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**The Influence of Age in the Indirectness of Women's Speech:**

**Women in Aoulef as a Case Study**

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts in Linguistics and Didactics

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to investigate how the women of Aoulef use indirectness and the reason behind it. Data were collected by using recordings, observations and note taking during conversations. The sample has been selected based on women's age (18-25, 26-35, 36-50, and 51-70) and the similarities which they share in topics and speech style. This study revealed that politeness, humour, self-protection and face-saving are the major motives to use indirectness. Old women claimed that the use of indirectness in speech shows the wisdom and the intelligence of the individuals and their societies. Thus, the results indicate that indirectness is increased with the increase of age.

**Key words:** indirectness, speech-style, age, women.

## Dedication

I would first like to thank God who provided me with the capacity to complete this work.

I would also thank my supervisor Mr. Mohammed Omari, who consistently contributed to the fulfillment of this paper, steering me in the right direction whenever he thought I needed it.

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## List of Acronyms

**SAT:** Speech Act Theory

**PBUH:** Peace Be Upon Him

**SDT:** Social Dominance Theory

### Transliteration

Arabic letter	Romanized Letter	Sample Examples
ا ب ت ج د هـ ز ح ط ث ذ ر ز س ش ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ك گ ل م ن هـ و ی	a b t j 7 kh d r z S ch ss dh tt 3 gh f 9 k g l m n h w y	ana bghyt tmar jrayda 7widga Khatik denya rja3t zhya Sidna Ch7al ssayma dharna nttayab 3yayna ghayba Fat Wa9ila Kamalna galy ma3lich mnin Nraja3 haka wyn yraj3w

## **General Introduction**

Language is a powerful means of communication in any speech community, and it is used to communicate, establish, and maintain meaning and social relations.

Communication is an essential element for humans; it is the process of sharing meaning, expressing feelings and thoughts among people. The latter differ in the use of language; the difference is evident between men and women. Everyone has their style of speech in communications.

The difference in gender language use has been studied by different scholars such as Lakoff (1962) and Tannen (1992). The latter claimed that several factors influence the speech-style of men and women such as gender, age, status and social class.

Moreover; language and communication become stronger when a speaker uses indirectness in the speech. Indirectness is a significant communication skill that is often used in daily conversations (Zhang, 2009). The use of indirectness is widely different from one culture to another. Meanwhile, there is a widespread belief that women's speech is more indirect than men (Tannen, 1994)

Broad literature is written about women's language from different perspectives. Lakoff (1962) stated that women differ in style of speaking which reflected the position of society. Tannen (1994) adds that women use more indirectness in their speech.

This work aims to investigate the indirectness of women's speech in Aoulef region, and to answer the following questions: How do women use indirectness? why do they prefer to imply their meaning when it is possible to state it directly? and, the main question is: How does age influence the indirect speech of women. The study hypothesizes that the indirectness in women's speech is increasing, when they get old.

The present study contains two chapters, a theoretical part and a practical one. The first chapter is entitled the use of indirectness in women's speech which is divided into two sections. Section One is about indirectness in speech, general rules concerning speech acts and an overview of indirectness in daily communication. Section Two is about women's language in relationship with age. It tackles the historical background to the study of language and gender. Besides, it introduces a general view on language and gender. This section ends with an overview of women's speech in same-sex conversation.

Chapter Two is the case study. It is devoted to introduce the methodology of research, the basic approaches and the procedures used in the investigation. It presents the findings of the collected data, its analysis, and the results.

The study used quantitative and qualitative approaches. The tools used for collecting data are tape-recording, observation plus note taking when it is needed, the chapter ends with recommendations for future researchers.



**Chapter I:**

**The Use of Indirectness  
in Women's Speech**

## **1.1. Introduction**

The present chapter deals with the theoretical part, which includes scholars and researchers' views of the study. It is divided into two sections, which tackle the general views of indirectness in gender's speech particularly women. Section One is about indirectness in speech; subdivide itself into two parts which are: speech act theory, and the use of indirectness in daily communication. Section Two entitled, "women's language and ageing", deals with the historical background to the study of language and gender, focusing on three different theories which are deficit theory, dominance theory and different theory. This section also includes age-graded variation which makes a comparison between different stages in language development starting by childhood, adolescence, to adulthood. The section ends with women's speech in same-sex conversation.

## **1.2. Section One: Indirectness in speech**

### **1.2.1. Definition of speech act theory**

Speech act theory is about how people achieve goals with not just words, but how the words are uttered; this utterance has a performative function in language and communications. Speech acts are taken to include such actions as promising ordering, greeting, warning, inviting and congratulating. "Almost any speech act is a performance of several acts at once, distinguished by different aspects of the speaker's intention: there is the act of saying it, such as request or promise, and how one affects one's audience" (Bach, K 2005, P. 56). The speech act can be defined as the action performed by a speaker with an utterance. For instance: "I will be there at six", the speaker is not just speaking, and he seems to be performing the speech act of 'promising (Yule, 2006).



Austin was the first one who introduced the speech acts theory in his book "How to Do Things with Words" that was published posthumously in 1962. He stated that "To speak is to act" i.e., Speech acts are based on communications. Austin (1962) adds that most utterances have no truth conditions, whereas one statement includes performative and constative actions; a performative act is a comment or question which contains performative verbs; for instance: "I drive a blue car", this is doubtful constative.

Performatives cannot be true or false because they offer an action, not just a statement. Then Austin (1962) adds that performative sentences include "the first person, declarative, indicative, active voice and simple present tense."

#### **1.2.1.1. Performative acts**

Performatives are the first speech acts which have been defined as an utterance containing a particular type of verb (Austin, 1962). According to Searle (1976) speaking a language is performing speech acts, acts such asking question, making statements, giving commands or making promises. There are two kinds of performative acts which are "explicit, implicit".

#### **1.2.1.2. Explicit performative acts**

An explicit action includes a performative verb with a force utterance, to state a clear and direct sentence which enables the speaker to leave no possibility for doubt (Thomas, 1995). For instance, "I order you to leave the house by tomorrow" the verb "order" in this case the speaker uses an imperative form and completely avoids any possible misunderstanding.

**1.2.1.3. Implicit performative acts**

An implicit action is to hint what the speaker means explicitly, that the hearer figures out the meaning behind the statement (Yule, 1996). Thomas adds that people often avoid using direct performative due to circumstances which seem to imply a power relationship or a set of rights on the part of the speaker (1995).

**1.2.2. Speech act components**

Austin (1962) identifies three distinctive levels of action beyond the utterance itself, which are the basic components with the help of which a speech act is performed as follows:

**1.2.2.1. Locutionary act**

A locutionary act is when the speaker is conveying the declaration itself. It indicates an act of saying something; and the speaker utters words in a specific language (Leech, 1983).

**1.2.2.2. Illocutionary act**

A illocutionary act is what the speaker intends from using a particular utterance, and the intended effect on the listener on how the speakers utter the words based on the tone, pitch, attitude, feeling, or body language to convey their messages. It performs an action in saying something (Leech, 1983)

**1.2.2.3. Perlocutionary act**

A perlocutionary act performs an action by saying something (Leech, 1983); in other words, it is the reaction of the listener, i.e. the effect that is produced on the listener after hearing the spoken utterance.

