم الله نبدأ وله الحمد We begin with the name of Allah and his praise'

NS10: سبحان الله بالأمس بدانا واليوم ننهي دراستنا 'Glory be to Allah', yesterday we started and today we finish.

As noted in **Figure 2**, it is one of the quotes from the students' graduation notebooks, and the examples indicate that the students were assiduous in following their religious rules. They preferred to use religious terms to get Allah's blessing. As noted, they used various expressions that are traditionally used by Jordanian society to indicate their belief in the great meaning of Allah. It is a sociocultural expression understood positively to make the readers feel Allah's

mercy and compassion. The expression ' سبحان الله' is not used mostly at the beginning of the Jordanian's speeches, but sometimes it was used to show their deep feeling about the time that was extremely finished. In this context, it indicated the positive feeling for the days that went with the graduate students in their study journey.
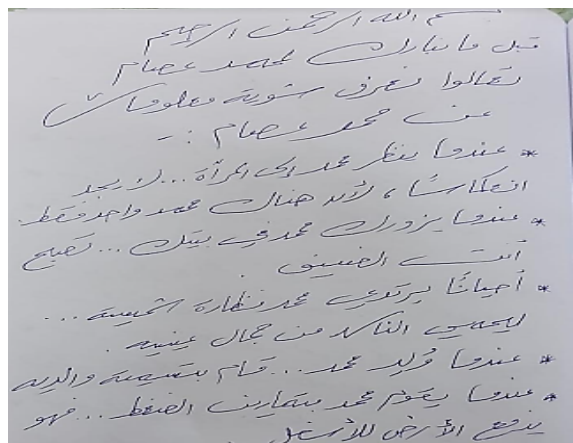
Figure 2. This is a figure. Schemes follow the same formatting.

' الحمد لله' is a great expression used to thank Allah for a great achievement or for all the good things that Allah decided for the Muslims. So, they intentionally used it to thank Allah for reaching this great level once the students completed their studies. It is a kind expression that expresses a deep feeling for the students who finished their studies at the university.

5.1.2. Student Name

This strategy of opening the congratulations texts indicated the close relationship between the writer and the graduate students. It was used to write their names at the beginning to show that they did not have distance. Obliviously, they used the name of the students such as 'Lara, Aya, Mohammad, Wael, Rwan, …'. They used a complementary clause after the names, such as diminutives, which will be explained in the next sections. Examples of these strategies are 'الغالي محمد' (Dear Mohammad), 'لارا العزيزة' (dear Lara), 'روان رفيقة الدرب' (Dear friend Rawan), 'الجميلات بيسان 'جميلة Bisan, The most beautiful). These expressions are sometimes used with the students' names to express the strength of their relationship. It is a polite opening strategy that was adopted to attract the readers to the ongoing text on the pages. **Figure 3** is one of the quotes from the student graduation notebook that is illustrated using student's name:

Figure 3. This is a figure. Schemes follow the same formatting.
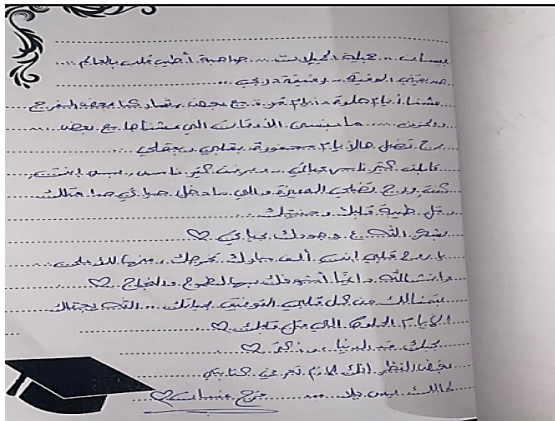
5.1.3. Diminutive Forms

The diminutive forms were used by the students many times, especially by the female students to female graduated students. They liked to call them diminutives to express their feelings of closeness and strong relationships. The following examples showed part of these diminutives that were used by the students to their graduate friends.

- 'حمادة العزيز' This diminutive form was used for a person whose name is Ahmad, Mohammad or Mahmoud'.

- 'أمون' (This diminutive was used for different female names such as Eman, Amani, or Amera)

- 'رورو' (This diminutive was used for female names such as Sara, Samar, Samiah).

- 'شوش' (This diminutive was used for female names such as Shahad, Shia'a, Shereen).

