# Speech Acts of Apology and Regret Expressions Used by English Language Students at Al al-Bayt University

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## ☐ ABSTRACT ☐

This study aimed to identify the use of apology and regret speech acts among bachelor students majoring in English language and literature at Al al-Bayt University, It examines the functions of apology and regret speech acts based on Searle's (1979), and Cohen & Olshtain (1983) taxonomy regarding the apology strategies, It also the study aims to contribute valuable insights and information regarding the use of apology and regret speech acts, considering the variables gender and place of residence. It employs mixed methods, collecting data from 60 students through 20 Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) focused on academic issues. The findings reveal variations in the use of speech act functions and strategies between male and female students, as well as differences based on the place of residence, and the results suggest that gender socialization and cultural expectations influence the speech act preferences of students. Both genders prioritize different functions and strategies, reflecting societal norms and communication styles . Additionally, variations in the use of speech acts are observed between village and city residents, influenced by the rural and urban environments.

**Keywords**: Apology, Place of Residence , Functions , Regret, Speech Acts, Strategies, Gender.

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# أفعال الكلام لتعابير الاعتذار والندم المستخدمة
# بين طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة آل البيت

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## ⬜ ملخّص ⬜

هدفت هذه الدراسة التعرف إلى استخدام أفعال الاعتذار والندم بين طلاب البكالوريوس الذين يدرسون اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة آل البيت، كما تتناول أفعال الكلام والاعتذار بالاستناد على نظرية سيرل (1979) لوظائف أفعال الكلام واستراتيجيات الاعتذار والندم وفقاً لنظرية أولشتين وكوهين (1983). استخدمت الدراسة منهجية مختلطة حيث تم جمع البيانات من 60 طالبًا من خلال 20 موقفاً من خلال اختبار إكمال الحوار (DCT).أظهرت النتائج وجود اختلافات في استخدام وظائف واستراتيجيات أفعال الكلام المتعلقة بالاعتذار والندم بين الطلاب والطالبات، كذلك ما أظهرت وجود اختلافات تعزى إلى مكان الإقامة، كما أشارت النتائج إلى أن التنشئة الاجتماعية بين الجنسين والتوقعات الثقافية تؤثر على تفضيلات أفعال الكلام المتصلة بالاعتذار والندم لدى الطلاب، كما يستخدم كلا الجنسين وظائف واستراتيجيات مختلفة، مما يعكس المعايير المجتمعية وأساليب الاتصال والاعتذار لديهم. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، لوحظت اختلافات في استخدام أفعال الكلام بين سكان القرية والمدينة تبعاً للبيئات الريفية والحضرية المختلفة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الاعتذار ، الندم ، أفعال الكلام، الوظائف، الاستراتيجيات، الجنس، مكان الإقامة.

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## Introduction

Language stands as the primary medium through which individuals communicate their thoughts, ideas, and emotions. It encompasses verbal, non-verbal, and sign language, each capable of generating a spectrum of emotions, ranging from pleasant to unpleasant. These emotions, termed as speech acts (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1979), are integral to human behavior and hold substantial relevance in interpersonal communication.

Apologies and regret expressions serve as vital tools in maintaining harmonious social interactions and remedying conversational misalignments (Brown & Levinson, 1987). They signify acknowledgment, expression of remorse, and a desire to restore disrupted social equilibrium (Goffman, 1971). The exploration of such expressions is crucial as they unveil various dimensions of politeness, face-saving, and conflict management strategies (Trosborg, 1995).

While apologies and regret are universal phenomena, their expressions manifest significant variability across different cultures and linguistic traditions (Holmes, 1990). This dichotomy underscores the influence of sociocultural norms, values, and expectations in determining the adequacy and appropriateness of these speech acts (Olshtain, 1989).

Apologies can manifest as direct or indirect forms. While direct apologies are explicit, indirect ones involve more nuanced expressions and inferential reasoning (Albadri, 2020). A comprehensive understanding of indirect apologies necessitates proficiency in both the specific speech acts and the principles of cooperative discourse.Offering an apology is inherently challenging, involving a delicate balance between maintaining social reputation and addressing the misdeed. The evasion of a warranted apology may exacerbate social discord (Brown and Levinson, 1987). The evaluation of an apology's sincerity and adequacy is intertwined with the relationship dynamics and the severity of the wrongdoing. For English Language Learners (ELLs) at Al al-Bayt University, proficiency in deploying these speech acts is crucial for achieving pragmatic competence. The exploration of speech acts, specifically apologies and regret expressions, unveils the intricate interplay between language, action, and societal norms. The categorizations and insights provided by Austin, Searle, and Miller outline the framework and multi-dimensional functions of speech acts in various contexts, emphasizing their transformative role in maintaining social harmony and exploring human behaviors and relationships. In essence, the diverse categorizations and real-world implications of speech acts offer a rich tapestry for understanding the social and cultural ramifications inherent in our use of language.

## Statement of the Problem

The speech acts of apology and regret are one of the common speech acts used by people. They are used to convey the feelings of remorse and as a regretful acknowledgment of an offense(Abbas, Anjum, and Pasha, 2019;Derakhshan, Shakki, and Sarani, 2020). The use of apology and regret speech acts may differ according to the demographic variable such as place of living and gender variable. Therefore, the types of apology and their functions might vary among individuals. Within the Jordanian context, previous studies on regret and apology only focused on the gender differences (Al-Sallal and Ahmed, 2020). After a thorough reading of the literature, it can be deduced that the types of apology and regret, the functions of speech acts, and the impact of demographic and gender variables are overlooked in literature. Therefore, this study is needed to bridge this gap in literature by investigating the speech acts of apology and regret among bachelor students majoring in English Language and Literature at Al al-Bayt University in Jordan.

## Significance of the Study

The importance of investigating speech acts arises from a need to know how communication occurs  and to explore differences and similarities in interactions carried out in different languages and cultures. Speech act investigations are great help to identify the influence of cultural and social norms and the beliefs that control the realization of speech acts in a community (Al-Ghamdi and Alrefaee , 2020). Investigating apology and regret speech acts among Jordanian students might lead the researchers to identify the types of apology, the functions of speech acts, and the impact of demographic and gender variables in performing apology and regret speech acts. Moreover, this study is significant for researcherss interested in this field of research and for linguists. The dearth of studies that have been conducted in this field, particularly in Jordanian context has prompted the researchers to bridge this gap in literature.