Austin (1962) has developed Speech Act Theory (SAT) at the level of illocutionary including the classification of different speech acts which are "assertive, commissions, declarative, directive, and expressive."

### **1.2.3. Indirectness in daily communication**

Indirectness refers to speech acts in which the expressed meaning of an utterance does not match the speaker's implied or intended purpose (Thomas, 1995). It is a fundamental element in human communication, which is a way of transmitting the message through hints, questions, and gestures; unlike directness in which the speaker is straightforward and concise (Nordquist, 2018). Tannen (1992) adds that indirectness is one of the elements that distinguishes one culture from another, and it can cause confusion and misunderstanding; in another word, indirectness differs from one culture to another, and that difference may cause problems in communication.

Those cases in which the illocutionary act is performed in roundabout way methods for playing out another (Searle, 1975). Speakers use indirect communication strategies at certain times and circumstances, and they mean more than they say (Tannen, 1992). The intention to communicate indirectly is reflected in the form of a speaker's utterance (Nordquist, 2018). Searle (1975) adds that the speaker's speech is relying on the standard cultural background information. In this respect, culture has its impact on the speech-style of the individual in society.

Indirectness is found in everyday interaction because people usually want to create a good relationship with others, it is used to perform a different function such as giving hints, avoiding confrontation, joking, being ironic, or expressing politeness by saving the face of the speaker. In many cultures like Asian cultures, indirectness is valued because saving face, and

harmony in social relationships are highly valued. Lakoff (1973) adds that indirectness is commonly used in cultures for example (Indian or Chinese) than others such as (North American and North European). Moreover, it is used more frequently by women than men (Nordquist, 2018).

Brown and Levinson (1987) define indirectness as a set of politeness strategies which can be used to minimise imposition on the hearer and to establish solidarity between two parties (the speaker and the receiver), it can also be between more than two participants through verbal or non-verbal means.

Thomas (2010) lists the following reasons for the universal use of indirectness,

First: it is the desire to make one's language more or less attractive. Second: it is the need to increase the force of one's message. Third: it is for competing goals. Fourth: politeness regards for saving face.

#### **1.2.4. Types of indirectness**

Searle (1975) states that there are two types of indirectness: non-conventional indirectness and conventional indirectness.

##### **1.2.4.1. Non-conventional indirectness**

Non-conventional indirectness is referred to as "hint", it comprises those utterances which are ambiguous on either prepositional content or illocutionary force or both. It is about when speakers are heavily relying on deriving speaker's intentions out of context-related factors, and the hearer misunderstands the speaker's intention (Searle, 1975).

### **1.2.4.2. Conventional indirectness**

Conventional indirectness is a theory elaborated by Grice (1975) who defines this meaning by resorting to the speaker's intention and the reflexive nature of those intentions, namely their need to be recognised as such by the addressee. These are standardised to perform only those acts conventionally designated for specific functional purposes which are not assigned to them in their grammatical form. For instance, Can you pass the salt? Both the means, i.e., the kind of ability that is used as an indirect utterance and the form, i.e. the exact wording "can you" as opposed to "are you able to" are conventionalised to signal the illocutionary force (Searle, 1995).

Understanding communicative intentions involve appropriately judging the impact of expectations, inferencing, individual mental representations and shortcuts brought about by shared collective representations, that are meant to elucidate the meaning of contextually-situated utterances.

### **1.2.5. Motives of indirectness**

#### **1.2.5.1. Indirectness for politeness**

There are various reasons why people interact or express themselves indirectly. An important characteristic that people are looking for is "politeness" (Searle, 1995), politeness has a vital role in communication, and the one who uses politeness during a conversation with others will gain respectability in return.

Searle (1995) and Grice (1975) have related indirectness to politeness considering it as a way to be polite. Scholars such as Leech (1980), Lakoff (2011), and Brown and Levinson (1987) have investigated the use of indirectness in people's interaction. Then they have shifted the identification of indirectness with politeness, and they found that the need to

be accepted by other people can have a significant effect on how to interpret the courtesy of utterance (Brown and Levinson, 1987)

Leech (1983) observed that the relationship between indirectness and politeness could be very complicated, in particular. Searle (1995) has stated repeatedly that politeness has been the chief motive behind indirect language use.

### **1.2.5.2. Indirectness for self-protection**

Goffman's theory of face in human interaction explains why people say things indirectly; "face" is a sacred thing for every human being. Then, fundamental factor communicators all have to pay attention to face wants are mutual; however, if one wants their face cared for, they should care for other people's face (1959). In this respect, the concise, comprehensive rule in scriptures (Hadith) "None of you (ultimately) believes; until he loves his brothers what he loves for himself" (al-Bukhaaree). I.e., treat others the way you want them to do at you; in other words, all people try to save their faces so that they should protect the face of others; i.e., to gain a safest face is not to damage the others' face.

In conversation, indirectness is a way to show politeness to others, and people are exposed to face facts such as unexpected questions; in this case, the person should have a healthy and optimist personality and never show their failure or weakness (Fathi, 2013). When one interacts with others in society, it is necessary to save face to avoid threatening another's face.

In case when possible rejection or conflict occurs; for instance, one wants to borrow something from others, the conventional indirectness of question form is usually used. For instance: 'could you possibly lend me your cell phone for a while?' The speaker expects the hearer to obey, if not this will provide the hearer to use polite language so as not to cause

embarrassment to the requester such as "sorry I am in a hurry" (Zhang, 2009). However; in other cases, if the requester asks in a direct way using the imperative form, and usually rude manner such as: "Give me your mobile phone for a while?" the speaker makes an order; somewhat it sounds impolite, rude and even insolent. Moreover, it may cause antipathy in the requestee toward a speaker; using indirectness in conversations help people for self-protection (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

### **1.2.5.3. Indirectness for humor**

Zhang (2009) states that misunderstanding could be an issue when the hearer has underestimated the intended illocution and the speaker sometimes intentionally flouts the Cooperative Principle to imply more than the literal meaning; these often form the basis of humour as Zhang (2009) says that:

Customer: 'Waiter! There is a fly in my soup.'

Waiter: 'Do not worry; there is no additional charge '(p.101)

In this awful joke, the customer's illocutionary meaning is a complaint. However, as the word "fly" has a different sense, the waiter misunderstands the real purpose, so he takes it as praise to avoid mentioning the fact, turns away from the potential conflicts, thus creates a sense of humour.

Zhang (2009) adds that humour has a kind of civilisation which is raised by people when facing plight in their lives. The power of humour enables people to express sincerity, generosity and kindness lightly. In addition it shows one's friendliness and tolerance towards others, promoting one's self-restraint and creating a meaningful life. Example:

**Customer:** Is my dish ready?

**Waiter:** What have you ordered?

**Customer:** Fried snails.

**Waiter:** Oh, I will go to the kitchen and have a look. Would you please wait for a moment?

**Customer:** (in anger) I've already waited for half an hour.

**Waiter:** You know, Sir, snails are slow in movement.

The two laughed (p.102)

The prophet Mohammed "Peace Be Upon Him" gives humankind a nice example: once an older woman asked the prophet to ask God to award her the paradise. The Prophet told her: "Matures never enter the Paradise"; the woman starts crying, the prophet "PBUH" laughed for awhile and told her: people become younger when entering the paradise, then the elder women became very happy. (P. C)

Here the prophet "PBUH" shows people how to be kind to each other, and how to make them feel happy.