The writers of congratulations in the preceding examples showed that Jordanian students preferred to use diminutive forms in their congratulations. Female students used them mostly because they traditionally liked to show kindness and soften their speeches with each other. **Figure 4** is one of the quotes from the student graduation notebook that is illustrated using one of the diminutive forms:
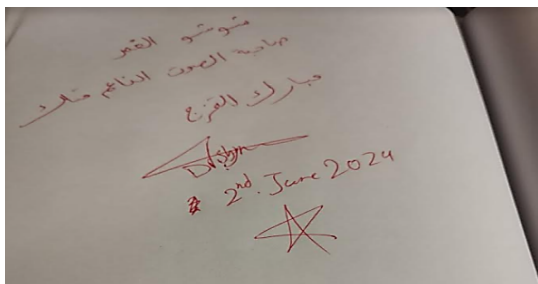

Figure 4. This is a figure. Schemes follow the same formatting.

The interesting finding in this usage was related to using the same diminutive form for different names. For example, they used 'حمادة/حمودة' for various names such as 'Mohammad, Ahmad or Mahmoud'. Similarly, the females students used 'رورو' or different females names such as 'Rawan, Ro'a, and Raya.'

This finding indicates the limited diminutive forms that could be used based on the sounds of the names which could begin with the same sounds. Moreover, the male students had limited usage for the diminutives because they did not like to indicate themselves as younger or softer than others. Contrastively, females like to be called with diminutives, which indicates that they are younger or softer. So, the inequality of using diminutives could be associated with the gender of the communicators. Research was conducted on the diminutive expressions in Mosuli speech. The researcher revealed that females frequently use diminutive expressions as a positive politeness strategy that demonstrates an emotional and compassionate sense (Mohammed & AL-Bajjari [23]. This research found that the females preferred to use the diminutives where necessary, but the interesting finding was that they used them more than the male participants. The reason was related to the common cultural norms that obligated the males to evade using such terms as diminutives, except in some situations when they call their friends, which enables them to use diminutive terms.

5.1.4. Direct Congratulate Terms

Direct congratulations were used when the students wanted to show their happiness to their friends. They sometimes wrote their words in a full page to represent their feelings. Using this strategy by the writers of congratulations supports Elwood's [15] Illocutionary force indicating device (IFID) to classify the congratulation strategy. They utilize this strategy in one word in different forms or with numbers such as 'مبروووووك' (congratulation), 'مباااارك' (congratulation), 1000 'مبروك' (1000 congratulations), 'مليون مبروك' Million congratulations). These congratulatory forms are represented at the beginning of the pages the students used to show their feelings to their friends. The meaning of them was approximately similar. The difference between them was using some other words with them or numbers or writing them with repetition for part of the word's letters. **Figure 5** is one of the quotes from the student graduation notebook that is illustrated using direct congratulate terms:
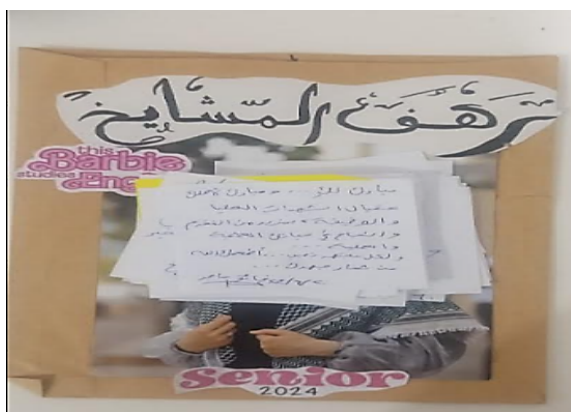
Figure 5. This is a figure. Schemes follow the same formatting.

5.1.5. Salutation

The most salutation used by the students was 'كاته ,السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبر' which means 'Peace and blessings to you.' This is the traditional Islamic salutation form that all Muslims worldwide use once they speak or write to each other. So, the students culturally preferred to use this opening in their congratulations as it is normally used by them in their daily communications. **Figure 6** is one of the quotes from the student graduation notebook that illustrated salutation:

Figure 6. This is a figure. Schemes follow the same formatting.

They rarely used some other expressions such as 'ابداء الكلام بالسلام' I begin my speech with peace be upon you,' 'حياتي' Hello, 'كيفك؟' How are you? The students use These salutation forms exclusively once they are very close to each other. They preferred to use them to change the traditional openings that were used by others in the previous pages. The religious impact on the students in their salutation was clear, for preferring to use the Islamic salutation in the congratulation notebooks, which was 'حمة الله وبركاته ,السلام عليكم ور' which means 'Peace and blessings to you.'