## Objectives of the study

This study seeks to achieve the following objectives:
- To investigate the functions of apology and regret speech acts used by bachelor students.
- To examine strategies of apology and regret speech acts used by bachelor students.
- To investigate the impact of place of living and gender variables in the use of apology and regret speech acts used by bachelor students.

## Questions of the Study

This study seeks answers to  the following research questions:
1. What are the functions of apology and regret speech acts used by bachelor students?
2. What are the strategies of apology and regret speech acts used by bachelor students?
3. What are the impacts of place of living and gender variables on the use of apology and regret speech acts used by bachelor students?

## Limitations of the Study

This study has several defined limitations. It exclusively focuses on bachelor students from Al al-Bayt University, both male and female, who are majoring in English language and literature, thereby restricting the scope of the participant pool. The objectives of the research are narrowly confined to examining the use of apology and regret speech acts among these specific students. In terms of theoretical boundaries, the study primarily utilizes Austin's (1962) types of apology and Searle's (1979) functions of speech acts as the guiding frameworks. Moreover, the research is constrained by considering only two variables: one demographic factor related to the place of residence, and the second factor being the gender of the participants. These limitations shape the focus and applicability of the study.

## Literature Review

Speech act theory is a cornerstone in the study of pragmatics, as highlighted by Rahayu (2021). He argues that speech acts are pivotal in reducing ambiguities in communication, especially when the meaning behind an utterance is elusive. This notion aligns with the perspective of Gowasa, Radiana, and Afifah (2019) who perceive speech acts as the mechanism speakers employ to both convey messages and delineate their intent behind their words. Proponents of this theory underscore the myriad of ways in which a speaker can communicate – be it through making statements, posing questions, giving commands,

and the like. Aitchison (1999) further categorizes speech acts into two main types: direct speech acts, which are presented in a straightforward linguistic manner, and indirect speech acts, which, though often carrying a different syntactic structure, imply a different intent.

Apologies play an indispensable role in language and communication, acting as a crucial tool to amend offences and sustain social bonds. At its essence, an apology reflects genuine remorse for actions that have brought unhappiness or complications to others. Olshtain (1989) captured this sentiment aptly by defining an apology as an act meant to support someone adversely affected by a violation. This definition finds resonance with Holmes (1995), who sees an apology as a tool to redress an offence the speaker has committed against the hearer.

Delving into the theoretical underpinnings of apologies, we encounter Austin (1962). Austin categorized apologies under "Behabitives," Under this classification, when a speaker offers an apology, several simultaneous actions can be discerned:

1. **Locutionary Act**: This pertains to the act of uttering the words of apology, be it an implicit 'I am sorry' or an explicit 'I apologize.'

2. **Illocutionary Act**: Beyond the words spoken, this represents the underlying act of apology, where the speaker expresses feelings and takes responsibility.

In sum, while apologies are universal tools to mend social disruptions, their efficacy is influenced by myriad factors. It's crucial for speakers to possess a pragmatic competence, as suggested by Alzeebaree and Yavuz (2017), to ensure that their apologies are aptly tailored to the context and are received as intended.

It's also pivotal to recognize the socio-cultural variables that influence the manner and frequency of apologies. The weight of social status and differences is paramount, as highlighted by Alzeebaree and Yavuz (2017). Adding another layer, Holmes (1995) suggests that gender dynamics play a role, with females often apologizing more than their male counterparts.

The act of apologizing is intrinsically linked to the principles of politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987) postulate that the sincerity of an apology is determined by its adherence to politeness. When individuals express regret through an apology, they are reflecting their attitudes and values, which are influenced by their societal context, personal beliefs, and education. Therefore, to effectively communicate the intended sentiment behind the apology, it is essential for the person to exhibit politeness. Offering an apology inherently signifies a gesture of respect and civility. However, neglecting to apologize when it is anticipated can exacerbate the situation, as the omission is perceived as an added transgression.

Apologies also find their significance in rectifying past mistakes, especially in hierarchical settings like academic institutions or workplaces. Those in a lower position, when at fault, might be quicker to apologize, aiming to restore harmony. Edmondson (1981) reinforces this view, depicting apologies as communicative acts with the primary goal of reconciling differences and reviving social harmony.However, the depth of an apology isn't just bound to its linguistic structure. Its authenticity and effectiveness are profoundly tethered to the socio-cultural milieu in which it is articulated. Brown and Levinson (1987) underscore this by positing that politeness is a sine qua non for an apology's sincerity. This means that an act of apologizing isn't just about expressing remorse. It's a nuanced dance that maneuvers through the complexities of the apologizer's societal context, beliefs, and educational background.

Regret is a speech act that is uttered in a variety of situations; including, wise, sincere,

failure to be responsible, the worst decision an individual made, ignoring individuals who are important to us, or missed opportunities that an individual did not take (Pink, 2022). Regret is associated with humans' emotions (Amalia and Haristiani, 2022). To elaborate, Abd and Al-Ameedi (2022) define regret as the cognitive states of the interlocutors in the prepositional contents in which each of them might find himself/herself experiencing painful feelings due to their inappropriate choices. They add that regret is "a more or less painful cognitive and emotional state of feeling sorry for misfortunes, limitations, losses, transgressions, shortcomings, or mistakes. It is an experience of felt-reason or reasoned-emotion" (p.44). The feeling of regret occurs when an individual feel that the outcome might have been better if he has acted differently (Van Dijk and Zeelenberg, 2002). Based on the foregoing, regret is resulted from feeling sorry for making a mistake or acting in an inappropriate manner.

Regarding the functions of regret, it might function as a noun and a verb (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002). As for the syntactic structure of regret, it might be followed by a complement NP such as 'I regret it, I am sorry'. Moreover, regret might be followed by a complement clause in past simple tense such as 'I regret that I ever did'. It can be followed by complement clause in present perfect tense like 'I regret that people have misrepresented my views'. Regret might be further followed by a complement clause 'perfect modal' e.g.: I regret that we couldn't have done more'. Regret might further be followed by a demonstrative pronoun such as 'I regret this very much'. It could be followed by a gerund such as 'I regret saying'. Regret might be subsequent by wh-phrase such as 'I regret what happened'. Regret can be modified by a present infinitive like 'I regret to say' or perfect infinitive like 'I regret to have damaged your book' (Radford 1990).

It is worth mentioning that regret is associated with past experiences and future anticipations. To clarify, the retrospective regret is associated with the past, while the anticipated regret is associated with the future (Amalia and Haristiani, 2022). The retrospective regret occurs when our past experiences present information concerning the elements that might shape our future attitudes. Accordingly, such type of regret might be regarded as a life lesson. However, the anticipated regret occurs from our fear of our past experience that guide us towards making a decision in the present that might affect our future (Amalia and Haristiani, 2022).