#### **1.2.5.4. Indirectness for rejection or denial**

Allah says "So by mercy from Allah, [O, Muhammad] you were linear them. And if you had been rude, and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you" (Qur'an, Surat Ali Imran, verse 159). Allah sends the message to the prophet Muhammad "peace be upon him", through which His Majesty delivers a speech to all humankind in how to deal with harsh people. Then people must be merciful and polite when expressing their ideas or point of view to avoid conflict during conversations. Likewise, it gains a positive reaction and saves the face of both sides.



In everyday life, people are often urged to face disagreement of their point of view or rejection by others; therefore Zhang (2009) says that there is a common strategy language use, which does not give out any direct expressions of rejection and denial, but to expose the reasons for it.

When people give direct refuse or rejection, they need to apologise, on the other side rejecting people face to face, bringing unnecessary troubles in conversational communication (Zhang, 2009). Sometimes people express a sense of negative meaning indirectly, for instance:

**Yassin:** There is a great party, let us go?

**Bouchra:** I have to finish my work.

Bouchra's illocutionary meaning is in fact rejection when she says 'I have to finish my work'. She meant 'I have no time to go to the party.' Then it is much more acceptable for the inviter (Yassin) than a direct refusal as "no I will not" (P. C).

## **1.2.6. Conversational implicature**

### **1.2.6.1. Definition of implicature**

Grice (1995) comes up with the theory of conversational implicature in which he explains in detail how the hearer gets what is said to what is meant. In Grice's theory, implicature is Grice's term for the things a speaker means but does not utter the exact word; in another word, implicature is anything implied from speech, but it is not a condition for the credibility of the utterance.

### **1.2.6.2. Types of implicature**

#### **1.2.6.2.1. Actual implicature**

Danias (2014) defines actual implicature as any potential implicature that is not cancelled by its context. For instance, the expression "I guess that some went" has two potential implicatures.

The matrix sentence "I guess... ." has the potential implicature "I do not know that some went". Then; The complement clause "...some went" has the potential implicature "not all went." (Dnias, 2014)

Alan (2011) claimed that an actual implicature is devoted to two categories which are:

- 1) Conventional implicature is part of a lexical item, rather than derived from principles of language; and not part of conditions for the truth of the item or expression. For instance, a speaker using the word BUT between coordinate clauses thinks that some contrast or concession relationship is relevant between the clauses.

2) Non-conventional implicature is an implicature that is drawn in accordance with a pragmatic principle such as the cooperative principle or the informativeness principles, rather than the meaning of a lexical item. (Cited in Danias, 2014)

#### **1.2.6.2.2. Potential implicature**

It is an implicature that will arise from any of the components in a given utterance if those components are uttered in some linguistics or new linguistics context, whether or not the implicature is an actual implicature of the given utterance. In this respect, Danias (2014) states that conversational implicature is one of the actual implications, which means an implicature that occurs in conversations.

In Grice's theory (1975) of implicature, the cooperative principles describe how listeners and speakers must act cooperatively during a conversation and mutually accept one another to be understood in a particular way. The cooperative principle leads to a number of rules which apply the way to explain the link between the operative speech and the meaning behind it which is called "Gricean Maxims" as Alan (2011) describes in brief:

“Maxim of Quantity contributes to informative as required and do not make a contribution more informative or tentative than is required. Maxim of Quality contribute only to what you know to be true, do not say wrong things, do not say things which need evidence. Maxim of Relation, be relevant. Maxim of Manner is avoidance of obscurity and ambiguity in additions must be brief and orderly” (pp. 417-418).

**1.3. Section Two: Women's language and ageing****1.3.1. Historical background to the study of language and gender**

Language is the most important feature distinguishing humankind from all other animals; it exists from the existence of Adam as Allah says "And He taught Adam all the names (of everything) then appeared them to the angels and said, " Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful."(Surat Al-Baqarah, verse 31) That means Allah taught Adam all languages of the world. Recently the interest of sociolinguists is increasing in this field of language and gender. Litosseliti (2014) says in his book "language is the mirror of society" which means any change occurs in a given society will undoubtedly affect language in a way or another.

According to Sapir (1921), language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires using voluntarily produced symbols. The definition points that language is the primary means of establishing and maintaining relationships between people in society

Language and gender are a multidisciplinary field of research that studies different types of speech regarding gender, gender relations, gendered practices, and sexuality. In the U.S, an interdisciplinary study of language and gender was initiated by Lakoff in her book 'Language and Woman's Place '(1975). (Nordquist, 2017).

Labov (1966) and Trudgill (1974) have examined the language of both genders, man and women focusing on syntactic, phonological and morphological variations. Unlike Labov and Trudgill, Lakoff (1975) had begun her research not only in the specific language used by women, but also language used about women.

### **1.3.2. Theories of language and gender**

The representatives of the field of gender study are Key, Lakoff and Thorne (Lynne, 1990). They have studied the relationship between gender and language, and central focus was on differences between men's language and women's language from different angles with different methodologies in three main theories that have developed the field which are: deficit theory, dominance theory and difference theory (Gu, 2013)

#### **1.3.2.1. Deficit theory**

This theory is linked to the idea of Jespersen (1922) that women's speech is deficient in comparison to the male's norm. Lakoff (1973) this theory created a separation between women's language and men's language (p.8); then it appeared at Lakoff in her influential work "Language and Women's Place"; when she identified several differences in the language used by women compared to men. For instance; differences in pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, syntax, and the attitudes toward language and choosing topics. (Gu, 2013)

Lakoff (1975) argues that women tend to use linguistic forms that reflect and reinforce a subordinate role in society. These include the use of tag question, intonation and weak directive. Lakoff (1975) suggests that "language uses 'us' as much as we use language." (p.10) which means that language is changing depending on gender, class, background, age and other; meanwhile, she gives features that characterise women's speech which are as follows:

- 1) Women speak less frequently,
- 2) They listen by using minimal responses like (mmm, yeah...etc)

- 3) Using hedges which are words that express uncertainty and lack of authority like “sort of” and “kind of”.
  - 4) They speak more quietly than men and tend to use the higher pitch range of their voices.
  - 5) Use empty adjectives like “adorable” and “divine”.
  - 6) Use a greater range of intonation and speak smoothly (so, very, quite, really)
  - 7) Use hypercorrect grammar and pronunciation (standard English, clear enunciation)
- (Irimia, Gotlsching, 2016)

Although Lakoff's work was welcomed by feminists, the female deficit theory has been criticised a lot on several grounds. For instance, Spender (1980) begins pointing to the problem with deficit theory, and distances her work. In additions, Lakoff (1975) states that women "lack" authority and seriousness. They "lack" conviction and confidence; she points to the disparate elucidation of language use. According to Spender (1980), Lakoff's topic of male dominance is harsh, that is there are echoes of the 'Deficit' approach to the notion of female "negative space".

O'Barr and Atkins (1980) findings challenge Lakoff's view of women language theory; they show that language differences are based on situation-specific authority and not gender. Indeed they notice that Lakoff's feature of women language is not exclusive to females and is not characteristic of all women; so that they use the term "Powerless Language" instead of "Women Language".