5.2. Body

The data showed that the writers of congratulations preferred to use five strategies. **Table 2** shows these strategies: congratulation statements, happiness clauses, complements, good wishes, and attaching presents. Each strategy is explained with examples to shed light on the exact meaning of using it by the writers of the congratulations.

Table 2. Strategies of congratulations in the body texts.

NO	Congratulation Strategies
1	Congratulation statements
2	Happiness clauses
3	Complements
4	Good wishes
5	Attaching presents

5.2.1. Congratulations

As Searle[20] stated, the illocutionary act is the action itself, performed in words. For example, the congratulation act is the words used to perform congratulation such as *saying congratulations, I am happy to know that you are graduated, let us make a party for your graduation* …etc. Moreover, Elwood[15] claimed that IFID can be performed in different strategies by expressing happiness, joking, encouraging and other IFID devices used by the person who offers congratulations. This strategy was exhibited once the writers of congratulations directly used the word '*congratulation*' (مبارك، مبروك) at the beginning of the body text in the notebooks. They wanted to elucidate their happiness by using it at the beginning of their speech. They sometimes repeated some of the letters of the word in the words of congratulations, such as 'مباااااارك, مبروووووووك' which carried an intensifying meaning for their congratulations. The impact of gender variables in the writer's expression was clear once they avoided using diminutive forms. The male students avoid using this form to be polite and avoid embarrassment to the female students. Similarly, the professors did the same thing with the female students, representing the impact of culture, traditions, religion, and the context and setting of speech while congratulating Jordanians. **Figure 7** is one of the quotes from the student graduation notebook that illustrated using the one of the congratulate statements:

Figure 7. This is a figure. Schemes follow the same formatting.

5.2.2. Happiness Clauses

Happiness clauses were exhibited in different forms. Part of them contained two words such as 'خبر سعيد' which means 'A happiness news', 'سعدنا لتخرجك' (we are happy for your graduation), 'سعيد يوم' (It is a happiness day). These two words represented the writers' happiness shortly, but their meaning was great for the students. Another writer of congratulations used a complete clause such as 'سعيد جدا لأجلك احمد' (I am very happy for you Ahmad', 'انا عرس انك تخرجت' (I want to have a party for your graduations), 'بدي اعمل الجميل' (Oh my God, this is nice news). **Figure 8** is one of the quotes from the student graduation notebook that illustrated using the one of the happiness clauses:
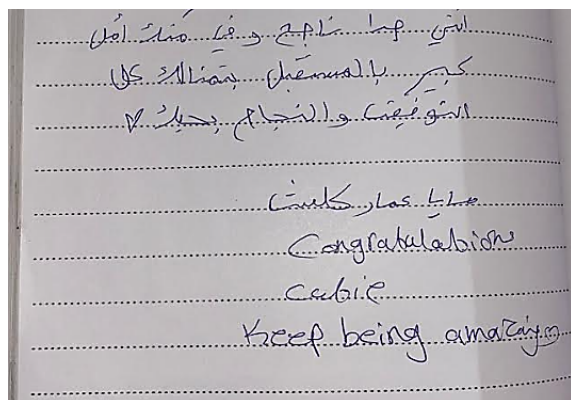
Figure 8. This is a figure. Schemes follow the same formatting.

Some of the writers of congratulations rarely used rhythm clauses such as 'مختار يا دار اخبري الزوار بان محمد بين الخريجين' (Oh my house, tell the visitors that my friend Mohammad is the mayor of graduated students). The writers expressed these creative strategies in a very interesting forms to show their happiness for their friends' graduation. The different forms of showing happiness indicated the

Arabic language's flexibility, which helped them form these various clauses. These clauses of happiness were considered polite illocutionary acts by the writers. They tried to tell the students about their fabulous feelings for their great achievement in their studies. Searle[17] considers them a strategy used by the person who offers congratulations.