According to Searle (1979) speech acts are divided into five functions. First, assertive, which commits speakers to the truth of the expressed proposition or to something such as complaining, concluding, etc. Second, directives: these are seen to be attempts by speakers in order to get the hearers to do something, e.g., command, request, order, etc. Third, the commissive acts: the commissive acts commit speakers to some future course of action, e.g., commitment and promise. Fourth, expressive words are those that express a psychological state of affairs that is presented in propositional content, e.g., apologize, welcome, etc. Fifth, declarative actions that lead to a change in the conditions and/or status of the objects referred to, such as declaring, appointing, and so forth.

In their study, Cohen & Olshtain (1983) suggested five strategies for apology and regret, which are: First, expression of apology, which consists of three sub-strategies; the first one is expression of regret such as 'I am sorry', the second one is 'offer of apology' such as 'excuse me', and the third one is 'request for forgiveness' such as 'excuse me'. Second, explanation of the situation such as 'the taxi was late'. Third, acknowledgment of responsibility, which consists of four sub-strategies; the first one is accepting the blame

such as 'it is my mistake', the second one is expressing self-deficiency such as 'I wasn't thinking', the third one is recognizing the other person as deserving apology such as 'you are right', and the fourth one is expressing lack of intent such as 'I did not mean to'. The fourth strategy is an offer of repair such as 'I'll pay for the broken phone'. The fifth apology strategy is promise of forbearance such as 'It will not happen again'.

The present study adopts Searle's (1979) functions of speech acts to investigate the strategies of apology and regret speech act and Cohen & Olshtain (1983) taxonomy regarding the apology strategies to investigate the apology strategies used by the bachelor students majoring English Language and Literature at Al al-Bayt University.

## Previous studies

Previous studies related to the variables of the current study were reviewed, Among the most important of these studies were the following:Amalia and Haristiani (2022) examined the use of regret speech acts among the characters in Japanese animation. The sample consisted of (14) episodes from Golden Time series. The animation revolves around the daily lives of Japanese students. A total of (54) regret speech act utterances were collected and analyzed utilizing a qualitative descriptive approach. The results revealed that the types of regret speech acts that are commonly utilized in the film are those pertained to regret of an opportunity or action that should have been taken by someone. In addition, they expressed their regrets by providing information revolves around facts.

Abd and Al-Ameedi (2022) carried out a cognitive pragmatic study of regret in Quranic and Biblical verses. To specify, (4) biblical texts and (4) qur'anic texts were selected. The study indicated that regret is a painful feeling experienced by someone for his/her unsuitable choices. The study concluded that there are various strategies used in conveying regret speech acts such as explicit, implicit, verbal and non-verbal.

Al-Sallal and Ahmed (2020) conducted a study on the gender differences in using apology speech act among Jordanian students. To collect the data, Harb's discourse questionnaire was used. The sample consisted of (40) students; 20 males and 20 females. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns was used to codify and classify the data. The results showed that there are differences and similarities between males and females Jordanian students in using apology strategies. Interestingly, the study found that Jordanian students tend to use multiple apology strategy in the same utterance.

A pragmatic study was conducted by Albadri (2020) to investigate apologizing expressions in in Moye's: Me Before You, and After You. The study sought to investigate the manipulation of apologizing expressions among the characters in both novels. The study further concerned with classifying pragmatic strategies to classify the apologizing expressions. To this end, a descriptive-analytical approach was used. The data were analyzed quantitatively by identifying the frequency and percentage of apologizing expressions. The study adopted Holms (1990) taxonomy of apology strategies. The study indicated that there are two strategies of apology, namely, direct and indirect. Regarding the types of apologies, they are divided into two types, namely, simple and complex. The results further showed that the characters used explicitness and implicitness apologizing strategies.

Al-Khaza'leh (2018) conducted a comparative study on the perception of speech act of apology under the influence of social power among (40) Jordanian second language speakers, (40) Jordanian non-English speakers, and (40) English native speakers. To elicit data from three groups of the respondents, the study used two instruments, namely, Discourse Completion Task (DCT) and Scaled Response Questionnaire (SRQ). The

findings revealed that social power affected the Jordanian participant attitudes more than English participants. Regardless of Jordanian second language speakers' proficiency in English, they lack the essential socio-pragmatic competence leading to negative socio-pragmatic transfer. Moreover, the study concluded that Jordanian native speakers lack of pragmatic knowledge of the target language.

Through the review of the previous studies, their objectives varied, including a search to identify the apology and regret speech acts in different contexts, there is a lack of research specifically focusing on the Jordanian context and the English language students at Al al-Beit University. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the speech act realization patterns of apologies and regrets among these students. Previous studie (Al-Sallal and Ahmed, 2020) have shown that gender can play a role in how individuals apologize and express regret. However, the specific impact of gender on the speech act realization of apologies and regrets among Jordanian English language students remains unexplored. This study sheds the light on whether there are gender differences in the usage of apology and regret speech acts.

## Design

In this descriptive study, the researchers used a mixed-methods, cross-sectional study design, including a quantitative survey (DCTs) and qualitative content analysis. This method allows the researchers to gather broad numerical data while also deeply analyzing specific behaviors within the data.

## Sample of the Study

The study includes two distinct groups of students from the English Department at Al al-Bayt University, comprising of 30 males and 30 females. All participants are undergraduate students pursuing an English degree and speak various dialects, with some residing in urban areas and others in rural areas. The age of the participants falls between 18 to 22 years.

## Instruments of the Study

The use of Discourse Completion Task (DCT) via a questionnaire, which is distributed to 60 students at the English Department of Al al-Bayt University. The DCT in the present study contain twenty scenarios of apology and regret speech acts. The questionnaires are distributed in Arabic language because the participants are Jordanians who are native speakers of Arabic language. The data cover most strategies and functions of apology and regret speech acts. The DCT consist of two parts; (the first part included demographic information about the participants; including age, gender, and place of residence ) and twenty situations which incite the speaker to make apology and regret speech acts.The second part contains (20) academic situations that students may encounter in their daily lives. Each situation consists of three predetermined answers, the fourth answer is entitled "other" option, which is used to allow participants to express their opinions.