### **1.3.2.2.Dominance theory**

Lakoff's research has influenced the feminists linguist's analysis, which encouraged them to learn more about language and gender. Jim Sidanius, Felicia Pratto (1999)

## Chapter One: The use of indirectness in women's speech

formulates the theory of social dominance theory (SDT) based on three social hierarchies which are (age, sex and arbitrary-set) ( Sidanius and Pratto,1999), this theory ascribes language differences between men and women to the dominance of men within society.

Zimmerman and West (1975) investigated the language used between male and female. They found that although there were lots overlaps in same- sex conversation, there were few interruptions and in interviews, males frequently interrupting females.

Fishman (1978) has investigated the dominance theory by recording 52 hours of conversation and observing the use of minimal responses, the use of questions, the use of statements, and who are trying to get attention. Fishman (1980) had agreed with Robin Lakoff that it was due to women's inferior position in society, and women may speak this way to maintain an inferior place to be in relationship with men.

However, Fishman (1990) concludes that there are unequal distributions of work during conversations. Fishman (1978) observes that women are more actively engaged in ensuring the flow of conversation, and they support men when they speak. Through the investigation, Fishman (1990) finds that men discourage interactions initiated by women and men initiate conversations less often themselves.

In investigation of the dominance theory DeFransisco (1991) looked at the marital relations and the conversational features such as talk-time, question asking and turn-taking violations. Then he discovered that women did more of the conversational work, but were more likely to be silenced by men.

However, the Dominance Theory has been criticised due to the multifunctional nature of linguistic forms, i.e., interruption can be supportive not always using of dominance; another reason was the over-emphasis on the subordination of women and the contextual

factors are not given enough attention, plus the dominance view correlates gender with specific forms of speech behaviour.

### **1.3.2.3. Difference theory**

This theory often contrasted with dominance and deficit theory. It deals with a cross-gender communication; Maltz and Borker (1982) and Tannen (1991) have supported this theory and argued that women and men are socialised to believe different linguistic features indicate different things. In other words, the speech of male and female is influenced by the society they belong to the different cultures, also to their speech which style is based on the different experiences they go through.

Maltz and Broker (1982) in their investigation looked at six areas (Minimal responses, starting utterances, posing questions, topic flow and shift, verbal aggression and problem sharing). According to the findings, they argue that men and women participate in a conversation in different ways because they learned to converse in different cultures. Therefore, they made a hypothesis to the difference theory indicating that in conversations miscommunication may happen between men and women because of their different social background, different sociolinguistic subcultures and socialisation patterns and different rules for casual discussion (Mellor, 2011).

However, Tannen (1990) in her investigation (genderlects speech style) shows that the differences between men and women communication styles go far beyond their different culture. Thus she presented the idea that offered that male and female had contrasting conversational styles. Tannen (1990) states that:

For males, a conversation is a way you negotiate your status in the group and keep people from pushing you around; you use to talk to preserve your independence.



Females, on the other hand, use conversation to negotiate closeness and intimacy, so a better friend means sitting and talking. For boys, activities, doing things cooperatively, are the principle, sitting and talking is not essential for creating friendship. They are friends with the boys they do things with. (cited in Laura, 1990).

Tannen (1990) adds that speech styles contain a series of contrasts when men and women communicate such as 'Status vs support, independence vs intimacy, advice vs understanding, information vs feeling, orders vs proposals, conflict vs compromise. (See women and men in conversation)

### **1.3.3. Age-graded variation**

Age-graded variation refers to speech differences within a community that are associated with age, speakers of different ages influence one another. Age-change has its effect in using language based on human's lifetime 'the children& adolescence, adults, and elderly.

#### **1.3.3.1. Children/ Adolescents**

(0-12 years) Children learn a language in the way of their mother and caretaker; Piaget (1952) adds that children experience milestones within the first two years of their life. In other words, children interact with different people starting with their parents or caretaker, siblings, family, neighbours and peers; meanwhile, they acquire language from the environment of family and social surroundings, children receive the way of uttering words too. Vygotsky (1962) said that a child's external speech is the first step in developing thought, in this respect acquiring language for a child is the way of thought achievement.

Skinner (1957) states that adolescence (13-24) is a transitional period, when children become adults and move away from their family, they want to express themselves as

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individuals, during this period, adolescents use linguistic variables to differentiate themselves from the adult people, and they use more slang and swear words. Skinner (1957) notes that in this period speakers master the language, they can understand different words and aspect also can create new ideas incorrect grammar structure.

The change of the language for adults appears at the phonetic level where their voice changes. Chambers (2008) states that adults can learn more than one language and differentiate between them easily; researchers have discovered that the frequency of incoming linguistic changes is highest among 15 to 17 years old (Chamber, 2008)

### 1.3.3.2. Adults

In this period, adults think themselves having the stable identity (Chomsky, 1957). In this respect, the speaker seems to be more conservative in using linguistic variables. Status and social class have a significant effect on the use of language as Skinner says that the development of language depends on the interaction with the environment. Then adults become more polite in conversation showing their responsibility by selecting particular aspects of their topics they discuss; hence, speakers can use language fluently (Skinner, 1957).

### 1.3.3.3. Older adults/ elderly

There is a big difference in the language of older adults' people, the differences are mostly due to the individual's life history, language competence, communication environment and cognitive ability, in this respect, ageing changes affect communication function which varies from person to another (Wardhaugh, 2006)

Older adults tend to use simple sentence structure and more fragment sentences in conversation. They also tend to be adept at conversational turn-taking, maintaining the topic

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and modifying the content of their message depending on the need of the listeners; moreover, older adults are the encouraged one to communicate with family and friends on a regular basis. (Asha, 1999)

Thus, people in this age go through different long experiences in life that affect their language and conversational styles.

### 1.3.4. Women's speech in same-sex conversations

The speakers usually do not always say what they mean precisely. According to researches, it is shown that men and women differ in their use of language, this part is about general overview of women's speech.

According to Lakoff (1975) women have a different style of speaking which reflects their position in society. Therefore Lakoff states that women's life carries more formalities that are shown by their mitigators, for instance, (sort of) and (I think), this feature of their language shows women's disqualification norms of society.

Tannen (1990) discusses a lot about women's speech, she concludes that in all over the world women use more indirectness in their conversations and they are sensitive to its use by others. Tannen (2017) shows that women use interviews to create a close relationship and to be intimate with others, Tannen says that for women, talking about troubles is the essences of connection. Tannen (2017) adds "I tell you my trouble, you tell me your trouble, and we are close." Thus, when a woman keeps talking, she tries to establish a particular kind of relationship or intimacy, and then Tannen adds women believe that talk can play a significant role in creating friendship by dealing with different topics especially talking about troubles (Tannen, 2017).

**1.3.5. Conclusion**

To sum up, the field of gender and language has been studied by several scholars and researchers, Austin (1962), Lakoff (1973) and Tannen, (1990). These scholars come up with various views on structures of speech acts component, age-graded variations and the differences between men and women's language. The latter had a broad study in the field of sociolinguistics and pragmatics, as it is shown. Recently, women's language has become an exciting topic for specialists as Tannen (2017). Though communication is an essential element in transmitting a message, indirectness has substantial power in making communicator's effectiveness. Thus, in this chapter, researchers of the field revealed that women speech is full of indirect expressions.



