

BROWN AND LEVINSON'S THEORY OF POLITENESS

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ملخص البحث:

يهدف البحث إلى تعريف مصطلح التأدب اللغوي ومدى إمكانية تطبيقه على الأعمال الأدبية حيث أشارت العديد من الدراسات أنه يمكن استخدام نظريات التأدب اللغوي لإلقاء الضوء على قضايا أدبية هامة ومنها على سبيل المثال تحليل الحوار بين شخصيات العمل الأدبي تحليلاً برجماتياً ليساعد في توضيح وتدعيم الفكرة الرئيسية في عمل أدب ما. يسرد البحث العديد من أمثلة نظريات التأدب اللغوي ويعرض الاختلافات بينها بصورة موجزة، كما يلقي الضوء بصورة مفصلة على إحدى هذه النظريات وهي نظرية العالمين براون وليفينسون (1978، 1987) والتي تعد من أهم النظريات المستخدمة في تحليل النصوص الأدبية تحليلاً لغوياً وذلك لمرونتها واستفادتها من نقاط القوة في النظريات السابقة لها.

يتضمن البحث شرح وافٍ لنظرية التأدب اللغوي ويلقي الضوء على بعض المفاهيم المتعلقة بالنظرية مثل مفهوم صورة الإنسان Face أمام نفسه وأمام المجتمع وما يهدف هذه الصورة من أقوال FTAS. ويناقش البحث الإستراتيجيات الخمسة الأساسية التي تقوم عليها هذه النظرية ومدى ارتباطها بمتغيرات شتى مثل السيطرة Power والمسافة الاجتماعية بين المشاركين في الحوار Distance وكذلك الوضع الاجتماعي للمتداولين Rank of Imposition.

بالإضافة إلى هذا يعطي البحث العديد من الأمثلة للمعارضين لهذه النظرية بشكل مختصر. وختاماً للبحث فإن الباحثة توضح بأنه لا يوجد نظرية لغوية يتفق عليها الجميع في المطلق ويستخدمونها في تحليل الأعمال الأدبية فلكل وجهة نظر مؤيديها ومعارضها

Introduction:

The present paper introduce some of the most important and most applicable theories of politeness, it also gives a detailed definition of the term politeness and it goes back to the origin of the theory of politeness, the main works on linguistic politeness. It also sheds the light on Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness and the criticisms it faces and gives some studies on the application of politeness to literary texts.

1-Politeness:

The following reflects many of the linguists' views of the term "politeness" especially in relation to drama. Politeness is the linguistic criterion used to analyze the characters' conversations in many of literary works. Culpeper (2001) believes that the analysis of the characters' speech acts in the light of their politeness choices helps to reveal much about the literary work:

"clearly, analyzing a character's speech acts is likely to reveal much about their character.... Analyzing how characters, or indeed people, perform their speech acts tell us much about their goals, how they perceive interpersonal relationships, and how they manage the social context. All this is very much the business of politeness." (236-7)

Trask (1999:241) defines 'politeness' as "the linguistic expression of courtesy and social position". As early as the eighteenth century, 'politeness' is seen from Sell's point of view as:

"The quintessentially Augustan aspiration, involving a view of man as both source and beneficiary of the blessings of

civilization and intellectual enlightenment....it was associated with the metropolitan aristocracy and opposed to rural life and cultural provinciality. It meant a high degree of mental cultivation and elegant refinement, polished manners and neo-classical good taste." (Sell,1991:12).[See also (Watts et al., 1992:110)]

Hobbs (2003:126) makes it clear that politeness is not just about "being nice"; however, "it is about managing the power relationships you have with others, the degree of closeness among people and the way people exchange goods and services with each other."

Politeness has become a major concern in pragmatics, giving a chance to a wealth of theoretical studies such as the concept of face with its two types which gives rise to the two types of politeness: Positive politeness and Negative politeness. Both Positive and Negative politeness should be seen as the two sides of the same coin. In this respect, Perez de Ayala (2001) indicates:

"I would like to insist that the concept of politeness is not only negative, face-saving and mitigating. The role of positive politeness as face-enhancing is as important as its negative counterpart." (145).