## Validity of the study instrument

To ensure the validity of the study instruments, it was reviewed by (9) experts with experience and competence of English Language and Literature evaluated the DCT to determine its accuracy, clarity, validity, and appropriateness. Based on their recommendations, the test was modified accordingly. The specialists thoroughly examined various aspects of the test, including score distribution, format, time requirements, content, and grammar of the questions. In order to ensure the questionnaire validity, the researchers sought the opinions and recommendations of experts in the field of education, including individuals from academic institutions, universities, and English language supervisors. The

questionnaire was modified based on their observations and suggestions and was approved in its final version.

## Reliability of the study instrument

To verify the reliability of the instrument, the test-retest method was used. The questionnaire was applied to (30) students from outside the sample of the study. After two weeks, the same group was given new questionnaires. Then the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between their estimates both times(0.90) these value were considered appropriate for the objective of this study. The reliability coefficient of the internal consistency was also extracted according to the Cronbach Alpha equation, It reached (0.87), which shows acceptable consistency in reliability.

## Data collection procedure

First, ethical approval was sought from the appropriate authorities. Then, Conducting the (DCT) via questionnaires distributed to English Department students at Al al-Bayt University. Then, Coding the students' responses in accordance with the gender and place of residence variables. Secondly, Exploring functions of apology and regret speech acts according to Searle (1979) functions of speech acts; including, representative, commissive, directives, declaratives and expressive.Then,Exploring strategies of apology and regret according to Olshtain and Cohen (1983) of apology and regret strategies; including, expression of regret, explanation of situation, acknowledgment of responsibility, an offer of repair, a promise of forbearance.Third, Identifying the most frequent functions and strategies of apology and regret speech acts, identifying their frequency and drawing the conclusion from the results of the study.Fourthly, In order to analyze the frequency of the functions of apology and regret speech acts, the study distributed a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) consisting of (20) situations distributed to (30) male and (30) female bachelor students at Al al-Bayt University in Jordan. The situations revolve around academic issues.

## Results

**First research question: What are the functions of apology and regret speech acts used by bachelor students?**

Table (1):The frequency of the functions of speech acts of regret and apology among male students (n=30)

| Situation | Assertive | | Directive | | Commissives | | Expressive | | Declarative | | Frequency |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | |
| One | 10 | 4.6% | 2 | 2.5% | 6 | 11% | 4 | 6% | 8 | 4.6% | 30 |
| Two | 11 | 5% | 4 | 5% | 2 | 4% | 3 | 4% | 10 | 5.7% | 30 |
| Three | 13 | 6% | 5 | 6% | 1 | 2% | 2 | 3% | 9 | 5.1% | 30 |
| Four | 14 | 6% | 5 | 6% | 2 | 4% | 2 | 3% | 7 | 4% | 30 |
| Five | 14 | 6% | 5 | 6% | 2 | 4% | 1 | 2% | 8 | 4.6% | 30 |
| Six | 10 | 4.6% | 3 | 4% | 4 | 7% | 3 | 4% | 10 | 5.7% | 30 |
| Seven | 9 | 4.2% | 3 | 4% | 3 | 6% | 5 | 7% | 10 | 5.7% | 30 |
| Eight | 10 | 4.6% | 4 | 5% | 1 | 2% | 4 | 6% | 11 | 6.4% | 30 |
| Nine | 10 | 4.6% | 5 | 6% | 2 | 4% | 5 | 7% | 8 | 4.6% | 30 |
| Ten | 12 | 5.5% | 4 | 5% | 4 | 7% | 2 | 3% | 8 | 4.6% | 30 |
| Eleven | 10 | 4.6% | 2 | 2.5% | 4 | 7% | 4 | 6% | 10 | 5.7% | 30 |
| Twelve | 11 | 5% | 4 | 5% | 1 | 2% | 4 | 6% | 10 | 5.7% | 30 |
| Thirteen | 9 | 4.2% | 5 | 6% | 2 | 4% | 4 | 6% | 10 | 5.7% | 30 |
| Fourteen | 10 | 4.6% | 1 | 1% | 5 | 9% | 4 | 6% | 10 | 5.7% | 30 |
| Fifteen | 10 | 4.6% | 4 | 5% | 6 | 11% | 3 | 4% | 7 | 4% | 30 |

| Situation | Assertive | | Directive | | Commissives | | Expressive | | Declarative | | Frequency |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | |
| Sixteen | 11 | 5% | 4 | 5% | 3 | 6% | 4 | 6% | 8 | 4.6% | 30 |
| Seventeen | 16 | 7.2% | 3 | 4% | 2 | 4% | 2 | 3% | 7 | 4% | 30 |
| Eighteen | 10 | 4.6% | 7 | 8% | 1 | 1% | 5 | 7% | 7 | 4% | 30 |
| Nineteen | 11 | 5% | 6 | 7% | 2 | 4% | 3 | 4% | 8 | 4.6% | 30 |
| Twenty | 9 | 4.1% | 6 | 7% | 1 | 1% | 5 | 7% | 9 | 5% | 30 |
| Total | 220 | 100% | 82 | 100% | 54 | 100% | 69 | 100% | 175 | 100% | 600 |
| % of total | | 6.3% | | 37.8% | | 8.4% | | 37% | | 10.5% | |

From the table (1), it can be inferred that different speech act functions are recorded, namely Assertive, Directive, Commissives, Expressive, and Declarative. In addressing Regret and Apology, it is apt to consider them under the Expressive function, as they exhibit emotional stance and sentiment. In this context, it is observed that the Expressive function has a total frequency of 69, making up 10.5% of the total. It is noteworthy to underline that the highest frequency of Expressive function is recorded in situation Seven and Nine, both showing a 7% occurrence, followed by Eight, Eleven, Thirteen, and Twenty at 6%, respectively. Situations Three and Four, as well as Seventeen, demonstrate the lowest frequency at 3% each.

Breaking down the analysis per situation, it appears that situation Seventeen is marked by the highest frequency in Assertive speech act functions at 7.2%, and it could be posited that the predominance of statements in this situation might imply a lower occurrence of Expressive functions like Regret and Apology. Contrastingly, situation One presents a higher prevalence of Commissives at 11%, a category that may involve elements of promise or future commitment, indicating a nuanced interaction between different speech act functions.It is crucial to acknowledge that the overall percentage of Directive and Declarative are relatively high, at 37.8% and 37% respectively, indicating that in the majority of situations, male students tend to use speech acts that are more inclined towards giving instructions or providing statements or opinions.

