

Camel-Related Proverbs as Pragmatic Resources in Jordanian Arabic: A Speech-Act-Based Elicitation Study

Oday Alshorafat, The University of Jordan
Sharif Alghazo, University of Sharjah & The University of Jordan
Ghaleb Rabab'ah, University of Sharjah & The University of Jordan

This study investigates the use of camel-related proverbs as speech acts in Jordanian Spoken Arabic (JSA), drawing on Searle's (1969, 1976) Speech Act Theory. The data were collected from 150 native speakers of JSA aged 30-60. The participants were divided into three groups: 20 individuals provided data during the preliminary questionnaire phase, which guided and informed the data collection process; 80 participants completed an extended questionnaire; and 50 individuals participated in an acceptability agreement/judgment task. The analysis revealed that camel-related proverbs in JSA perform 10 distinct illocutionary forces: criticizing, expressing anger, praising, offering condolence, blaming, offering sympathy, threatening, advising, rejecting, and asserting. These illocutionary forces were categorized into four illocutionary acts: expressives, commissives, directives, and representatives. The findings highlight the versatility and contextual sensitivity of camel-related proverbs in JSA, underscoring their role as dynamic communicative tools rather than mere static folklore. Given the study's focus on JSA, future research could explore the illocutionary acts and forces of camel-related proverbs in other Arabic dialects, offering insights into both shared and dialect-specific pragmatic patterns across the Arab world.

Keywords: pragmatics, speech act theory, camel-related proverbs, Jordanian Spoken Arabic

1 Introduction

Proverbs have long been recognized as a significant object of pragmatic and discourse-based inquiry, particularly because they convey evaluations, advice, criticism, and social norms through indirect, culturally grounded language. Rather than functioning as static folkloric expressions, proverbs are widely understood as context-sensitive communicative resources whose meaning and force emerge from use in interaction (Mieder, 2004; Dundes, 1981). In everyday discourse, speakers employ proverbs strategically to perform actions, negotiate relationships, and manage face, often more effectively than through direct forms of expression.

A growing body of research has used the framework of the Speech Act Theory to show how language frequently performs indirect illocutionary acts such as advising, warning, blaming, or asserting (Lawal, Ajayi, & Raji, 1997; Benyakoub et al., 2022; Yankah, 1989; Ali & Makhlef, 2011). Within Arabic linguistics, several studies have highlighted the pragmatic richness of proverbs and their sensitivity to social context and speaker intention (Lutfi, 2007; Ali & Makhlef, 2011). More specifically, research on Jordanian and Bedouin Arabic has shown that animal-related proverbs occupy a central place in everyday interaction, functioning as tools for moral evaluation, social regulation, and interpersonal stance-taking (Alshorafat, 2019; Farghal, 2021; Rayyan et al., 2024). Recent work on animal metaphors in Jordanian proverbs further confirms that culturally salient animals serve as powerful carriers of pragmatic meaning (Alshorafat, 2023).

Despite this growing interest, camel-related proverbs—despite their cultural prominence in Jordanian society—have not yet been systematically examined from a speech-act perspective using empirically validated data. The present study addresses this gap by investigating how camel-related proverbs in Jordanian Spoken Arabic function as speech acts in naturally occurring contexts. Drawing on Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969, 1976), the study identifies the illocutionary acts and forces performed by these proverbs as interpreted and evaluated by native speakers.

For clarity and transparency, all Arabic proverbs discussed in this study are presented in Latin (IPA-based) transcription alongside English translations, ensuring that the original linguistic forms are accessible to both Arabic-speaking and non-Arabic-speaking readers. It is important to clarify the analytical scope of the present study. Rather than examining naturally occurring spoken interaction, this research investigates speakers' metapragmatic knowledge of proverb use, elicited through contextualized scenarios and native-speaker judgments. The analysis, therefore, focuses on shared pragmatic interpretations of camel-related proverbs and the speech-act functions speakers attribute to them in culturally recognizable situations. While this approach does not constitute an analysis of recorded speech in the conversation-analytic sense, it provides insight into culturally entrenched norms governing proverb use and pragmatic inference in Jordanian Arabic.