According to Yule (2006), politeness could have to do with ideas like being modest and nice to other people: "politeness, can be defined as showing awareness of and consideration for another person's face." (119).

Many pragmatic models have been introduced to the study of linguistic politeness, most important of which is Brown and Levinson's which was originated in 1978 and modified in 1987. This model- which is the basic theoretical framework of this dissertation- is as Chen (2001:88)

2-John Austin (1962):

Austin's book *How to Do things with words* 1962 (first published in 1959) is the first serious work which attempts at explaining speech acts, followed by Searle's *Speech Acts: An Essay on The Philosophy of Language* in 1969. In the book, Austin contrasts what he calls *performatives* to *constatives* (i.e., statements). He defines the former as sentences which are not only used to say things, but also used to do things or perform actions. Austin distinguished three types of acts based on the force of the act: 1) *the Locutionary act*, 2) *the illocutionary act*, and 3) *the perlocutionary act*. He sees that the most important act is the illocutionary one as it signifies the contextual meaning of an utterance. Austin divides the illocutionary act into five categories: verdictives, exercitives, expositives, and behabitives.

3-John R. Searle (1979):

When Searle (1965) writes his article *What is a Speech Act*, he puts the standard theory of 'speech acts' and then in his book *A Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts (1979)*, Searle proposes a taxonomy of speech acts alternative to that of Austin. He also divides speech acts to five classifications: *assertives, directives, commissives, expressives and declaratives*.

In his article, *Indirect speech Acts (1975)*, Searle defines *indirect speech acts* as "cases in which one illocutionary act is performed indirectly by way of performing

another". He believes that the meaning of indirect utterance is dependent mainly on the shared background between the speaker and the hearer.

4-Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle (CP):

Paul Grice puts the foundation of the first pragmatic principle of conversation, i.e. the Cooperative Principle (CP) which precedes politeness as speakers perform politeness strategies when one or more of the CP maxims are violated. That is why any attempt to study linguistic politeness should begin with a brief account of Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle because most models of politeness are based, to some extent, on such a principle with its four maxims and the notion of conversational implicature. For Grice, during any interaction, there should be cooperation between the participants in this interaction in order for their interaction to achieve its goals. He proposes four maxims for cooperative interaction. These maxims are:

- 1) *Quality*: To say only what you believe to be true and sincere. Try to make your contribution as true as possible, e.g. when a speaker says : "Smoking damages your health". It seems that the speaker is absolutely sure that smoking damages one's health.
- 2) *Quantity*: To be as informative as is required; to be precise and not to say less than or more than is required. That is to say, do not make your contribution more informative than is required, e.g. when someone asks another about his/her job and the latter replies: "My job is O.K.". This is the less information that could be given about one's job and it has the

implicature that the speaker is not that much happy in his/her work.

- 3) *Relevance*: To be relevant. The utterance should be in one way or another, relevant to the situation.
- 4) *Manner*: To avoid ambiguity and obscurity and to be brief and orderly, e.g. They washed and went to bed. It is presented in an orderly way and the meaning is quite clear.

Moreover, Grice (1975) gives four ways for the conversation to be cooperative: 1) by *violating* a maxim, 2) by *Opting out* a maxim, 3) by *flouting* a maxim, and 4) by being brought into a *clash of maxims*.

In this respect Lindblom (2001:1603) adds:

"But Grice knew that people do not always follow these maxims as they communicate, and he identified four ways in which discourse participants regularly break, or fail to fulfill, maxims in conversations: violating, opting out, clashing, and flouting. He considered implicature as the most important aspect of the CP."

Therefore, Grice is not suggesting that all these four principles are strictly available in all communication. They must not be followed all the time. For Finch (2000), there are two ways in which the maxims are not noticed: flouting and violating:

"[Maxims] can be departed from in two main ways. Speakers can choose either to flout or to violate them. Floutings are different from violations. Violating a maxim

some elements of communication failure: providing too little, or too much, detail, being irrelevant, or too vague. Floutings, however, are apparent rather than real violations. They enable us to comply with the maxims indirectly rather than directly."(160-161).