In conclusion, the frequency of Expressive speech act functions like Regret and Apology among male students is varied, with some situations showing a higher prevalence than others. The analytical inference drawn from the detailed frequencies accentuates the nuanced and multifaceted nature of speech act functions, illustrating how different situations invoke varied functional responses. While this data gives insight into the tendencies and preferences in speech act utilization, the interconnectedness and interdependence of different speech acts necessitate a more holistic and contextual understanding of communicative interactions.

**Table (2): The Frequency of the Regret and Apology Speech Act Functions among Female Students (n=30)**

| Situation | Assertive | | Directive | | Commissives | | Expressive | | Declarative | | Frequency |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | |
| One | 2 | 5.3% | 10 | 4.4% | 4 | 8% | 7 | 3.1% | 7 | 13% | 30 |
| Two | 2 | 5.3% | 15 | 6.6% | 4 | 8% | 8 | 4% | 1 | 2% | 30 |
| Three | 1 | 2.6% | 7 | 3% | 4 | 8% | 13 | 6% | 5 | 8% | 30 |
| Four | 2 | 5.3% | 9 | 3.5% | 3 | 6% | 15 | 7% | 1 | 2% | 30 |
| Five | 1 | 2.6% | 14 | 6.2% | 2 | 4% | 9 | 4% | 4 | 6% | 30 |
| Six | 3 | 8% | 13 | 5.7% | 1 | 2% | 9 | 4% | 4 | 6% | 30 |
| Seven | 2 | 5.3% | 12 | 5.3% | 3 | 6% | 11 | 5% | 2 | 3% | 30 |

| Situation | Assertive | | Directive | | Commissives | | Expressive | | Declarative | | Frequency |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | |
| Eight | 1 | 2.6% | 11 | 5% | 2 | 4% | 13 | 6% | 3 | 4% | 30 |
| Nine | 3 | 8% | 10 | 4.4% | 4 | 8% | 9 | 4% | 4 | 6% | 30 |
| Ten | 2 | 5.3% | 10 | 4.4% | 2 | 4% | 11 | 5% | 5 | 8% | 30 |
| Eleven | 4 | 10.1% | 11 | 5% | 1 | 2% | 12 | 5% | 2 | 3% | 30 |
| Twelve | 1 | 2.6% | 12 | 5.3% | 3 | 6% | 12 | 5% | 2 | 3% | 30 |
| Thirteen | 1 | 2.6% | 13 | 5.7% | 1 | 2% | 13 | 6% | 2 | 3% | 30 |
| Fourteen | 1 | 2.6% | 16 | 7% | 2 | 4% | 10 | 4.5% | 1 | 2% | 30 |
| Fifteen | 3 | 8% | 12 | 5.3% | 2 | 4% | 10 | 4.5% | 3 | 4% | 30 |
| Sixteen | 3 | 8% | 11 | 5% | 1 | 2% | 11 | 5% | 4 | 6% | 30 |
| Seventeen | 2 | 5.3% | 8 | 3.5% | 2 | 4% | 13 | 6% | 5 | 8% | 30 |
| Eighteen | 1 | 2.6% | 11 | 5% | 1 | 2% | 12 | 5% | 5 | 8% | 30 |
| Nineteen | 2 | 5.3% | 10 | 4.4% | 3 | 6% | 14 | 6.4% | 1 | 2% | 30 |
| Twenty | 1 | 2.6% | 12 | 5.3% | 5 | 10% | 10 | 4.5% | 2 | 3% | 30 |
| Total | 38 | 100% | 227 | 100% | 50 | 100% | 222 | 100% | 63 | 100% | 600 |
| % of total | | 6.3% | | 37.8% | | 8.4% | | 37% | | 10.5% | |

From the table (2), it is evident that the majority of speech act functions utilized by female students fall under Directive and Expressive categories, accounting for 37.8% and 37% of total usage respectively. This suggests a notable inclination towards employing language that instructs, requests, or commands, alongside expressions conveying emotions or attitudes.Commissive speech acts, which represent emotional expressions and commitments respectively. Commissives are the third most frequent speech act functions at 8.4%, indicating a moderate usage of language to make promises or commitments.The Assertive speech act functions, embodying the conveyance of beliefs, are less prevalent, constituting 6.3% of the total speech act functions. These acts are notable for the conveyance of information or perceptions believed to be true by the speaker. Lastly, Declarative functions, which represent the pronouncement of states or conditions into existence, account for the least overall usage at 10.5%. These are typically associated with formal or ceremonial contexts.

In reviewing individual scenarios, Scenario Fourteen manifests the highest frequency in Directive speech acts at 7%, possibly indicating a situation with heightened instructive or commanding language needs. On the contrary, Scenario Three depicts a relatively lower inclination towards Directives at 3%. Scenario Twenty exhibits the highest Commissive frequency at 10%, suggesting a context involving substantial commitments or promises. However, Scenario Six and Eleven illustrate the lowest frequency in Commissives at 2%. It is essential to understand that the higher frequency of Directive and Expressive speech acts may be indicative of the interactive and expressive nature of female students, showing a preference for instructive language and emotional expressions. The context of the scenarios and the nature of interactions involved would provide a more nuanced understanding of the diverse utilization of these speech act functions.

**Second research question: What are the strategies of apology and regret speech acts used by bachelor students?**

**Table (3): The Frequency of the Regret and Apology Strategies among Male Students**

| Situation | Expression of Apology and Regret | | Explanation of the Situation | | Acknowledgement of Responsibility | | An offer of Repair | | Promise of Forbeara | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % |
| One | 8 | 7% | 9 | 3% | 10 | 6% | 1 | 3% | 2 | 8% |
| Two | 7 | 7% | 10 | 4% | 11 | 7% | 1 | 3% | 1 | 4% |
| Three | 6 | 6% | 10 | 4% | 10 | 6% | 2 | 5% | 2 | 8% |
| Four | 7 | 7% | 11 | 4% | 8 | 4% | 2 | 5% | 2 | 8% |
| Five | 5 | 5% | 12 | 5% | 11 | 7% | 1 | 3% | 1 | 4% |
| Six | 4 | 4% | 12 | 5% | 9 | 5% | 3 | 8% | 2 | 8% |
| Seven | 5 | 5% | 12 | 5% | 10 | 6% | 2 | 5% | 1 | 4% |
| Eight | 4 | 4% | 11 | 4% | 10 | 6% | 3 | 8% | 2 | 8% |
| Nine | 5 | 5% | 14 | 5.5% | 8 | 4% | 2 | 5% | 1 | 4% |
| Ten | 4 | 4% | 15 | 6% | 7 | 3% | 3 | 8% | 1 | 4% |
| Eleven | 5 | 5% | 15 | 5% | 8 | 4% | 1 | 3% | 1 | 4% |
| Twelve | 4 | 4% | 14 | 5.5% | 8 | 4% | 4 | 9% | 0 | 0% |
| Thirteen | 4 | 4% | 15 | 6% | 8 | 4% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 8% |
| Fourteen | 5 | 5% | 13 | 5% | 9 | 5% | 2 | 5% | 1 | 4% |
| Fifteen | 6 | 6% | 14 | 5.5% | 8 | 4% | 1 | 3% | 1 | 4% |
| Sixteen | 5 | 5% | 12 | 5% | 10 | 6% | 3 | 8% | 0 | 0% |
| Seventeen | 4 | 4% | 11 | 4% | 10 | 6% | 2 | 5% | 3 | 8% |
| Eighteen | 4 | 4% | 14 | 5.5% | 9 | 5% | 1 | 3% | 2 | 8% |
| Nineteen | 5 | 5% | 15 | 6% | 8 | 4% | 1 | 3% | 1 | 4% |
| Twenty | 4 | 4% | 15 | 6% | 8 | 4% | 3 | 8% | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 101 | 100% | 254 | 100% | 180 | 100% | 38 | 100% | 27 | 100% |
| % of total | | 16.8% | | 42.4% | | 30% | | 6.3% | | 4.5% |