The paper is structured as follows. The next section outlines the theoretical framework of Speech Act Theory as adopted for the analysis. This is followed by a review of relevant literature on proverb pragmatics. The methodology section details the data collection procedures and participant profiles. The results section presents the identified illocutionary acts and forces, followed by a discussion of their pragmatic and cultural implications. The paper concludes with a summary of findings and suggestions for future research.

2 Speech Act Theory and Context

This study adopts Speech Act Theory as its analytical framework, building on the foundational work of Austin (1962) and its subsequent refinement by Searle (1969, 1976). Over the past six decades, Speech Act Theory has developed from a philosophical account of performative utterances into a widely used linguistic framework for analyzing how speakers perform actions through language across cultures and discourse types. Contemporary pragmatic research has demonstrated its particular usefulness in examining indirectness, speaker intention, and context-dependent meaning, especially in culturally embedded forms of expression such as proverbs (Searle, 1976; Levinson, 1983). In this study, the theory is applied descriptively to identify the illocutionary acts and forces realized through camel-related proverbs in Jordanian Spoken Arabic, as interpreted and validated by native speakers.

Context is treated as an integral component of speech act interpretation rather than as a separate analytical construct. The illocutionary force of a proverb is determined by situational factors such as speaker–hearer relations, social roles, and communicative goals. Accordingly, camel-related proverbs are analyzed within clearly defined interactional scenarios, allowing their pragmatic functions to be inferred from use rather than from decontextualized form. This integrated approach ensures that Speech Act Theory is directly linked to the study's objective of capturing how proverbs function as communicative actions in real-life Jordanian discourse.

3 Literature Review

Previous research has consistently demonstrated that proverbs function as pragmatically rich units of discourse rather than as fixed or purely aesthetic expressions. Early pragmatic studies applying Speech Act Theory to proverbs revealed that they frequently perform indirect illocutionary acts, such as asserting, advising, warning, and blaming, depending on context and the speaker's intention (Lawal, Ajayi, & Raji, 1997; Yankah, 1989). These studies collectively emphasize that proverb meaning cannot be reduced to literal content but must be understood in relation to communicative purpose and situational use.

Subsequent work extended this pragmatic perspective to different languages and cultural settings. Comparative and language-specific studies have shown that proverbs across languages commonly express representative, directive, and commissive illocutionary forces, although the distribution of illocutionary forces varies according to cultural norms (Ali & Makhlef, 2011; Yan, 2006; Lutfi, 2007). A recurring finding across these studies is that proverbs often function indirectly, allowing speakers to perform face-threatening or evaluative acts in socially acceptable ways. This confirms the suitability of Speech Act Theory as a framework for analyzing the use of proverbs across linguistic contexts.

Within Arabic and African contexts, several studies have highlighted the multifunctionality of proverbs and their role in social regulation and moral instruction. Research on Yoruba proverbs, for instance, shows that a single proverb may perform multiple speech acts simultaneously, with assertive and directive functions being particularly prominent (Dairo, 2010; Jombadi & Juliana, 2014). Similarly, studies focusing on Arabic proverbs—especially within Jordanian and Bedouin communities—demonstrate that animal-related proverbs serve as powerful pragmatic tools for expressing criticism, advice, threat, and social judgment (Alshorafat, 2019; Alshorafat & Al Hassi, 2025). These studies intersect with the present research in their emphasis on context, indirectness, and culturally salient animal imagery, but they stop short of offering a focused, empirically validated analysis of camel-related proverbs in Jordanian Spoken Arabic.