5-Main works on Linguistic Politeness:An abstract:

In order to give an overview of linguistic politeness, one should refer to the three models that are considered by many researchers as the most important ones. These three models are: Lakoff (1973), Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) and Leech (1983) which all differ from other modern models of politeness in that they are more comprehensive and don't focus on politeness as only one perspective of age or power or sex.

5.1- Lakoff's (1973) Politeness principle:

Lakoff (1973) is one of the "founding fathers" (Eelen, 1999: 28) of politeness theory. She takes the origin of her principle from Grice, but she sees that the Gricean four maxims are not enough to give a sufficient pragmatic interpretation of what is communicated among interactants, since in spontaneous conversation these maxims can hardly be followed. Her *politeness principle* (PP) involves three politeness rules: *Don't impose* (formality/ distance), *Give options* (Deference) and *Make A feel good – be friendly* (Camaraderie). In this way, Lakoff seems to be close to Grice in that they both seek to find an appropriate pragmatic interpretation for a speaker's utterances during communication.

5.2- Leech's (1983) Politeness Principles/ maxims:

Leech's (1983) work on politeness is highly dependent on Grice's (1975) CP, but he gives much attention to the difference between semantics and pragmatics which are, from his point of view, equal to directness and indirectness.

Leech (1983) formulates his *politeness principle* according to which six politeness maxims / sub- principles are in operation during any interaction: *Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement, and Sympathy* and he concedes that politeness is relevant to only the last two types. Leech (1983) sees that *the situation* is an important factor in determining the amount and the type of politeness used. For him politeness and impoliteness are in the same category of favorableness and unfavorableness. According to him,

"Polite and impolite beliefs are respectively beliefs which are favorable and unfavorable to the hearer or to a third party, where favorable and unfavorable are measured on some relevant scale of values". (Leech, 1983: 123-4).

Leech's (1983) notion of pragmatic scales, i.e. scales or criteria in the light of which speech acts (illocutions) are judged as less polite or more polite, is most relevant to the present research. These scales are mainly: the cost- benefit scale, the indirectness scale and the power ('authority') scale and the social distance ('solidarity') scale. The cost- benefit scale depends on the degree of cost and benefit the action bears to the hearer (H); the more the benefit and the less the cost of an action to H, the more polite it is. The indirectness scale depends on the equation that the more indirect an illocution is, the

more polite it is. To leech, indirect illocutions are more polite because they give H more freedom/ optionality in performing the act and because their force is more "diminished and tentative" (108). The power ('authority') scale has to do with the degree of power or authority one participant over the other. The greater the difference of power between the two participants is, the more polite the respective speech situation they are in will be. The greater the social distance between the two participants is, the more formal and the more polite a certain situation will be⁽¹⁾.

5.3- Brown and Levinson's(1978, 87) model of politeness:

the most relevant pragmatic model of the present research is the model proposed by Brown and Levinson which is first introduced in an article in 1978 and later revised and elaborated at length in their book *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage* published in 1987.

Brown and Levinson's model of politeness stresses the following factors of speech : 1) face, rationality and the Model Person (MP), 2) face – threatening acts (FTAs), 3) the three sociological variables of weighting the seriousness of an FTA- Power (P), Distance (D), and Rank of imposition (R)- and 4) the five types of politeness super- strategies with their linguistic outputs or sub- strategies. The researcher will give a brief account of each point of this model and the model will be detailed further in the following section of the research.

5.3.1- Face, rationality and the Model Person (MP):

(¹)This idea of 'pragmatic scales' is summarized from (Leech, 1983:107- 8, 123- 7).

By *Face*, the two authors mean "the public, self – image that every member wants to claim for himself, consisting in two related aspects" (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 61). According to them, politeness is simply a means to save face these two aspects are *the negative face* and *the positive face*. The negative face refers to "the want of every 'component adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others", while the positive face refers to "the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others" (62). They argue that *face* is a universal concept existing in all cultures and all societies but it is affected by what they call "cultural specifications" (1987: 13).