The following Table No. 3 illustrates the frequency of the strategies of speech acts of regret and apology among male students: The most frequently used strategy is the "Explanation of the Situation", which constitutes 42.4% of the total, with 254 occurrences. This strategy is consistently prominent across all the instances, indicating a tendency among male students to clarify and elucidate the circumstances surrounding the regretful incident or apology. It appears that providing an explanation is seen as a pivotal element in conveying apologies and expressing regret, potentially serving to contextualize the apology and make it more meaningful and sincere.Next, the "Acknowledgement of Responsibility" is the second most prevalent strategy, with a frequency of 180, making up 30% of the total strategies used. This suggests that acknowledging one's own responsibility in the regrettable situation is also deemed essential by male students, possibly as it may demonstrate sincerity and foster understanding. The "Expression of Apology and Regret" strategy is used with a total frequency of 101, representing 16.8% of the total usage. The occurrence of this strategy is relatively lower compared to the explanation and acknowledgment strategies, implying that while expressing apology and regret is integral, it may not be prioritized over offering explanations and acknowledging responsibility in the process of conveying apologies among male students.

The "Offer of Repair" is the second least used strategy, with only 38 instances, forming 6.3% of the total. This low frequency implies that proposing solutions or reparations is not a primary concern, potentially reflecting a focus more on addressing the emotional and

relational aspects of apologies rather than the practical or tangible ones.Lastly, the "Promise of Forbearance" strategy is employed the least, with only 27 occurrences, accounting for 4.5% of the total. This infrequent use indicates that making promises to abstain from repeating the regretful action is the least emphasized aspect in the apology and regret expressions among male students. It might suggest an emphasis on addressing the present situation rather than committing to future behavior. In conclusion, male students predominantly rely on explaining the situation and acknowledging responsibility while expressing apologies and regret, with less emphasis on offering repair or making promises of forbearance. These trends might reflect the value placed on understanding and sincerity in the process of expressing regret and apology.

**Table (4): The Frequency of the Regret and Apology Strategies among Female Students**

| Situation | Expression of Apology and Regret | | Explanation of the Situation | | Acknowledgement of Responsibility | | An offer of Repair | | Promise of Forbeara | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % |
| One | 14 | 5% | 2 | 5% | 8 | 4% | 4 | 7% | 2 | 5% |
| Two | 13 | 4% | 2 | 5% | 10 | 6% | 3 | 5% | 2 | 5% |
| Three | 14 | 5% | 1 | 3% | 10 | 6% | 4 | 7% | 1 | 3% |
| Four | 15 | 5% | 1 | 3% | 8 | 4% | 5 | 9% | 1 | 3% |
| Five | 15 | 5% | 3 | 8% | 7 | 4% | 4 | 7% | 1 | 3% |
| Six | 16 | 5% | 2 | 5% | 7 | 4% | 3 | 5% | 2 | 5% |
| Seven | 14 | 5% | 1 | 3% | 11 | 7% | 4 | 7% | 0 | 0% |
| Eight | 17 | 6% | 1 | 3% | 8 | 4% | 1 | 3% | 3 | 8% |
| Nine | 16 | 5% | 2 | 5% | 8 | 4% | 3 | 5% | 1 | 3% |
| Ten | 14 | 5% | 3 | 9% | 9 | 6% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 11% |
| Eleven | 15 | 5% | 1 | 3% | 9 | 6% | 2 | 4% | 3 | 8% |
| Twelve | 15 | 5% | 2 | 5% | 8 | 4% | 2 | 4% | 3 | 8% |
| Thirteen | 12 | 5% | 3 | 8% | 8 | 4% | 4 | 7% | 3 | 8% |
| Fourteen | 16 | 5% | 1 | 3% | 8 | 4% | 2 | 4% | 3 | 8% |
| Fifteen | 16 | 5% | 2 | 5% | 8 | 4% | 2 | 4% | 2 | 5% |
| Sixteen | 15 | 5% | 3 | 8% | 9 | 6% | 2 | 4% | 1 | 3% |
| Seventeen | 15 | 5% | 1 | 3% | 11 | 7% | 2 | 4% | 1 | 3% |
| Eighteen | 14 | 5% | 2 | 5% | 10 | 6% | 3 | 5% | 1 | 3% |
| Nineteen | 13 | 4% | 3 | 8% | 10 | 6% | 3 | 5% | 1 | 3% |
| Twenty | 17 | 6% | 1 | 3% | 8 | 4% | 2 | 4% | 2 | 5% |
| Total | 296 | 100% | 37 | 100% | 175 | 100% | 55 | 100% | 37 | 100% |
| % of total | | 49.4% | | 6.1% | | 29.2% | | 9.2% | | 6.1% |

The table (4) delineates the utilization of various Regret and Apology Speech Act strategies among female students, clearly exhibiting variability in preference for different strategies. Predominantly, "Expression of Apology and Regret," an expressive, seems to be the most frequent strategy employed by female students, accounting for 49.4% of the total strategies used with 296 occurrences. This frequent use indicates that direct expressions of apology and conveying regret play a crucial role in their communicative approach to apologetic and regretful situations, reflecting a focus on directly addressing and amending the emotional implications of their actions. Subsequently, "Acknowledgement of Responsibility," a declarative strategy, is the second most frequent with a share of 29.2%

of the total, illustrated by 175 instances. This demonstrates a substantial emphasis on acknowledging one's role in the given regrettable situation, implying a sense of accountability and sincerity in their apologies, which could enhance the perceived genuineness of the apology.