# **Chapter II:**

## **The Case Study**

## **Chapter Two: The case study**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This study aims to investigate the use of indirectness in the speech of Aoulef's women. In addition to that, it also tries to explore the reason why women use it in their daily life conversations. This study also provides some examples through recording women having different ages while having a conversation. The results show that age plays an important role in the process of women's life, and it has a relationship with the use of indirectness by women. The older they are, the more they tend to speak indirectly.

### **2.2. Research Design**

Research is the systematic application of a set of methods, which are employed to provide trustworthy information about problems (Gay, Airasian, 2000). This chapter is devoted to the practical part which is subdivided into findings, data analysis, and discussion.

### **2.3. An overview of the investigated Area (Aoulef)**

Aoulef is geographically located in the east of Adrar precisely in the Tidikelt; it is 270 km<sup>2</sup> far from Adrar. Aoulef area covers about 24536 Km<sup>2</sup>. It is divided into four regions (Temokten, Aoulef Lkbir, Akabli, Tit, and Ain belbal).

### **2.4. The sample**

The population of this study consists of Aoulef's women differentiated by their age which ranges between (18 to 70 years old), these women were selected randomly to supply a precise form of the language used by them. They were also asked to be recorded. The division of the population was based on the similarities they share according to the topics and speech-style which is divided into four categories which are as follow (18-25, 26-35, 36-50, and 51-70). These women are a mixture of young and older women. The classes of the population were free to choose topics in conversation.

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### 2.5. Techniques

The selected technique for the study is a tape-recording type. It is the useful methodology for the research purpose. In the conversation, we could notice the speech-style of women, and the time of using indirectness in their speech. Moreover, the tone, body-language, pitch of the voice are assessed. We took notes and calculated how they used indirect expressions. Meanwhile, observation is the primary instrument in this research. The research has been studied by using a mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches. As we are members of the community of Aoulef, it was easy for us to get a wide range of data through taking notes from natural interactions of Aoulefian women. Milroy and Gordon (2003) say that: "the principal benefits of participant observation are the amount and quality of the data collected and the familiarity with community practices gained by the investigator" (p.68).

The goal of recording is "to understand the sociolinguistic dynamics of the community from the perspective of the community itself" (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1996, p. 71). The problem with this technique is the difficulty of analyzing the results; therefore there must be other techniques to reinforce the collection information. In our study the data were collected through recordings, observation and note taking. Then, time in which recording takes place is varied from one person to another, depending on the topic.

### 2.6. Procedures

Kiowa A5 cell-phone is the device we used for the recording process, before making a record we inform the participants about the reason behind recording their conversation. Almost all the data were collected through making free conversations with women differed by their age (young and elder women).

## Chapter Two: The case study

Conversations were taking place in various situations, for instance, wedding, funerals or a normal conversation, i.e. without special occasions such as a conversation between a group of girls on the university campus, at a shop or in the street.

To obtain reliable data, we visited different villages of Aoulef region such as (Akabli and Tit), and we made a few conversations there. There are 20 conversations as a whole, besides; the time of recording ranges between 30 minutes to 2 hours.

During the conversations, we were observing how women interacted towards each other, their style-speech, for instance, the tone they used when communicate others, meanwhile we were taking notes which certainly would help us in analytical part.



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### 2.7. Findings and analysis

Women of Aoulef city almost use indirectness in conversation, they prefer to hint meaning in their speech. In this respect, the division of the population is based on the age of women related to the use of indirectness during the speech. So the study includes 4 different categories (18- 25, 26- 35, 36- 50, 51- 70). There are 20 recorded conversations, we have selected the conversation which contains 2 hours. In order to analyze the use of indirectness for each category.

**Table 01: The division of the population**

<b>Age categories</b>	<b>Number of the participants</b>	<b>The percentage</b>
18 – 25	15	25%
26-35	15	25%
36- 50	15	25%
51- 70	15	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 2.8. Indirectness in Aoulef's women speech

### 2.8.1. The first category (18 – 25 years old)

In this class of age, there are five recorded conversations, and each covers 2 hours. We noticed in one conversation, that girls tackle 13 different topics. They talk a lot about their relations with their families, parents, siblings, friends, dreams and fashion. We also see that girls of similar ages use abnormal words in their speech, which the other categories may not apply. Through the investigation of the fifth recorded conversation, we observed that girls utter 21 different indirect expressions. We have selected some statements to be analyzed:

**Table 02: The use of indirectness by the first category**

N	daily expressions	Equivalence/meaning in English	Transliteration	Intended Meaning
01	نتي, خلي بورطابلك تم باش ينفرقع	Let your cell phone charging, until it crashes.	Nty khally portablek tam bach yatfarga3	Unplug your mobile from the charger
02	حويقة رقية	You are so cute	7wiiidga Rekia	Thank you
03	اما شحال زين هاد لبراسلي	Mother, how beautiful is this bracelet	Emma, ch7al zin had l braceli	Mum; buy me the bracelet.
04	هادا توبر وكلها بغا راسو	I am so busy, I don't have time for you	Hada tawbar w kelha bgha rassw	Go elsewhere
05	من لي دفنوه ما زاروه	Out of sight, out of mind	Mn li dafnwh ma zarwh	Where have you been
06	ماكانو قاع لمغارف	There are no spoons	Ma kanw ga3 lamgharf	Bring spoons
07	شوفو راني نراجع	Look I am revising	Chawfw rany nraja3	Keep silent
08	السخانة	It is hot	Al-skhana	Switch on the fan
09	راه جا الصيف	The summer is coming	Rah ja al-sayf	It is time to travel

10	ما يبقى فلواد اللا حجارو	Brightness shall preveal.	Ma yab9a f al-wad ghyr 7jarw	We used to stay last.
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The list of statements shows how this population uses indirectness in their free conversation and the intended meaning of their literal statements. We take the first expression from the table that is (Nty khally portabelk tam baach yatfarga3); a girl was watching, and she forgot about her phone. A friend of her said "keep your mobile charging in order to crash" based on the context the speaker meaning is "unplug your mobile before it crashes".

In the second expression when girls were eating dinner at the campus, and one of them said: "this orange is for you Wafaa", Wafaa replied "7widdega Rekaya" instead of the intended meaning is "thank you Rekaia". The common meaning of the expression (7widdega) used by people of Aoulef to mean the expression "beautiful". Recently its use indicates various meanings which are based on the context.

The third expression, a mother with her daughter were shopping, the daughter said: "Emma ch7al zin had lbracely" I.e "how beautiful is this bracelet" the mother understands the implicit meaning which is "Mum buy me the bracelet".

Moreover; the fourth expression was at the campus in the exam period. A girl asked her friend to revise for exams. The friend replied "hada tawbar w kelha bgha rasw", the speaker means that "I don't have time to you"; it is time to be serious. i.e., go elsewhere. People of Aoulef use this expression in the season where all people are busy in their garden for grain food and seeds.

For the fifth expression, a girl met her friend at the wedding and told them: "Mn ly dafnwh ma zarwh" to state the question: "where have you been all that time".