According to their model of politeness, this *face* is obtained by rational Model Person (MP). By *rationality* they mean "the application of a specific mode of reasoning... which guarantees inferences from ends or goals to means that will satisfy those ends". (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 64). They go further to define *rationality* as the ability to select from different means the most appropriate one to achieve a certain goal. By Model Person they refer to any adult member of society who has the two qualities of *face* and *rationality*.

5.3.2- Face – threatening acts (FTAs):

In any conversation, both S and H try to save the other's face from being threatened because if one's face is threatened by others, s/he should defend his / her own face. So, it is in the interest of both parties to save each other's face during interaction. However; sometimes threat occurs because, as Brown and Levinson claim, certain kinds of speech acts are by nature- threatening to face. They call such acts *face – threatening acts*

(FTAs). They divide them into acts that threaten the negative- face wants such as orders, requests, suggestions, threats, warnings.... etc., and acts that threaten the positive- face wants such as compliments, expressions of hatred, anger, lust....etc.

They also divide those acts according to whose face is being threatened (S or H) into acts that threaten S's face and those that threaten H's face. Expressing thanks, excuses, apologies, self- humiliation...etc. are examples of acts that threaten S's face; while expressions violent emotions, irreverence, interruptions...etc. are examples of those that threaten H's face. Politeness functions before and after committing a FTA. If politeness fails to prevent the occurrence of an FTA, it is used afterwards to reduce the threat.

5.3.3- The five major politeness super-strategies:

The model of Brown and Levinson (1987) presents five politeness super- strategies in order for a participant to use to reduce the threat of an act. The choice of a specific strategy by one of the interactants depends on the type of the face being threatened. The five types are briefly explained as follows:

1) Bald – on – record; it occurs when the act performed is direct without any redress or mitigation. This strategy is used in three cases: 1) the existence of a great power differential between the two participants, 2) emergency and need of maximal efficiency, and 3) the act performed being in the hearer's interest/ benefit.

2) Positive politeness; It aims at redressing H's positive face by making him approved of, liked and appreciated. This can be done by using one of the fifteen sub- strategies of positive

politeness which will be found in details in the following section "theoretical framework".

3) Negative politeness; this is can be achieved by using one or more of the ten sub-strategies formulated to maintain H's negative face by assuring S's desire not to infringe upon his/ her freedom of action.

4) Off- record; here, S performs the act indirectly, applying Grice's notion of 'implicature', thereby avoiding responsibility for the act performed. This strategy is often used when face threat is great.

5) Don't do the FTA; in which case the act is not performed because the risk is too high.

5.3.4- The three sociological variables; Power (P), Distance (D) and Rank of imposition (Rx):

There are three factors that determine the seriousness of a certain speech act and determine which politeness strategy the speaker has to choose to perform the act. These factors are the *relative power (P)* of one participant over the other, *the social distance (D)* between the two, and the ranking of the imposition (R). these factors help to determine the level and kind of politeness needed in performing a certain act.

6-Critiques of Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness:

Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness was faced by much criticism and modification. One can find different reactions to it; some accept it, defend it and others refuse it and a third party accept it but with some modifications of some aspects of the models. Here, in the following lines we are going to focus on some major concerns raised in response to Brown and Levinson's model (1987). The

first concern centers on the universality Brown and Levinson claim for their concept of face.

The concept of *face* in Brown and Levinson's (1987) model has been widely modified. Matsumoto (1988) claims that this notion of *face* can never suit all the societies. He gives the Japanese society as an example showing that Japanese politeness is achieved not when the individual satisfies his/her own face, but rather when s/he satisfies the society by conforming to its social/cultural convention. Matsumoto's main objection on Brown and Levinson's model of politeness is in their concept of "negative face wants" which means, in Brown and Levinson's (1987) definition, "the desire to be unimpeded in one's action" where politeness is used to achieve personal goals, and this contradicts what politeness is designed to achieve in the Japanese society; namely 'society satisfaction'. So, politeness, in the Japanese culture is oriented not towards the individual but towards the society.