The "Offer of Repair," a commissive, is observed less frequently, making up 9.2% with 55 occurrences. This suggests that while offering solutions or making amends is part of the apology process, it is not the focal point in their expression of apologies or regret, indicating a more relationship-oriented approach over a problem-solving one.Interestingly, the "Explanation of the Situation," an assertive, and the "Promise of Forbearance," another commissive, both share the same frequency and percentage, 37 occurrences and 6.1% respectively. The parallel frequency demonstrates that providing explanatory context and making promises for future conduct are equally least prioritized. The relatively infrequent use of explanation could mean a preference for accepting responsibility over justifying actions, while the similar frequency of promising forbearance might reflect a focus on present reconciliations rather than future assurances.

In conclusion, the expressive strategy of directly expressing apology and regret is paramount among female students, followed by a significant emphasis on acknowledging responsibility. The other strategies, including offering repair, explaining the situation, and promising forbearance, are used comparatively less frequently, revealing a communicative preference for direct emotional accountability in apologies and expressions of regret among female students.

**Third research question: What are the impacts of place of living and gender variables on the use of apology and regret speech acts used by bachelor students?**To investigate the effect of place of Residence on using regret and apology speech acts, the researchers collected the demographic information about the participants and identified their responses on DCT. The study found that the number of students living in villages outperform those living in cities with the percentage (40) and (20), respectively. As indicated earlier, the aim of the study is twofold; the first one is to identify the functions of apology and regret speech acts, while the second aim is to determine the strategies of apology and regret speech acts. The following Table No. 3.5 illustrates the frequency of the functions of apology and regret speech acts among bachelor students based on place of living (city, village).

**Table (5):The Frequency of Apology and Regret Speech Act Functions among Male Bachelor Students Based on Place of Residence**

| Place of Residence | Assertive | Directive | commissives | Expressive | Declarative | Frequency |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Village | 120 | 60 | 30 | 80 | 110 | 400 |
| % | 30% | 15% | 7.5% | 20% | 27.5% | 100% |
| City | 10 | 90 | 20 | 50 | 30 | 200 |
| % | 5% | 45% | 10% | 25% | 15% | 100% |

Table (5) above shows the frequency of apology and regret speech act functions among male students that varied in terms of place of residence. The male participants living in village opt for using the assertive speech act function the most with the percentage (30%), while those living in city opt for using the directive function the most with the proportion (45%). The second frequently used apology and regret speech act function among those living in village is declarative that amounts to (27.5%), while the expressive speech act

function accounts for (25%) among those living in city. The third commonly utilized speech act function among those living in village is expressive that accounts for (20%), whereas declarative speech act occupies the third rank among those living in city with the proportion (15%). The fourth rank among the participants living in village is directive with the percentage (15%), while commissives occupies the fourth rank among those living in city with the proportion (10%). The least commonly used speech act function among the participants in village is commissives with the percentage (7.5%). By contrast, assertive speech act function occupies those living in city is assertive that accounts for (5%).

The following Table shows the frequency of the strategies of apology and regret speech acts based on place of residence variable.

**Table (6): The Frequency of Apology and Regret Strategies among Female Bachelor Students based on Place of Residence**

| Place of Residence | Expression of Apology and Regret (Directive=request) Offer of apology= expressive | Explanation of the Situation (assertive) | Acknowledgement of Responsibility (declarative) | An offer of Repair (commissives) | Promise of Forbearance (commissives) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Village | 70 | 170 | 100 | 30 | 30 |
| % | 17.5% | 42.5% | 25% | 7.5% | 7.5% |
| City | 125 | 5 | 50 | 10 | 10 |
| % | 62.5% | 2.5% | 25% | 5% | 5% |

Table (6) above shows the frequency of apology and regret strategies among female students based on place of residence. The results show that 'explanation of the situation' with the percentage (42.5%), followed by acknowledgement of responsibility accounts for (25%). The fourth commonly used speech act strategy is expression of apology and regret that amounts to (17.5%). The least frequently used apology and regret strategies are 'an offer of repair' and 'promise of forbearance' that account for (7.5%) per each. Regarding the use of apology and regret strategies among female students' living in city, the analysis shows that 'an expression of an apology and regret' accounts the first rank with the proportion (62.5%), followed by an 'acknowledgement of responsibility' that accounts for (25%). The third frequently used apology and regret speech act is 'an offer of repair' and 'an offer of forbearance' that equally amounts to (5%). The least commonly used apology and regret speech acts is 'explanation of the situation' that amounts to (2.5%).

## Discussion

**RQ1.The Functions of Apology and Regret Speech Acts among Jordanian Male and Female Bachelor Students:** To answer the first research question regarding the functions of apology and regret speech acts among male and female bachelor students at Al al-BaytUniversity, the results reveal that there are differences among them. To elaborate, males tend to use assertive, declarative, directive, expressive, and commissives, respectively. On the other hand, females tend to use directive, expressive, declarative, commissives, and assertive speech acts, respectively. The following sub-section presents the functions of apology and regret speech acts by male students. The current study's findings align with previous research that explored gender differences in speech acts. Studies like Al-Sallal and Ahmed (2020) have investigated how gender influences the use of apologies and other speech acts. The current study's observation that male students tend to use certain speech act functions more frequently than female students is consistent with the findings of gender-related speech act research. The previous studies, Al-Khaza'leh (2018), have touched on pragmatic competence and gender differences in using apologies.

The current study's results on the differences in the functions of apology and regret speech acts between male and female students may reflect variations in pragmatic competence, suggesting that male and female students may have different linguistic strategies and preferences in expressing apologies and regrets. Previous studies.

Although the current study did not directly compare different cultural groups, it compared the speech act functions of male and female students within the same university setting, which could be considered a form of intracultural comparison. This comparison can provide insights into how gender and sociocultural factors interact in shaping speech act behavior. The findings of the current study on the differences in the functions of apology and regret speech acts among male and female students at Al al-Bayt University add to the body of knowledge on language use and communication patterns. They also complement and corroborate some of the themes and trends observed in previous studies that explored similar speech acts in different contexts, languages, and cultural groups.