4 Data Collection and Participants

4.1 *Participants and Demographic Profile*

A total of 150 native speakers of Jordanian Spoken Arabic participated in the study. Participants were recruited from the North-Eastern Badia region of Jordan, including the cities and surrounding areas of Mafraq, Ruwashed, and Zarqa, where camel-related proverbs remain actively used in everyday discourse. The age range of participants was 30–60 years ($M = 43$), a demographic group identified through preliminary observation as the most frequent users of traditional proverbs. The sample included 82 male and 68 female participants. Regarding educational background, 41 participants had completed secondary education, 76 had undergraduate degrees, and 33 had postgraduate qualifications. The relatively large sample size was chosen to allow for triangulation across elicitation tasks and to ensure reliable validation of proposed pragmatic functions through acceptability judgments.

4.2 *Data Elicitation Procedures*

Data were collected using a multi-stage elicitation approach designed to balance contextual control with native-speaker intuition. In the first stage, a mini questionnaire (n = 20) was used to identify commonly used camel-related proverbs and the types of situations in which they occur. Participants were asked to recall proverbs from casual conversations and to describe the contexts in which they are typically used.

In the second stage, an extended questionnaire (n = 80) presented participants with short situational prompts reflecting everyday social interactions (e.g., workplace exchanges, family discussions, conflict situations). These prompts were intentionally brief but contextually grounded, encouraging participants to supply proverbs they would naturally use in such situations and to indicate the intended pragmatic function. While the data are elicited rather than naturally occurring, this method has been widely used in pragmatic research to access speakers' metapragmatic awareness and culturally shared interpretations.

4.3 *Validation and Contextual Interpretation*

In the final stage, an acceptability judgment task (n = 50) was conducted to validate the proposed illocutionary forces. Participants evaluated each scenario–proverb pairing using a five-point Likert scale and were invited to suggest alternative functions when they disagreed. This step enhanced the reliability of the analysis by grounding interpretations in collective native-speaker judgments rather than researcher intuition alone.

4.4 *Analytical Scope and Nature of the Data*

The data analyzed in this study consist of elicited metapragmatic judgments rather than naturally occurring speech. Participants were asked to evaluate the use of proverbs in constructed, but culturally plausible, scenarios and to identify the intended communicative function. Such judgments represent shared cultural knowledge (doxa) regarding appropriate proverb usage rather than direct evidence of real-time interactional behavior. Accordingly, the findings are interpreted as reflecting conventionalized pragmatic expectations within the speech community, not as claims about actual conversational sequencing. This methodological choice allows the study to capture culturally stable interpretations of proverb meaning, while acknowledging that future research based on naturally occurring discourse would offer complementary interactional insights.

5 Results

The term Jordanian Spoken Arabic is used in this study to refer to spoken varieties used by Jordanian speakers, particularly in Bedouin-influenced regions, rather than to a distinct written code. While several expressions examined here are attested across Levantine Arabic, the analysis focuses on their pragmatic interpretation among Jordanian speakers.

Before presenting the pragmatic analysis, two clarifications are necessary. First, the term Jordanian Spoken Arabic is used in this study to refer to naturally occurring spoken varieties used by Jordanian speakers, particularly in Bedouin-influenced regions, rather than to

a standardized written variety. Second, the expressions analyzed here are treated as proverbial sayings—that is, culturally conventionalized utterances with figurative meaning and pragmatic force—regardless of whether they meet narrow folkloristic definitions of proverbs. While several of these expressions are attested across Levantine Arabic, their pragmatic interpretation and usage patterns were examined specifically as employed by Jordanian speakers in the present dataset.

Table 1 presents the illocutionary acts and illocutionary forces of camel-related proverbs in Jordanian Spoken Arabic, as agreed upon by more than 50% of the subjects. The table also highlights the number and percentage of participants who accepted each interpretation. This data provides insight into how native speakers pragmatically interpret these culturally rooted proverbs, reflecting shared norms and communicative strategies. The consistency in responses above the 50 percent threshold indicates a relatively high level of agreement on the intended illocutionary force of the proverbs, such as advising, warning, criticizing, or consoling, within specific social contexts.