In a similar way, Nwoye objects to Brown and Levinson's notion of 'negative face' and 'non-imposition'. He argues that:

"Brown and Levinson's view of politeness, especially their notion of negative face and the need to avoid imposition, does not seem to apply to the egalitarian Igbo society in which concern for group interests rather than atomistic individualism is the expected norm of behavior." (1992 : 20).

Nwoye distinguishes two types of face (of course in relation to the Igbo society): 'individual face' vs. 'group face'.

The first means the individual's desire to maintain his own face, and the second refers to the individual's desire to be in agreement with the society by adopting the appropriate social behavior.

Moreover, both Chen (1993) and Mao (1994) center on the universality of Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness. Neither Chen nor Mao rejects Brown and Levinson's conception of *face*, but their clarifications suggest important considerations to keep in mind when using face work concepts. Chen (1993: 136) argues that:

"during communication interaction in certain Chinese cultures, face occurs not as the abstract mental construct described by Brown and Levinson but rather as a concrete social construct achieved and maintained by rhetors throughout the communicative events."

Mao (1994: 471-472) argues that the distinctive cultural realizations of face lead the speakers to value the relationship between the need to maintain both their self and social images. O'Driscoll's (1996) modifications of Brown and Levinson's concept of *face* never deny the universality of the two author's concept of *face*. It rather expands it to include a third dimension (in addition to the other two dimensions of *positive/negative face* proposed by Brown and Levinson; it is *the cultural-specific face*). The third type of face allows for the variation of politeness usage as a result of cultural differences or "cultural specifications" as Brown and Levinson called. O'Driscoll uses different terms for face wants from that of Brown and Levinson. He uses 'association' and

'dissociation' instead of positive/negative face wants.

A worth-mentioning critique of Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness is of Bayrakaroglu (1991) who does not agree with the author's claim that all acts are face-threatening. He makes a new framework of politeness for which Brown and Levinson's model is a basis. Bayrakaroglu introduces the *face boosting act (FBA)* which denotes an act that 'satisfies' the positive face wants of an interactant. He also presents the idea of *conversational sequences* in which, according to Bayrakaroglu, politeness occurs not at the level of separate sentences/utterances, but at the level of a whole situation.

Hymes (1986) also has the same point of view in criticizing Brown and Levinson's (1987) model :

"For considering only individual utterances, as data, and largely ignoring the role of connected discourse structure as constitutive of interactant awareness of what is going on, and of the kind of acts which might count as strategically relevant to the moment of actions." (See Agha, 1994:284)

Meier (1995b) criticizes Brown and Levinson's claim that all speech acts are face-threatening. He sees that there are two factors which make speech acts (im)polite (i.e. (non) threatening): the situation in which acts occur and the way in which they are performed. He also argues that politeness should be interpreted through utterance meaning, not sentence meaning. Meier (1995: 387) defines politeness in terms of appropriateness. According to him ,

politeness is "doing what is socially appropriate/ acceptable.". Accordingly, he believes that the universality of politeness is incarnated since it is dependent on every society's set of norms for it.

Like Meier, Sell (1992) also rejects the concept of Brown and Levinson that some acts are by their nature threatening. He assumes that politeness is not connected with specific acts , but rather with the way in which acts are performed or not performed. As a result to his assumption , the same speech act may be interpreted as either polite in one situation or impolite in another. Sell accepts the main concepts of the theory, but he rejects its conception that politeness is needed only when a FTA is performed. He believes that politeness exists all the time in people's interaction. He sees that:

"even in a period which had no explicit concepts of politeness, politeness's considerations would nevertheless be operative...I see all interactions, and all language, as operating within politeness parameters. Politeness, one may say, or a sensitivity to politeness considerations, is mankind's patient, sleepless super-ego."