5.2.3. Complements

This strategy was used once the writers of congratulations wanted to praise the students. They tried to show their respect and some of the characteristics the students knew about them. They mentioned their compliments to show their notable distinctive positive personalities. There are many examples that indicated complements in the writer's congratulation texts such as 'it is not a strange accomplishment for such great students like you' (يب هالانجاز على طالب مثلكم), 'you are one of the best students who I knew very polite you' (من افضل الطلبة انت الذين عرفناهم بادبهم مو غر), 'are beautiful like your achievement that you got' (انت جميلة مثل انجازك الي حققتيه), 'A well-mannered students always do the best attainment' (حسن السلوك بعمل افضل الإنجازات الطالب). **Figure 9** is one of the quotes from the student graduation notebook that illustrated complement form:
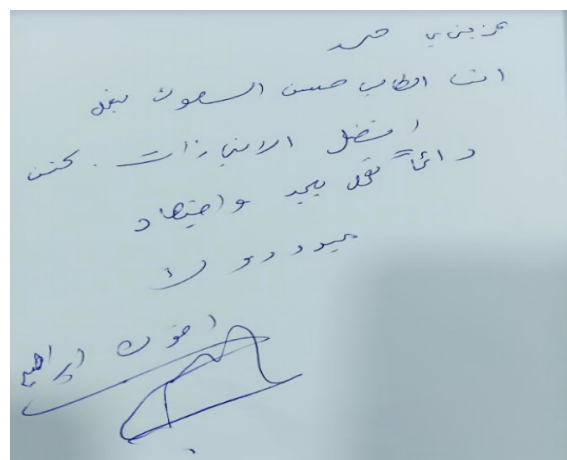

Figure 9. This is a figure. Schemes follow the same formatting.

Although the performance of complements sometimes embarrasses the hearers in the verbal speech act, the written speech act excludes this kind of reaction by the hearers. The understanding of such great complements in the written text expressed the great emotional meaning that the writer implicitly performed for the receivers of the actions. As noted on the congratulations pages, some students wrote a word of gratitude to those who wrote their kind compliments. In

other words, the graduated students showed their happiness for the words the writers wrote to them because they were attracted by their feelings, which were explicitly or implicitly presented in their texts.

5.2.4. Good Wishes

An offer of good wishes is one of the IFIDs stated by Elwood[15]. The writers of the congratulations offered that in different forms in the graduated notebooks. This strategy was one of the most important strategies used by the writers to congratulate the graduated students' notebooks. The reason was related to the writer's various wishes for the students after they finish their studies at the university. The gender wishes are exhibited differently. For the females wishes, they illustrated their wishes which were related to the female's interests such as ' أتمنى لك زواجا الانجاز ' هذا بعد سعيدا '(I wish you will get a happy marriage after this achievement), ' لك امنياتي كل المميز والزوج بالسعادة ' , (All my happiness wishes for you and to get an interesting marriage), ' ما عقبال وظيفة احسن على حصولك عن نسمع ' , حياة ' (We look for to hear from you getting the best job), ' لك أتمنى رائعة مثلكم عائلة مع سعيدة '(I wish you a very happy family like you), ' وتحققون امنياتكم كل بتحقيق لكم ' , امنياتي اليه تصبون ما كل ' (All my wishes for you to prove all your wishes and what you like to attain), ' ان قريبا عاروس نشوفك الله شاء ' (I wish you were bride soon). As observed in the examples of female wishes, they wrote that their wishes were mostly related to marriage and attaining jobs. This indicator demonstrated their interest after completing their studies.

Contrastively, the male students' congratulations rarely wrote marriage wishes for male or female students after completing their studies. Most of their wishes were related to getting the best jobs, positions or health. These wishes were illustrated in their written texts such as ' الصحة وافر لك أتمنى المناصب وافضل الوظائف '(I wish you a good health and job), ' بأعلى الوظيفة عقبال ' (I wish you get the best position in your future job), ' وظيفة باحسن تتوظف رح الله وباذن مميز انت ' (You are a distinguished person and I wish Allah will give you the best job), ' حلو يا عاريس نشوفك الله شاء ان ' , العزيز صديقي والسعادة و ' (I wish we will see you groom), ' الصحة وافر لك أتمنى ' (I wish you my dear friend a full of health and happiness), ' امير يا وزير نشوفك ما عقبال ' (I wish you will be a minster my prince), ' لك أتمنى تحب ' , ومن والديك ضل في سعيدة حياة ' (I wish you a happy life