Table 1: The speech acts (illocutionary acts) and illocutionary forces (pragmatic functions) of the camel-related proverbs and their acceptability judgments

Speech Act	No.	Illocutionary forces	No	Acceptability judgments (%)
Expressives	1	Criticising	46	84%
Expressives	2	Expressing anger	44	70%
Expressives	3	Praising	44	64%
Expressives	4	Offering condolence	43	64%
Expressives	5	Blaming	41	60%
Expressives	6	Offering sympathy	40	60%
Commissives	7	Threatening	46	70%
Directives	8	Advising	45	74%
Directives	9	Rejecting	40	56%
Representatives	10	Asserting	27	50%

Below is a descending presentation of each illocutionary force within its specific context, followed by an illustrative example. Each example is provided in two formats: an IPA transcription and an English translation.

(1) *Criticizing*

(Context) Ahmed constantly criticizes people. The following conversation happened between Ahmed and Mona:

Ahmed: "People make many mistakes."

Mona:

al-zæmæl ma: jifu:f ʕawʒ raqabatih

‘The camel can’t see the crookedness of its own hump.’

The proverb literally means the camel does not see the crookedness of its own hump. It is metaphorically used to describe a person who is blind to their own faults or mistakes but quick to notice and criticize others'. This proverb is occasionally used to point out hypocrisy or unfairness, highlighting others' shortcomings while ignoring one's own. Thus, this proverb can convey a range of pragmatic meanings depending on its context.

From the perspective of the Speech Act Theory, when Mona uses this proverb in response to Ahmed, the illocutionary force is one of criticism. Mona's goal is to express disapproval of Ahmed's behavior, especially his lack of self-awareness. The illocutionary act here is expressive, as the speaker, Mona, conveys her negative attitude toward Ahmed's fault indirectly through the proverb.

(2) *Expressing anger*

(Context) A young man tries to teach an elderly man how to deal with different life problems. The elderly man replies angrily:

la: tād' dil al-baṣi:r ṣala al-raṣi ṣuyūnuḥo: aṣwæṣ min ṣuyūnək
'Don't guide the camel on grazing; its eyes are bigger than yours.'

The proverb above means that you should not try to advise or direct someone more experienced, as they already know better. It warns against giving unsolicited advice to those who are wiser or more capable.

From the perspective of the Speech Act Theory, when the elderly man says this proverb angrily, the illocutionary force performed is one of expressing anger. The illocutionary act is primarily expressive, as it conveys the speaker's emotional reaction—specifically irritation and disapproval—toward being instructed by someone younger or less experienced.

(3) *Praising*

(Context) In a workplace, the manager notices that one of the team members, who is usually very quiet and reserved, consistently delivers excellent work. One day, the manager says to him:

al-xalæ: saba:q
'The tamed desert camel is swift.'

This proverb highlights that someone who appears calm, humble, or submissive outwardly may, in reality, be quick, capable, and proactive. The 'tamed desert camel' symbolizes a creature that seems docile and controlled but is actually able to race ahead when needed. It warns against underestimating individuals based on their quiet or modest demeanor. The proverb warns against judging someone's abilities solely by their outward calmness or humility, as they may have surprising strength or initiative beneath the surface.

The expression *ḍalu:l al-xalæ: saba:q* was reported by participants from Bedouin backgrounds as a conventional saying used to praise quiet competence. Although this expression may not be uniformly attested across all Jordanian dialects, its inclusion reflects regional Bedouin usage within Jordan. Importantly, the analysis focuses not on dialect

exclusivity but on the pragmatic function of the expression as Jordanian speakers use it in context.

The manager's use of the proverb carries the illocutionary force of praise, expressing recognition of the employee's quiet yet effective work style. Primarily, this serves as an expressive speech act, conveying the manager's positive attitude toward the employee's performance.