Although various researches in recent years have demonstrated the general validity of Brown and Levinson's framework of politeness strategies as a method of discourse analysis , most have not accepted this framework without question or modification. For instance, Wilson (1991: 218) questions three basic assumptions of Brown and Levinson's model; first: speech actions threaten only one aspect of face, second: face threats can be understood by analyzing individual

actions in isolation, third: all face threats are intrinsic. This research demonstrates that in some situations, these assumptions cannot go with all kinds of interactions.

Other studies have criticized Brown and Levinson's model for its limitations in accounting for impoliteness/rudeness. Lakoff (1989) maintains that three kinds of politeness are in operation: polite behavior, non-polite behavior and rude behavior. Kasper (1990) identifies two kinds of rudeness : motivated and unmotivated rudeness. For him, unmotivated rudeness is a result of ignorance. Culpeper (1996) expands this idea of impoliteness to be used for investigating dramatic texts. Culpeper (2001) presents a well-developed framework of Brown and Levinson's model of politeness. In fact, Brown and Levinson do not ignore the idea of politeness completely in their model as they talk about the cases in which a speaker or a hearer may use the bald-on-record strategy where one of these cases the speaker and/or the hearer intentionally want to be rude because his/her relatively high power.

Another research that focuses on objecting on Brown and Levinson's claim that off-record strategies are generally more polite than on-record ones (1987:20) is of Leech (1983). Leech claims that the more indirect an utterance, the more polite it is. Blum-Kulka (1987) presents a counter view to that of Brown and Levinson and Leech as well. When she studies requests in both English and Hebrew, she finds that the Hebrew speakers regard hints, which are indirect forms of language, as less polite; whereas the English speakers consider them more polite. She comes to this result through her study to the difference of the two

cultures. Besides, Blum-Kulka distinguishes between conversational and non-conversational indirection and points out that politeness is much related to the former type. [see also El-Shafey, 1990].

Another concern of Brown and Levinson's (1987) model focuses on the *three 'social logical variables'* that, according to the two authors, identify the seriousness/weightiness (W_x) of a certain act and thus the type of politeness used in a certain situation. In this respect, Agha (1994:286) clarifies that levels of politeness are entirely dependent on variables such as power and distance. For instance, Brown and Levinson suppose that the high power speakers would exhibit less amount of politeness towards their less-power interlocutors, in other words, the low power speakers would be more polite towards their superiors. While many studies (e.g., Brown and Gilman, 1989; Holtgraves and Yang, 1990& 1992; Morand, 1996& 2000; and Stubbe et al., 2003; etc.) support this conception, others (e.g., Reynolds, 1985; Pearson, 1988; and Chery, 1988) counteract it.

Other criticisms to Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness include Fraser (2005). Fraser directs his criticism against the two authors' formula used to determine the value of the weightiness of a certain act. The formula, [W_x= D (S, H) + P (H, S) + R_x], which according to Brown and Levinson helps to choose the suitable politeness strategy in a specific context. Fraser (2005: 78) objects on this formula suggested by Brown and Levinson in the following few lines:

"They never give a precise definition of a variable or even how you would go about determining its valuethus we are left with no

idea of how to assign number to P although we are told that it is relative to contextual factors"

In addition to his rejection to the formula, Fraser supposes that even if the number of Wx were determined, Brown and Levinson do not clarify " how it should be applied to the hierarchy of politeness strategies and what the relationship of the main class of strategies to each other." (2005: 79).

Other studies reject Brown and Levinson's assumption to give all the three variables , power (P), distance (D), and rank of imposition (R) the same level of importance in determining the value of a specific act. Holtgraves (1992:146), for example, clarifies that " if a request is extremely large (high imposition), a speaker will be polite regardless of the closeness of the relationship ; that is , relationship distance will have little effect.". Nevala (2004: 2125), who studies the socio-pragmatic aspects of forms of address and terms of reference in late 16th –century English correspondence, notices that in direct address, when the social status of either the addressee or the referent is very high, it seems to override the addressee influence of social distance.