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The sixth expression, see table; "Ma kanw ga3 lamgharf" or "there is no spoon" the intended meaning is to bring the spoons. For the seventh expression, when a girl was revising at home, then said: "Chawfw, rany nraja3" "Look I am revising". She meant "keep silent".

The eighth expression described group of girls were sitting in a room at the campus, one of them said "al-skhana" the hearer understands the explicit meaning of the utterance, that is "switch on the fan". Likewise; the ninth expression that is "rah ja al-sayf", the speaker here is informing about the time of travel.

The tenth statements; "Ma yab9a f lwad ghyr 7jarw" that is "rightness shall prevail". This expression is indicated when a person used to be late or last. Based on the context, the speaker means to say "we used to stay last".

### 2.8.2. The second category (26 – 35 years old)

In this range of age, most women of the sample are married workers. Thus, their speech-style is different from other categories. They mention 4 to 5 different topics during a conversation, and most are about jobs, food, news, husband and family. These women use about 30 indirect expressions in each conversation (2 hours). The following table shows some of their expressions:

Table 03: The use of indirectness by the second category

N	Daily expressions	Equivalence/meaning in translation	Arabic Transliteration	Intended meaning
01	ما تخدمي اليوم	Don't you work today?	Ma tkhadmy lywm	Why don't you go to the work today?
02	ما جاش المدير	The director doesn't come!	Ma jach lmodyr	I won't go to work
03	معليش	Ok	Ma3lych	You will see.
04	توحشت لفاران	I miss Elfarran	Twa7acht al-faran	Cook the faran
05	زين عليك هاد ليزار	This izar is very nice on you	Zyn 3lyk had l Izar	Buy the izar
06	نهار لي تقسم لعرف كللها رضى على عرفو ونهار تقسمو لرزاق حتى واحد ما رضى على رزقو	Contentment is an exhaustible treasure.	Nhar ly tgassam l3arf kellha rda 3la 3arfw, w nhar tgassamw l-arza9 7ta wa7d ma rda 3la raz9w	don't ask me advice anymore
07	بردي قلبك	Be strong and relax	Bardy galbk	Everything will be ok
08	دايرة قانون وحدي	I have my law, I.e., no one have the right to tell me what to do	Dayra kanwn wahdy	It is not your business
09	دكا رجليا يوجعوني	There is something wrong with my feet, or my feet are hurt	Daka rajlya ywaj3wni	I won't go with you
10	الطمع يخسر الطمع	Grasp all, lose all.	Al- tma3 ykassar al tab3	Be convinced

Concerning the list of statements above, the first expression (Ma tkhadmy lyawm!), and the speaker does not state her exact meaning instead she said: "Ma tkhadmy lyawm" to mean "why do not you go work today". The same for the second expression, a woman talked with her friend on the phone and said "Ma jach lmodyr", here she is not performing or asking her colleague, but she informs her that "she will not go work that day".

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For the third statement, a speaker was in a difficult situation. A problem with her co-workers, she utters one word that is "Ma3lych" that is "ok", based on the situation and the intonation of the speaker the word performed an action, and the hearer understands the implicit meaning which is "you will see". The expression of "bardy galbk" in this case a woman was upset, and moving from place to another; thus her friend told her "everything will be ok" which mean: don't worry "I am here by aside you."

The fourth and the fifth expressions are used to demand something. The fourth occurred when two sisters were talking about the dinner and what to cook. Thus one of them said "Twahecht al-faran"; that is "cook al-faran". The fifth expression, a woman wants to promote her commodity, she said to a customer "zyn alyk had l Izar" instead of saying Buy the Izar, the use of that expression pushes the customer to buy it.

The sixth expression: women were chatting, and one of them asked for a piece of advice about a particular problem. The woman was arrogant and has headstrong, thus her neighbour responses: "nhar ly tgassam l3arf kolha rda 3la 3arfw, w nhar tgassamw l-rza9 7ta wa7d ma rda 3la raz9w". That is to say; you deserve what is happening to you. However; this expression has various meanings, but the direct meaning in this context is "don't ask me advice anymore".

The eighth expression: "Dayra 9anwn wa7dy" that is, "don't interfere in what you do not concern in". The speaker telling the hearer that "I do what I found suitable to me and be far from me" that is "it is not your business".

The ninth expression: "dakka rajlya ywaj3wny" used to avoid or ignore someone who is asking you to go out with them. Therefore; instead of saying "I do not like going with you" women created an excuse which took the indirect form that is "my feet are hurted".

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The tenth expression which is "al-tma3 ykassar al-tba3" that is "Grasp all, lose all". In this respect, a woman feels that she is going to lose her friend; then she advises her indirectly instead of saying: "you are greedy". The women preferred the idea of "be convincer".

### 2.8.3. The third category (36- 50 years old)

Most of Aoulef's women in this range of age are mothers and have children. Therefore they tackle various topics in their daily conversations; for instance wedding, family troubles and tragedies. Moreover, these women are careful in choosing words during conversation, unlike the previous categories of women. They indicate about 40 indirect expressions in conversation (2 hours). The following table shows some of their expressions in indirectness:

Table 04: the use of indirectness by the third category

N	Daily expressions	Equivalence/ meaning in English	Transliteration	The intended meaning
01	اه ديري لي ظهر ليك	You are free	ah dyry ly zhaar lyk	Don't ask me again
02	لقراية ماهي خير ليك؟	To keep study isn't better for you?	Lkraaya mahy khyr lyk	Keep studying, don't stop
03	شوفي فبنت عمك	Look at your cousin	Chawfy f bant 3amk	Be polite and delightful
04	الناس بالناس والناس لربي	God helps them, who helps themselves	Al-nass b al-nass w al-nass b molana	You must be cooperation
05	واش ما تفهمي نتي !!	You! Why don't you understand!!	Wach ma tfahmy nty!!	Don't touch it
06	لبعير بالبعير يالي كلشي ليك كبير	A person who is generous and helpful.	Lab3yr ya Lab3yr	You are so generous
07	خوك خوك لا يغرك صاحبك	Adversity tries friends. I.e. if you have a lot of friends ,brother is the only one who help you whenever you want.	Khwk khwk, la yghark sa7bk	Never lose your brother
08	لكلام بيده الريح	Barking dogs, seldom bite. Or much ado about noyhing	Lklam ydyh al-ry7	Live life and don't care for hearsay.
09	لجيد يفهم من غمزة والدمسو يفهم من دبزة	A word to the wise	Ljyad yafham mn ghamza w al-damssw yafham men dabza	Either you are intelligent or fool
10	رجليا يوجعوني	My feet are ill	Rajlya ywaj3wni	I will not go with you
11	راني عيانة	I feel tired	Rany 3ayana	I won't go with you
12	لي خاف نجا	Better safe than sorry	Ly khaf nja	Be careful



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We selected 13 indirect expressions which are in the table. Its use is based on the context. We take the first expression "Ah dyry ly dhar lyk" the explicit meaning is that "don't ask me advice anymore". In the second expression the structure of the statement has a form of a question, a woman advises her daughter: "La qraya mahy khayr lyk?", the mother here mentions the importance of studying. Thus, instead of saying "you have to keep studying" she preferred to hint meaning to make her speech strong.