with your parents and loved ones). The examples demonstrated the interests of the males which were almost different from the females' interests. **Figure 10** is one of the quotes from the student graduation notebook that illustrated using good wishes:
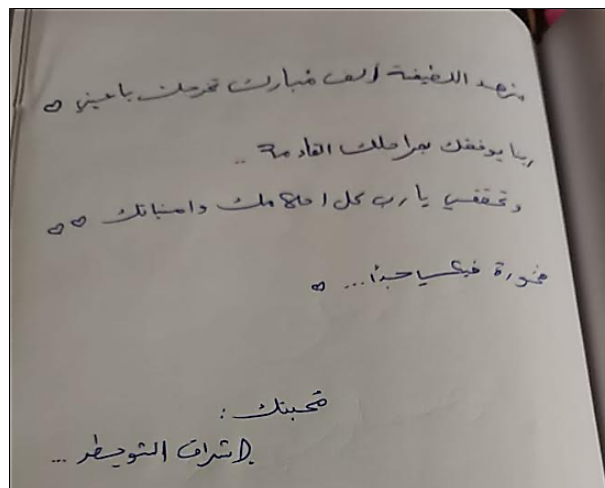

Figure 10. This is a figure. Schemes follow the same formatting.

This indicator explained that the male students wish to prove these wishes in their previous communications with each other's. This kind of wish showed the very polite feelings that the writers had for the graduated students. As known for everyone worldwide, health is the best treasury they have in their lives. So, the male or female writers' wishes consisted of these for the students. Males are particularly responsible for their families and relatives in Arabic culture. Because of that, the males' congratulations indicated that they wish for the graduated students to have the ability to be responsible once they have a good job to take care of their families. A very limited number of male students wrote for the students to get married because it is a great goal they must be responsible for. Using religious words such as ' الله شاء ان ' represented that they were following the cultural and religious practices in their communications. Religions affect Jordanian speech, as explained by Al-Natour et al.[24]. They stated that the term of address ' أختي ' meant 'sister' elaborated another different meaning which was related to the religious relationship among Muslims. The impact of culture and religion was indicated in both female's and males' wishes. So, most of them prefer these wishes to the graduated students to be able to get married. This illocutionary act demonstrated the cultural aspect of the Jordanians. The men have to be responsible to be able to get married.

5.2.5. Attaching Presents

The writers of congratulations noted the sense of humor in this strategy once they attached a little money to the graduation notebook pages. The meaning of this strategy is consistent with the joking strategy mentioned in the IFID by Elwood[15]. They sometimes attached just half dinner, ten cents, or simple things like empty small envelopes. Traditionally, Jordanians give presents 'نقوط', which could be a common gift or money present which could not be less than 10 JD. So, once they attached like these presents, they liked to joke with the graduated students to have a memory that makes them laugh once they see them. The attachment of presents was observed in many pages of the congratulatory notebooks at the end of the written speech on the pages. Subsequently, with the constitutive rules proposed by Searle[17], this strategy is concerned with preparatory rule once the writers of congratulation believe that this congratulation event is interesting for the graduated students. So, they want to show their interest by attaching a present for them in their graduation notebooks. The writers of congratulation employed the essential rule without words in this strategy but they express their pleasure by attaching the present to make the graduated students feel happy about them. **Figure 11** is one of the quotes from the student graduation notebook that illustrated attaching present:
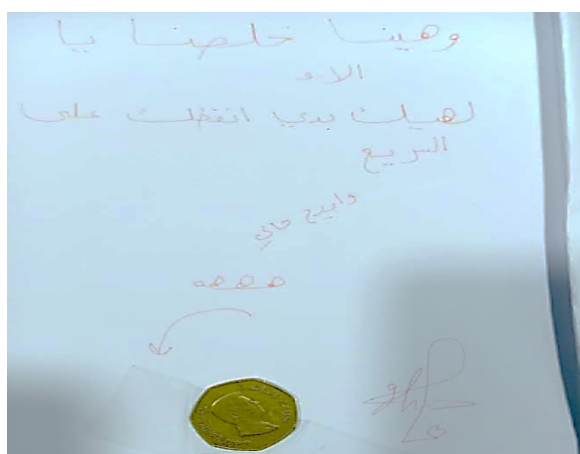

Figure 11. This is a figure. Schemes follow the same formatting.

The writers of the congratulations for the students used this strategy as a sense of humor in this context, which the graduated students understood positively. These presents could not be given in the real congratulation event because it indicates an impolite or inappropriate act by the givers for the receivers. However, it was understood politely in the academic context and setting once the writers of congratulations attached them for the graduation students. The impact of traditions, context, and setting were clearly employed in this strategy.