While all the above-mentioned researchers point out a variety of limitations, objections, criticisms and even modifications of Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness, the model continues to be the most influential and applicable among other models. Harris (2004: 193) believes that:

The fact that Brown and Levinson provoked so much criticism from researchers interested in politeness in diverse cultures and languages on a wide range of important

issues...is a testament to their strength and to the fact that their model is explicit and detailed enough to be testable , capable of application to a wide range and different types of empirical data...the great strength of Brown and Levinson's work, and an important part of the reason for their dominating influence on politeness research for such a considerable period, is that they provide a theoretical model which is.... coherent and detailed, supported some levels of cross-cultural empirical evidence."

Similarly, Simpson (1997:155) praises B-L model in that it is:

"an elegant model in that it sits out a relatively simple rationale for explaining complex linguistic behavior. It is powerful in that it develops a system of universal principles which underline many different languages and it is convincing in that it is based strong empirical support derived from substantial cross-cultural comparisons between languages."

It is for all the above-detailed reasons the researcher selects this specific model with its three variables of power, status, and social distance that are crucial to Synge's plays under consideration *The Playboy of the Western World* and *Riders to the Sea*.

7- Some studies on the application of politeness to literary texts:

Previous research on pragmatics, politeness, and speech acts, that have been applied to drama are few, compared to other forms of literature. Helmy (1991) did

an application of pragmatics on Shakespeare's plays analyzing the character of the 'fool' in *King Lear*. Nash (1989) is another example who made use of pragmatics and discourse analysis in examining a section of *Hamlet*. In addition to his tragedies, Shakespeare's comedies were used by Elam (1986). The *Merchant of Venice* was analyzed by Dodd (1979) and Porter (1979) traced speech acts in four of Shakespeare's plays.

Other researchers showed an early interest in the concept of applying pragmatics to drama, i.e. Tanaka (1972), Dodd (1979) and Lakoff and Tennen(1979). Also Hess-Lattish (1982) examined Sheirden's *The School of Scandal* describing the element of 'Irony'. Hafez (1993) analyzed El Hakim's works using the turn-taking tools. Burton (1980) took sections from Pinter's works as material for his book "Dialogue and discourse: a sociolinguistic approach to modern drama dialogue and naturally occurring conversation". Simpson (1989) analyzed the 'Politeness Phenomena' in Ionesco's *The Lesson*.

Other attempts were made by Cooper (1981) on "Implicature, convention, and the *Taming of the Shrew*". The same work, the *Taming of the Shrew*, received another examination of characterization by Culpeper (2000) who dealt with the text from a social cognitive approach.

Ermida's (2005) pragmatic study of Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is one of the modern researches that applied pragmatics to a literary text. The author used Brown and Levinson's (1987) pragmatic model of politeness and analyzed the different kinds of face-threatening acts between the characters with different power levels and social

statuses. This study concluded that the characters' speech is determined by relative power of each character. Ermida believes that in this work of art, Orwell's novel, politeness is "not necessarily a sign of deference but a means to establish distance and maintain authority and power."(2005: 860).

Gao and Shen (2006) used Chinese language drawing upon pragmatic framework to do a stylistic analysis of dramatic text. They adopted two models; Brown and Levinson's (1987) model on one hand, and Culpeper's (2001) theory of characterization on the other hand in order to investigate Hampton's play *The Philanthropist*.

To sum up, the present dissertation sheds the light on the importance of combining both approaches of pragmatics and drama together since they are mutually important and helpful in understanding a work of art, Levinson (1983: 33-4) states:

"Meanings of words (sentences or sounds) cannot be-explicated simply by statements of context and independent context, rather one has to refer to pragmatic concepts like relevance, implicature, or discourse structure. So either Grammar.....must make reference to pragmatic information, or they can not include full lexical (syntactic, semantic, and phonological) descriptions of a language."

Conclusion :

To conclude, one might assume that the pragmatic models of linguistic politeness offered in this paper are, sometimes, received by acceptance and admiration by many linguists, and other

times they are received by much criticism which in its turn supports the idea that there is never one tool to be appreciated by all the analyze a literary work.

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