

A Sociolinguistic Study of Euphemistic Death Expressions in Jordanian Arabic

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Abstract

This study investigates the euphemistic death expressions used in the Jordanian society. It also examines the effect of the social variables: age, gender and region on the use of these expressions. To achieve the goals of the study, a questionnaire was developed and distributed to 130 male and female participants randomly selected from the governorates of Irbid and Mafraq to participate in the study. The results of the study showed that there are certain expressions which are more frequently used than others among participants irrespective of their age, gender or region. The results indicated that the social variables affect the use of these expressions only in certain situations. For instance, the above 30 year-old participants used more euphemized expressions than those who are 30 years old or under. In addition, males and females used different expressions only when trying to reduce the painful effects of someone's death. The results also showed that bedouin participants used different expressions from those used by rural participants when referring to the condoling house.

Keywords: euphemistic expressions (euphemism), death, politeness, sociolinguistics

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