The third expressions: "chawfy fy bent amak", it was a wedding, and there was a talkative girl, a woman noticed that and wanted to advise the girl. Then, the woman said, "Look at your cousin". She meant to say: be polite and delightful as your cousin, which means that the exact meaning of the statement is "You are a talkative girl".

In conversations, women hint at their exact meaning by using proverbs as it is shown in this expression "al-nass b al-nass w al-nass b mwlana". The expression indicates how people to be helpful and merciful to each other.

The fifth expression: "wach ma tfahmy ntya" the speaker means, "don't touch it" in anger. The expression itself may not seem as it implies. However, the way of uttering the words enable the hearer understands the meaning of the speaker.

The sixth expression: "la b3yr ya la b3yr ya ly kalchy lyk kbyr." this expression is used to describe the generous people instead of saying; "You are so generous".

The seventh expression: "khwk, khwk la yghark sahbk". Women in this age give great importance for their family's relations. Thus this statement stated from a woman to her friend who has a problem with her brother. The direct meaning of the expression is; "don't lose your brother".

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The eighth expression: "l klam yedyh al-ryh" this expression tends to mean "do not care for the foolish person." This expression is usually used to make someone feel relaxed.

The ninth expression: "al-jyad yafham mn ghamza w al-damssw yafham mn dabza" means that a word is enough to the wise, i.e., the expression indicates the meaning of awareness "Be aware and intelligent".

The tenth (rajlya ywaj3oni) and the eleventh expression (rany 3ayana) indicate a kind of tiredness. Both are used when we want to ignore or avoid someone. In the tenth statement; a woman asked her friend to go out, the friend replied "My feet are ill" that is to mean "I will not go with you" the same for eleventh expression which indicates the same explicit meaning.

The twelfth expression which is: "ly khaf nja", means "be careful and don't trust people".

### 2.8.4. The fourth category (51 – 70)

(51 – 70) Women in this class of age have experienced various facts in their life. They spent their time mostly at garden where they almost gather in groups. These women talk almost about their experiences in life and their present days; for instance (Orchard). People in this range act as a wise class in society, they use many proverbs in conversations, they use about 40 indirect expressions; the following table shows some of their indirect expressions from their daily conversations:

Table 05: the use of indirectness by the fourth category

N	Daily expressions	Equivalence/ meaning in English	Transliteration	The Intended Meaning
01	هاد التسقات ثقيلة عليا	The tesgat is heavy	Had tesgat t9yla 3lya	Take the tesgat off
02	جيتوا	You come!	Jaytoul!	Where have you been
03	عبيت نسنا	I waited for a long time	3yayt nesanna	I left
04	يموت لميت ما غطاوه	When someone makes you wait for a long period	Ymwt lmayat ma ghatawah	You are so slow
05	عقوبة لعينهم	A wish to see someone after long time	39wba l 3aynyhwm	They are about arriving
06	يسلم دينك وايمانك	Allah secures you	Ysalam dynak w Imanak	Thank you, and God blessed you
07	الدنيا ما عطات عاهد	Don't trust life	Al-danya ma 3tat 3ahd	Be honest
08	اللي فات مات	Let bygones be bygones	Al-ly fat mat	Live your life
09	الخير مرا والشر مرا	A woman can be an angel or evil	Al-khir mra w al-char mra	Be a good wife
11	ما تصلح لا للعبادة واللعبادة	Let sleeping, dogs lie	Ma tassla7 la l l3ada w la ly l 3bada	Useless
12	كردو حزيماتكم	Be ready	Kardw 7zaymatkom	Let's go
13	اللي بغا لعافية يعطيها لراسو	If you want to live in peace, don't interfere in other's problems	Al- ly bgha l3afya ya3tyha l rasw	Take care of yourself
14	من زمان وحنا هنا	We have been here for a long time	Men zman w 7na hna	We are leaving
15	اللي بغا الدنيا يبكر واللي بغا لاخرة يبكر	Cleverness is the best trade	Al-ly bgha al-danya ybakar w ly bgha lakhra ybakar	You have to work hard
16	اللي عندو الدهينة يدهن كل مفصل	Horses for courses	Al – ly 3andw al- dhyna yadhan kol mafssal	you are rich

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The list of statements above has several indirect expressions with their direct meaning. The first expression, "had tesgat t9ila 3lia" occurred at the orchard, a woman felt tired and wants someone to take the tesgat off -"tesgat: is a bag made of palm fronds"-; she used the indirect expression that is: the tesgat is heavy, and the hearer understands what is meant by her statement.

However the second expression "jaytw!"; the speaker was a grandmother who was waiting for her sons to come back. When the sons arrived home, she told them "You come!", One of them replied we were at the party of molay Ahmed. The expression means that the exact meaning of this word, in this case, is "where have you been".

The third expression "3yayt nsana" tends to mean "I cannot wait any more", similarly to the thirteenth sentence "mn zman w 7na hna" that is to say you are too late, and "we are about to leave now". Meanwhile; the fourth expression "Ymwt lmayat ma ghatawh", refers to the situation of the hearer. The speaker preferred to hint the explicit meaning, which is "You are so slow, be active" rather than state it directly. The speaker makes the implicature strong on the receiver.

The fifth and the sixth statements "3gouba l 3ynyhoum" and "ysalam Imank" both used to wish good for people who were absent for a long time. The fifth expression indicates that "You will see them soon"; not far from the previous statements, the sixth one when a woman said "finally your parents have arrived Allhamdu li Allah" that is "3la slamt nassk" the hearer replied "ysalam Imank" that is to say "Thank You and God bless you".

The seventh statement "al-denyā ma 3tate 3ahed" tends to indicate "Be patient" this expression is used when a person becomes weak and hopeless. Then the eighth expression is "al-ly fat mat" tended to express the idea of living your life in the way wanted, and don't

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look back because nothing deserve sadness. This expression stated by older women to a young one.

The ninth statement: "al-khyr mra w al-char mra"; usually women use this statement as advice for boys, that is "be aware and wise in choosing a wife". However, in this case, a mother was chatting with her daughter. The latter asked the mother a piece of advice to be fair and good with her family in law. Instead of telling her a direct sentence as: "be good and honest with yourself, share love with them, show them respect and make them your true family; then you will save your whole family". Instead she sums up this long sentence in the very short idiom. Hence the daughter understood the implicit meaning without uttering it literally.