(4) *Offering condolences*

(Context) Ahmad's house burned down in a fire. The following conversation took place between Ahmed and Khaled.

Ahmad: "I can't believe even my Persian carpet was ruined in the fire."

Khaled: *ʔiða ɖa:ʕal zæmæl la: hæʕæfatan ʕala: ar-ræsn*

'If the camel is lost, there's no point in grieving over the rope.'

Literally, the above proverb means if you lose something major or essential (e.g., a camel), there's no need to regret the minor things (e.g., a rope). It is often used to downplay the importance of small losses when something greater has already been lost. When it is said, this proverb can perform an array of pragmatic meanings depending on the context in which it is said.

Based on the above context, the speaker uses the proverb to console the hearer, who is expressing sorrow over a minor loss following a major disaster. Thus, the proverb's illocutionary force is consolation. It serves to deliver an empathetic message, encouraging the hearer to shift focus from smaller losses to the greater one and come to terms with it. The speech act performed here is an expressive speech act, as the speaker is expressing his own feelings toward the hearer.

(5) *Blaming*

(Context) A business owner makes a risky decision that not only causes financial loss for himself but also negatively affects his employees' livelihoods. Someone blames him by saying:

ʔæ ðæ:biħ al-næ:qæ wæ mælħaqhæ walu:ðæh

'O you who slaughter the she-camel and also harm her calf!'

This proverb is used metaphorically to describe someone who not only causes harm but also goes further to destroy what is connected to it — showing cruelty, betrayal, or injustice in an extreme form. Depending on the context, this proverb can convey a variety of pragmatic functions when said.

The illocutionary force behind the utterance is blaming, where the speaker explicitly holds the hearer responsible for causing harm and expresses disapproval and condemnation. The illocutionary act is primarily an expressive speech act, as the speaker conveys negative emotions such as frustration, disappointment, or anger toward the hearer's actions.

(6) *Expressing sympathy*

(Context) A man of high social status loses his reputation due to a scandal. People who used to praise him now attack him. Ali said to him:

ʔiða waqafa al-zæmæl kathræt sa 'kæ:ki:nih
'If the camel falls, the knives multiply.'

The proverb means that when a powerful, respected, or successful person experiences a downfall or loses their status, many people who were once supportive or silent suddenly begin to criticize, attack, or take advantage of them. It is used to describe situations in which someone who was once influential or admired becomes vulnerable and, as a result, others turn against them.

Based on the above context, Ali uses the proverb to express sympathy toward the hearer, who is suffering betrayal and criticism after losing his reputation. Thus, the proverb's illocutionary force is expressive, conveying empathy and understanding of the hearer's difficult situation. The speech act performed here is an expressive speech act, as Ali indirectly shows compassion and acknowledges the emotional pain caused by the change in how others treat the hearer.

(7) *Threatening*

(Context) Salem accidentally wronged Mahmoud and caused him many problems, so Mahmoud said to him:

al-zæmæl ma: jinsa: ʔawātih
'The camel does not forget those who hurt it.'

This proverb literally means that the camel does not forget those who have wronged it and may seek revenge later. People use this proverb to describe someone who never forgets those who mistreat, hurt, or do wrong to them. When said, this proverb can perform many different pragmatic meanings based on the context in which it is uttered.

In this situation, the illocutionary force of this proverb is threatening, as Mahmoud's words imply a warning of future retaliation. The illocutionary act is a commissive, as the speaker indirectly commits to a possible future response by indicating he will not forget the harm done.

(8) *Advising*

(Context) In a workplace meeting, a young, new employee (Ali) begins aggressively criticizing the decisions of senior managers. His colleague (Hassan) pulls him aside and says:

la: taʂa:dem al-zæmæl wiʔantæ ʔa:fi:
'Don't clash with the big camels when you are just a calf.'