5.3. Closing Text

Closing congratulation texts, in particular, were limited by writing a word, signatures, simple expressions, or clauses. Some of the students closed their congratulations by attaching a present. An example for their closing congratulations was by writing 'صديقك للابد وائل' (Your forever friend-Wael), 'اختك العزيزة شيماء' 'كل التحايا' (best regards), (Your beloved sister-Shaima'a), 'الوفي صديقك' (Your faithful friend), 'بالتوفيق' (Good luck), 'بالرفاه والبنين' (With prosperity and children), 'لاستمرار صداقتنا للابد' (I look forward to be friends forever), 'مودتي', 'اتطلع' (My best wishes). The writers used *Self-related comments, an expression of envy and longing,* one of Elwood's[15] IFID. As the texts showed, they sought to look for friends and expected to stay in contact after finishing their university studies. Similarly, they tried to insist on their relationship by using honest words such as 'your sister, your beloved, forever.' These expressions express their deep, honest feelings toward their friends who will leave the university after graduation. **Figure 12** is one of the quotes from the student graduation notebook that illustrated closing the text of congratulations:
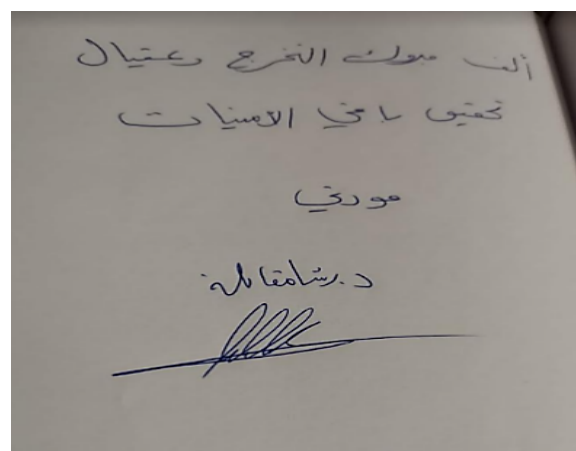

Figure 12. This is a figure. Schemes follow the same formatting.

As noted, the writers of congratulations closed the congratulation briefly. The reason for that was related to the body of the text they wrote before closing the congratula-

tions. They consider writing a lot in this speech context as not required because they want to use expressive, brief words, expressions, or clauses. This kind of writing represents the contextual impact on the writers as they had the ability to write just on one page, not more than that. This limited choice obligated them to write more than one sentence in the body and avoid writing long texts at the end of the pages. They carefully used very polite and kind closing texts to leave a good impression on the students about their emotions toward them.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the congratulations strategies that the writers of congratulations used for the graduated students after they finished or approximately finished their bachelor studies at Jerash University. The data were collected from 10 student's congratulation notebooks. The speech act that was analyzed in this research was written. Searle's [20] theory of speech act and Elwood's [15] were followed to analyze the data. As the analysis showed, they used five opening strategies: religious expression, student name, diminutive forms, direct congratulate terms, and salutation. The body congratulation strategies were congratulation statements, happiness clauses, compliments, good wishes, and attaching presents. The closing strategies used by the writers were words, signatures, simple expressions, or clauses—attached presents. As the analysis exhibited, the Jordanian culture, tradition, religion, setting, and context affected their congratulation texts. The impact of these elements was noted in their speeches. Therefore, this study revealed that the formulation of congratulations was structured based on the sociocultural variables that directed their speeches. Consequently, the gender variable varied their formulation, indicating they had to be careful about the congratulations offered to the graduated students. This study recommends that future researchers look into the impact of congratulations on graduated students after they read them. This future research can be settled by interviewing with the graduated students to get an in-depth understanding of the congratulation forms that were written for them in their congratulation notebooks by the writers of congratulations. Moreover, congratulations for new positions among professors or once one of the professors is promoted to associate professor, or professors can be exam-

ined by the researchers of the future. Additionally, future researchers can compare between the morphological and syntactical forms of the professors' congratulations with the finding of this research to look for the similarities and differences between the congratulation's forms that will be used by the students and their professors in same setting.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, M.M.A.-N. and A.B.; methodology, Z.A.; software, K.B.A.-B.; validation, M.M.A.-N., A.M.M.A.-H. and Z.A.; formal analysis, M.M.A.-N., and A.M.M.A.-H.; investigation, M.M.A.-N., and Z.A.; resources, K.B.A.-B.; data curation, A.B.; writing—original draft preparation, M.M.A.-N. and A.B.; writing—review and editing, M.M.A.-N., A.M.M.A.-H. and Z.A.; visualization, K.B.A.-B.; supervision, A.M.M.A.-H. and Z.A.; project administration, M.M.A.-N. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding

This work received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement

The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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