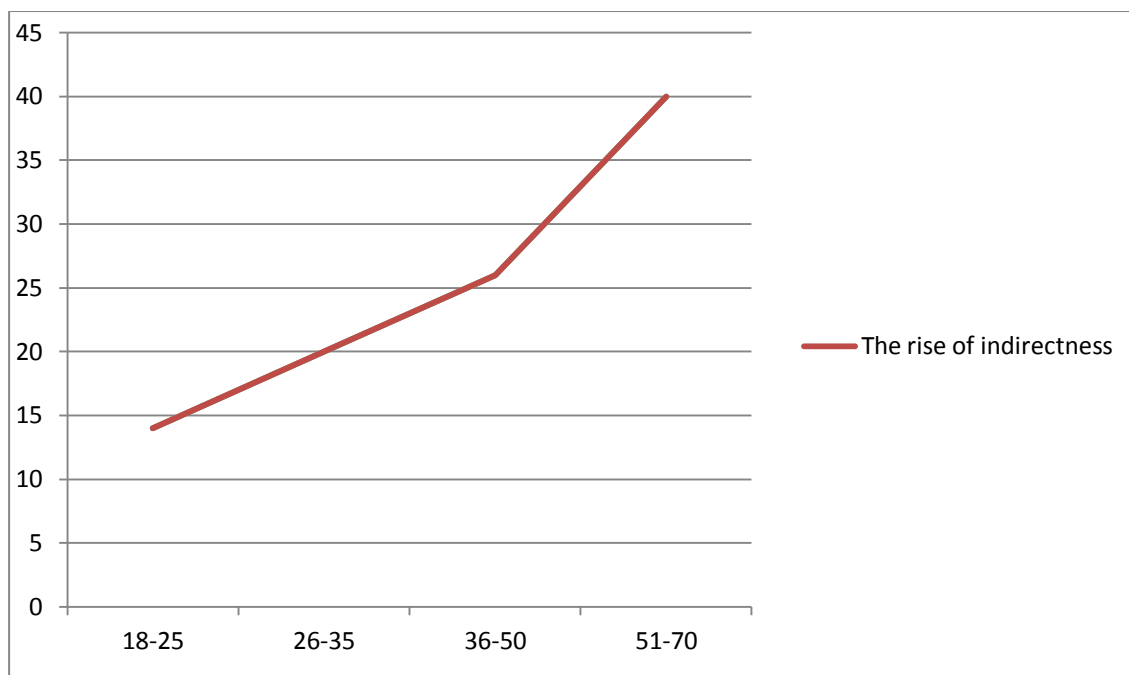
The eleventh statement has various meanings, in this case, women were working at the orchard, then when they finished one of them stated "kardaw 7zaymatkwm" the women understood the meaning behind the expression, which is "Let's go back home."

The fourteenth statement "al- li bgha danya ybakar, w li bgha la-khra ybakar" this means that the successful people must wake up earlier. The explicit meaning of the expression is: "you have to work hard".

For the fifteenth expression, a group of women were talking about rich and poor people. There was a wealthy woman among them, and she was showing off her status and so on. Therefore, other women said that "al-ly 3andw al-dhyna, yadhan kol mafssal", that is to say, the one who has money can buy whatever she/ he likes. Instead of saying "You are rich". The table shows the percentage in using indirectness for the various categories:

**Table 06: The quantity of indirectness use by Aoulef's women**

Age groups	The number of indirect expressions	The percentage
18 – 25	21	14%
26 -35	30	20%
36 – 50	40	26%
51 – 70	60	40%



**Figure: the use of indirectness by Aoulef's women**

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### 2.9. Discussion of the results

Women in different ages differ in the topics which they tackle and discuss, they also differ in their speech-style. The latter is changing at several levels. Based on the findings and the results of this study, we noticed that each category has particular kind of topics. However; all women of Aoulef region use indirectness in their daily conversation, but they differ in how much each category use indirectness.

The different expressions in the table show that the use of indirectness has particular motives, which pushed these women to use it. Moreover; the speaker must have an aim behind the use of indirectness which can be intentional or non-intentional.

The investigation of the first category, women express 20 indirect expressions in conversation (2 hours); the major motive in using indirectness in their speech is politeness, for instance, the use of tag questions in conversations. They show politeness when talking with old people, whereas they show humour when communicating with their peers. In addition, they use words and expressions which are not used by other categories. These expressions can be considered as indirect speech-style. For instance, a girl asks her friend to come to her; that is "t3ali l dar", then the friend's answer "rany mat3alya lik" that is "I am coming", here the unusual word is "Mat3alia", instead the correct one is to say "rany jaya".

However; when using proverbs to hint their explicit meaning, we noticed that most of the time women do not know the exact meaning of the expression. Women in this range of age are memorizing by imitating older women in using idioms.

The second category shares some similarities with the first category. Based on the recorded conversations, we noticed that their speech-style has a kind of authority; these women use indirectness when talking with co-workers or when talking about a job.



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We also notice that their speech style is affected by their status; therefore they used to use the imperative form toward others, especially with people who are younger than them.

Compared with the previous categories, women in (36- 50) use more indirectness in their speech. Through the expressions in the tables; the use of indirectness appears most in giving advice. Women in this class of age indicate 30 indirect expressions in conversation (2hours) instead they hint the meaning of speech by using proverbs. The latter have developed through the experiences which they have experienced in their life.

Women's speech in the (51-70) category is rich of indirect expressions, and rich with proverbs. The various topics they tackle reveal the wealth of vocabulary. They express 60 indirect expressions in conversation (2 hours). Hence; these women became fluent in using indirectness in their daily conversations.

Women in this age use more proverbs in their speech, which seems complicated and difficult to be understood at a particular level, especially by the first category. In addition, the use of indirectness also appears through the tone of their speech as it is shown in the table above.

### 2.10. Conclusion

To conclude, the investigations of the use of indirect speech among Aoulef's women, revealed that women in different ages could not be equal in their discussed topics, interest, speech style and way of communication. The use of indirectness in speech also differs from one category to another. So, the results obtained from the data collected confirm that Aoulef's older women use more indirectness increasingly.

**2.11. Limitations**

This work encounters barriers like any other research topic. The practical part was not an easy task as we expected. Another problem encountered is the lack of time, in recording, we had to listen carefully to get valuable results. In addition many people refused to be recorded because they did not understand exactly what we were doing such research, and others did not feel comfortable. Moreover, we spent a long time explaining the aim of researching the educated and the uneducated people.

We tried to make more conversation, but recording was the main obstacle, it took more time to convince participants to be recorded. Also, it was not easy to visit other places such as (Akabli and Tit). We could not visit all the regions and villages of Aoulef, first because they are far from the centre, the second reason is that the transport is not available all the time.

**2.12. Recommendations**

The investigation reveals that age influences the indirect speech of women, i.e., the increase of indirectness in their speech is increasing with age as it is shown in the finding section.

Further studies should be more specific, age in relation to other different factors such as (status) influence the speech-style of women. Thus, future studies should also investigate the use of indirectness by educated and uneducated women, married and non-married women, in addition to the indirect speech used by women who live with grand-parents comparing with those who live with their small family.

Researcher also can investigate the use of indirectness in one category only, in order to make it less complicated and easy to other researchers.

## General Conclusion

Language is the mirror of society which differs in its use from culture to another, and it differs by certain social variables. Each speech community shares specific speech norms, which shows solidarity and belonging.

The present research focused on finding out the proportion of the use of indirectness among Aoulef's women. In order to collect data, the researcher depended on recording free daily conversations; the audio recording was a helpful methodology. The researcher could listen to the conversation or the interview many times. The researcher could reach a concrete result.

The findings show the different use of indirect expressions by each category. Also, it indicates the various topics that are most discussed by women of different ages. Each range of age is characterized by its speech-style which distinguishes them from each other.

The results of the findings indicate that the use of indirectness cause from an adult woman to the old one. That is women of the different categories cannot be similar neither in their discussed topics, nor in their speech style and their use of indirectness.

Women in the fourth category are wealthy with vocabularies; they master the language of their society consciously because they are oldest, the study reveals that age had affected the use of indirectness through the process of life.

This research work reveals that the use of indirectness by Aoulef's women is increasing with the increase of their age.

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