This proverb is used to advise someone with little experience, power, or status not to confront or challenge those who are much stronger, more experienced, or in positions of authority. The *zamel* (الزمل) refers to strong, adult camels, while the *hashi* (الحاشي) is the young, weak camel.

Based on the context provided above, the speaker, Hassan, used this proverb to advise the hearer, Ali, about the potential consequences of his confrontational behavior toward authority figures. The illocutionary act here is a directive speech act, as the proverb functions to influence the hearer's future actions.

(9) *Rejecting*

(Context) Sami is seeking a promotion and asks Maher for help, acknowledging that it requires a lot of work. In response, Maher says:

ʔiða taħibb al-laħm ʔaθbaħ zæmælak
'If you love meat, then slaughter your camel.'

The above proverb conveys the idea that in order to obtain something you desire or value, you must be willing to make sacrifices or put in the necessary effort. It suggests that wanting something desirable (symbolized by "meat") comes with a price (symbolized by the "slaughter of the camel"). It emphasizes the relationship between desire and the cost associated with achieving one's goals.

The pragmatic force of this expression is highly context-dependent. In the scenario presented above, it functions as an indirect rejection. However, in a different context—such as advising a family member about starting a business—the same expression may perform an advisory rather than rejecting function, emphasizing personal responsibility rather than refusal. This illustrates that the illocutionary force of camel-related sayings does not reside in the expression itself, but emerges from contextual cues such as speaker intention, relational dynamics, and situational goals.

Importantly, the same proverb may realize different illocutionary forces in different contexts. For example, the expression "If you love meat, then slaughter your camel" may function as advice in one interaction, but as rejection in another. This demonstrates that pragmatic force emerges from contextual configuration rather than lexical meaning alone.

From the perspective of the Speech Act Theory, the illocutionary force is one of rejecting, as Maher subtly declines to assist. The illocutionary act is primarily directive, since Maher implies that Sami must take action himself if he truly wants the promotion.

(10) *Asserting*

(Context) Maryam had a very strong personality, and many people feared her. One day, Rakan harmed her, so people warned him about the consequences. He said to them:

al-næ:qæ næ:qæ wælc: ħadarat
'A she-camel remains a she-camel even if it grunts.'

The proverb "The she-camel is a she-camel even if it grunts" means a person's true nature or role does not change just because they act differently or put on a show. For example, even if a

woman has a strong personality, she remains limited by her nature, and she cannot possess the qualities of men or become a man. Similarly, even if a she-camel resembles a camel, it is still a she-camel. Generally, it means that no matter how much someone tries to imitate or act differently, their true nature or identity remains unchanged.

From the perspective of the Speech Act Theory, based on the above context, the illocutionary force is asserting—the speaker makes a definitive statement about Maryam’s nature. The illocutionary act is representative as the speaker expresses a belief or judgment about the world, specifically about gender and identity.

6 Discussion

The findings of this study confirm the pragmatic richness and functional diversity of camel-related proverbs in Jordanian Arabic. Far from being mere cultural artifacts or decorative language, these proverbs perform active communicative roles and fulfil a wide array of speech acts. The ten identified functions—ranging from expressive acts like praising and criticizing to commissive acts like threatening—underscore the nuanced ways speakers use proverbs to manage interpersonal relationships and express attitudes in context-sensitive ways. Notably, expressive speech acts were the most dominant category, suggesting that these proverbs often convey emotions, judgments, or social evaluations rather than simply relay factual information. This aligns with the cultural role of proverbs in Bedouin and rural Jordanian communities, where indirectness, politeness, and metaphor are preferred strategies in maintaining social harmony.

The variation in the frequency and acceptability of different functions, as shown in the judgment task, also indicates that some proverbs and their uses are more socially conventionalized than others. For instance, proverbs used to offer consolation or express sympathy were rated more favorably, likely reflecting cultural values such as solidarity and empathy. Furthermore, the use of proverbs for directive or commissive acts, such as warnings or threats, reflects the speaker’s intent to influence future behavior, underscoring the persuasive power of these expressions. The study also highlighted the importance of context, tone, and social roles in shaping the illocutionary force of a proverb, echoing Hymes’ (1974) emphasis on the social embeddedness of language.