**RQ2: The strategies of Apology and Regret Speech Acts among Jordanian Male and Female Bachelor Students:** To answer the second research question regarding the strategies of apology and regret speech acts among male and female bachelor students at Al al-Bayt University based on Olshtain and Cohen (1983) theory of apology and regret strategies, the results reveal that there are differences among them. To elaborate, males tend to use explanation for the situation, acknowledgement of responsibility, expression of Apology and Regret, an offer of repair, and promise of forbearance, respectively. By contrast, females tend to use expression of Apology and Regret, acknowledgement of responsibility, an offer of repair, promise of forbearance, explanation of the situation, respectively. However, the results reveal similarities between them regarding the lack of use an offer of repair and promise of forbearance apology and regret strategies. The following sub-section presents the strategies of apology and regret speech acts by male students.

The Strategies of Apology and Regret Speech Acts among Jordanian Male Students: Example No. (1): Expression of Apology and Regret, This strategy occupies the third rank regarding the most frequently used apology and regret speech acts among male students with the percentage (16.8%). For example, the male student in the eight situation, which states "you missed your university for several days, and when you came back, you had an exam and you had no news and you were asked to prove your excuse", has chosen the first answer "apologize for the absence" بعتذر على تأخير by using 'expression of apology and regret strategy', which falls under the first category of Olshtain and Cohen (1983) taxonomy of apology and regret strategies. Possibly, he used this strategy to demonstrate his remorse for his absence. By apologizing he expresses his regret for being absent and taking responsibility for the consequences of his actions. This finding is consistent with Jassim and Nimehchisalem (2016) who defined expression of regret strategy as employing a set of phrases or predetermined expressions of remorse that utilize performative verbs (such as "be," "sorry," "excuse," "apologize," "forgive," "regret," "pardon," etc.). These linguistic tools are employed by the speaker to convey their regret for the wrongdoing and to appease the listener.

The Strategies of Apology and Regret Speech Acts among Jordanian Female Students: Example No. (2): Expression of Apology and Regret, By referring to the data in Table 4,this strategy occupies the first rank among the female students with the percentage (49.4%). For instance, the female student in the ninth situation, which indicates "you and your colleagues were in the university riot, and the university president asked you to justify

what you did and apologize", opts for choosing the first apology strategy, namely, "apologize to the rector and explain why you did this" by saying بعتذر على الي صـار' 'I apologize for what I did'. Possibly, the female student maintains positive social relationships and views apologizing as a way to repair and maintain these relationships. This finding agrees with Hines and Douglas 2010), that females are inclined towards using expression that reflect their intimacy and solidarity.

**RQ3: The Impact of Gender and Place of Residence on the Use of Regret and Apology Speech Acts:** To answer the third research question regarding the impact of gender and place of residence in the choose of apology and regret speech acts among male and female bachelor students at Al al-Bayt University, the results reveal that there are differences among males and females as well as those who live in village and those who live in city in the selection of the functions and strategies of apology and regret speech act. The analysis shows that there are similarities among males and females in using apology and regret speech act. To illustrate, the commissives speech act occupied the fifth rank among males, while it occupied the fourth rank among females. Such function of speech act was indicated by promising among males and swearing among females. This result could be explained by the fact that males might use promising as a way to assert their intentions and show reliability, aligning with the traditional notion of male responsibility and assertiveness. This finding agrees with Banikalef (2019) regarding the tendency of men towards using assertive speech acts to a greater extent, while women were more inclined to utilize expressive speechacts. By contrast, females could use promising as a means of building and maintaining social connections, aligning with the expectations of nurturing and cooperative behavior associated with femininity.There is an expectation for women to employ communication as a means to strengthen social connections and foster relationships (Merchant, 2012).

Similarly, the use of swearing as a form of expressing regret among females could be attributed to the influence of gender norms. Swearing might serve as a way for females to vent frustration or disappointment, deviating from the stereotypical expectation of women always displaying politeness and emotional restraint. This usage could be seen as a form of asserting agency and expressing genuine emotions rather than conforming to societal expectations.This finding agrees with Banikalef, Maros, Aladdi, and Al-natour (2015) regarding the use of swearing in apologizing in Jordanian culture to reduce the degree of offense.

Interestingly, acknowledgement of responsibility occupied the second rank among both genders. Possibly, both of them tend to express their apology and regret by accepting the blame, expressing self-deficiency, and recognizing the other person as deserving apology. This finding could be justified by the fact that in Jordanian culture, both genders tend to take responsibility and show remorse when one has done something wrong. These cultural norms might lead both men and women to prioritize acknowledging responsibility as a way to show moral character and uphold social expectations. Moreover, both males and females are socialized to take responsibility for their actions and accept blame when they make mistakes. Such socialization process instills the belief that acknowledging responsibility is a desirable trait and a symbol of integrity.

On the other hand, the results showed that the place of residence among Jordanian male and female student influences the use of apology and regret speech acts among them. These differences are pertained to the functions of speech acts and the strategies of apology and regret speech acts. This preference could be linked to the rural setting in which people

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tend to depend on direct and explicit communication to convey their stance and express their opinions. The village setting may enhance a sense of close-knit community and interpersonal relationships, where expressing one's ideas and standing up for oneself are highly valued. By contrast, the students living in the city show a different pattern, with the directive function taking precedence. The directive function includes giving commands, making requests, and providing instructions. This preference in the urban context can be explained by the fast-paced nature of city life, where pragmatism and efficiency are often emphasized. Directives enable individuals to navigate complicated social interactions efficiently and accomplish tasks effectively. Moreover, the expressive function ranks higher among city dwellers as opposed to those living in the village. This could be attributed to the diverse and cosmopolitan nature of cities in which individuals from various backgrounds coexist. Expressing emotions and personal experiences becomes essential for establishing connections and fostering understanding within a diverse community.In conclusion, the varying preferences in speech act functions among village and city residents can be justified to the distinct cultural and social dynamics of these environments. The assertive function holds more significance in the village, whereas direct communication and personal expression are appreciated. Moreover, the directive function gains prominence in the urban setting, where efficiency and pragmatism are emphasized.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

1. This study investigates the apology and regret strategies and functions according to the gender and place of residence variables. The researchers recommends further studies to investigate the effect of using apology and regret strategies and functions according to the educational and social power and distance variables.

2. This study conducts with sixty students; therefore, it is recommended to replicate the study with a larger sample size to enhance the robustness of results and to reduce the impact of sampling bias.

3. This study uses only DCT; further studies are recommended to use more than one instrument, such as interviews, observations, and questionnaires because the triangulation of data helps in increasing the reliability and the credibility of the study.

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