The findings can be further interpreted through politeness theory, particularly Brown and Levinson’s (1987) concept of face-threatening acts. Many camel-related sayings perform evaluative or directive functions—such as criticizing, rejecting, or warning—that would constitute direct threats to the hearer’s face if expressed explicitly. By embedding these acts within culturally familiar metaphorical expressions, speakers mitigate potential face damage while maintaining social norms of respect and indirectness. This strategy aligns with Bedouin and broader Jordanian communicative practices, where social harmony, hierarchy, and reputation are highly valued. In this sense, camel-related sayings function not merely as rhetorical devices but as culturally sanctioned mechanisms for negotiating interpersonal tension and authority.

Moreover, the results highlight the dynamic nature of proverbs as tools for socialization and moral instruction. The high acceptability ratings for advising and consoling functions indicate that these proverbs continue to play a pedagogical role in transmitting values such as patience, endurance, and respect for social hierarchy. This aligns with Yankah’s (1989) view of proverbs as instruments of cultural continuity that guide behavior and reinforce community

norms. In modern contexts, where oral traditions face challenges from digital communication and globalization, the persistence of camel-related proverbs in everyday speech underscores their resilience and adaptability. These findings open avenues for further research into how proverbs evolve in digital discourse, for instance, in memes or social media posts, and whether their illocutionary force is maintained, softened, or intensified in online interactions.

7 Conclusions and Recommendations

This paper examined camel-related proverbs in Jordanian Arabic based on the Speech Act Theory. The analysis revealed that proverbs about camels are pragmatically multifunctional in JSA, performing 10 distinct illocutionary forces (pragmatic functions). They are as follows: criticizing, expressing anger, praising, offering condolences, blaming, offering sympathy, threatening, advising, rejecting, and asserting. These illocutionary forces were categorized into four illocutionary acts: expressives, commissives, directives, and representatives. It also revealed that their use is deeply influenced by contextual factors, including speaker-hearer relationships, tone, and social expectations. The findings underscore the value of applying the Speech Act Theory to proverbs, revealing their performative nature and communicative impact in real-life situations. Importantly, the study demonstrates that traditional expressions continue to serve vital roles in contemporary Jordanian discourse, especially in rural and Bedouin settings where oral traditions remain influential.

Substantial effort was dedicated to identifying, categorizing, and validating the illocutionary forces conveyed by camel-related proverbs in their respective contexts. However, I recognize that the proposed classifications may not be universally accepted, whether by native speakers of Jordanian Arabic or by academic scholars. Naturally, a certain degree of subjectivity has shaped the analysis, interpretation, and labeling of these functions. Complete consensus is unlikely, as alternative labels or interpretations may appear equally valid upon further examination. Such variability is an inherent and expected aspect of linguistic inquiry, and it calls for a degree of openness and interpretive tolerance from both readers and evaluators. Future studies should compare camel-related proverbs in Jordanian Arabic with similar animal metaphors in other Arabic dialects or cultures to reveal whether their pragmatic functions are universal or culture-specific.

References

- Abdul Jabbar, Lubna. 2008. A Linguistic Analysis of the Speech Act of Advice in American English Proverbs. *Journal of College of Education for Women* 19(1). 116-128.
- Ali, Ayed & Salam Makhlef. 2011. A Speech Act Analysis of Some English and Arabic Proverbs. *Tikrit University Journal for Humanities* 18(4). 44-66.
- Al-Jallad, A. 2009. *Arabic Dialects and Proverbs*. Beirut: Middle Eastern Publishing.
- Alshorafat, Oday. 2023. An Analysis of Animal Metaphors in Jordanian Proverbs in Light of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory. The University of Jordan, Jordan. (Doctoral dissertation.)

- Alshorafat, Oday. 2019. A Speech Act Analysis of Bedouin Proverbs in Jordan. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation* 2(6). 235-241.
- Alshorafat, Oday and Al Hassi, M. 2025. On the Speech Acts of Dog-related Proverbs in Jordanian Arabic. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 16(5). 1647-1653.
- Austin, John. 1962. *How to Do Things with Words*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Benyakoub, Nour, Sharif Alghazo, Abdelrahaman Altakhaineh & Ghaleb Rabab'ah. 2022. A cross-cultural analysis of disagreement strategies in Algerian and Jordanian Arabic. *Kervan: International Journal of African and Asiatic Studies* 26(1). 253-275.
- Brown, Gillian & George Yule. 1983. *Discourse Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, Penelope & Levinson, Stephen. 1987. *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dairo, Lekan. 2010. A Speech-act Analysis of Selected Yoruba Proverbs. *Journal of Cultural Studies* 8(3). 431–442.
- Dundes, Alan. 1981. *The Study of Folklore*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Fraser, Bruce. 1990. An approach to discourse markers. *Journal of Pragmatics* 14. 383–395.
- Farghal, Mohammed. 2021. Animal Proverbs in Jordanian Popular Culture: A Thematic and Translational Analysis. *Journal of English Literature and Language* 2(1). 1–8.
- Hagg, R. 1993. *Bedouin Culture and Language in the Desert*. Cairo: The American University Press.
- Jombadi, Abiodun and Juliana Jombadi. 2014. A Pragmatic Study of Yoruba Proverbs in English. *International Journal of Novel Research in Education and Learning* 1(2). 10–19.
- Lawal, Adebayo, Bada Ajai & Wumi Raji. 1997. A Pragmatic Study of Selected Pairs of Yoruba Proverbs. *Journal of Pragmatics* 27. 635–52.
- Lieber, Rochelle. 2009. *Introducing Morphology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Levinson, Stephen. 1983. *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lutfi, Abbas. 2007. Weather Proverbs and Speech Acts. *Journal of College of Education* 2(19). 296–304.
- Mieder, Wolfgang. 2004. *Proverbs: A Handbook*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Newmark, Peter. 1988. *A Textbook of Translation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rayyan, Mohammad, Nimer Abusalim, Siham Zidouni, & Sharif Alghazo. 2024. The connotative meanings of animal names in the Algerian society. *Jordan Journal of Modern Languages and Literature* 16(1). 95-116.

- Searle, John. 1969. *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Searle, John. 1975. A taxonomy of illocutionary acts. In Keith Gunderson (ed.), *Language, Mind and Knowledge*, 344-369. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Searle, John. 1976. A classification of illocutionary acts. *Language in Society* 5(1). 1-23.
- Searle, John. 1979. *Expression and Meaning Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Yan, X. 2006. *A Study on Speech Acts in the Use of English Proverbs*. MA diss., Anhui University, China.
- Yankah, Kwesi. 1989. *The Proverb in the Context of Akan Rhetoric: A Theory of Proverb Praxis*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Yule, George. 1996. *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Yule, George. 2010. *The Study of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Oday Alshorafat
The Language Center, The University of Jordan
e-mail: alshorafat123@gmail.com

Sharif Alghazo
University of Sharjah, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Foreign Languages
The University of Jordan, School of Foreign Languages, Department of English Language and Literature
e-mail: salghazo@sharjah.ac.ae

Ghaleb Rabab'ah
University of Sharjah, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Foreign Languages
The University of Jordan, School of Foreign Languages, Department of English Language and Literature
e-mail: grababah@sharjah.ac.ae

In SKASE Journal of Theoretical Linguistics [online]. 2026, vol. 23, no. 1 [cit. 2026-06-30]. Available on web page <http://www.skase.sk/Volumes/JTL61/09.pdf>. ISSN 1336-782X