



Contents available at : <http://jls.tu.edu.iq>

Journal of Language Studies

ISSN 2616- 6224



A Cultural and Sociolinguistic Analysis of English and Iraqi Arabic Certain Animal Proverbs

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Keywords: -Social Variables -Proverbs - Animals - Connotations speech communities	Abstract This study deals with some dog proverbs with the aim of showing the way in which the English and the Iraqi Arabs interpret and use animal proverbs. Some dog proverbs have been picked out and worked with Leech's (1981) connotations and Holmes' (2013) social factors. Among the findings, it is found out that English and Iraqi Arabs have different attitudes towards their animal proverbs which give the proverbs different connotations, and in turn, influence the way they interact with social factors. It is also figured out that both cultures associate the frequent use of dog proverbs with the lower prestigious occupations (e.g., farmers). Moreover, the English are more flexible in using animal proverbs with socially remote participants more than the Iraqi Arabs do. Finally, it is concluded that the only variable that coincides in the two cultures is the informality variables. This means the inappropriate use of dog proverbs in the formal type of interactions in England and Iraqi Arabic speech communities.
Article Info	
Article history: -Received 12/8/2018 -Accepted 20/8/2018 Available online 1/9/2018	

تحليل ثقافي واجتماعي للأمثال الحيوانية
العربية والإنجليزية

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المستخلص

تتناول هذه الدراسة تحليل امثال مختارة محتوية على صورة "الكلب" بهدف عرض الاختلافات في استعمالها وتفسيرها بين المجتمع العراقي والمجتمع الانكليزي . استعملت نظرية العالم ليج (1981) للمعنى الضمني ونظرية العالمة هولمز (2013) للعوامل الاجتماعية كأساس للتحليل بالإضافة الى تطبيق استبيان على عينة عشوائية في انكلترا والعراق. من بين النتائج التي توصلت اليها الدراسة انه يوجد اختلافات في موقف كلا المجتمعين من صورة الكلب في الامثال وبالتالي يؤثر على استخدامات الامثال في مواقف اجتماعية معينة. وان الناس الذين يميلون الى استعمال هكذا امثال هم يشغلون مهن الطبقة الدنيا في المجتمع (مثلا، الفلاحين وغيرهم). بالإضافة الى ذلك، فان مجتمع انكلترا هم اكثر مرونة في استعمال الامثال المحتوية على صورة الكلب مع الأشخاص الذين تربطهم علاقة رسمية (مثلا، الموظف مع رئيسه في العمل) اكثر مما هي الحال في المجتمع العراقي. وأخيرا، فان هنالك تشابه في كلا المجتمعين قيد الدراسة في ربط استعمال هكذا امثال في المواقف والمحادثات غير الرسمية(مثلا في البيت او الشارع).

1. Introduction

Animal expressions (e.g., proverbs) are frequently used in everyday interactions and grow as part of language and society (Hsieh and Jucker, 2003:332). Proverbs are traditional sayings which play a very major role in any region. Many cultural themes can be found in proverbs because they are full of imagery (e.g., animal, food, colour, etc.).The range of animal images in proverbs is one of the most complicated ones since it is important to understand the culture value of the given animal for the analysis , interpretation, and appropriate use of proverbs.

Academic researchers have shown that the relationship between the linguistic choice and social factors are systematic. and rule-governed. In support of this view, this study supposes that whether the speaker's choice of animal proverbs is conscious or automatic, such choices are subjected to the connotations and consequently to certain social factors.

This study is designed to address the problem that the effects of different culture values; and the effects of occupational, social distance, and formality variable on linguistic choice of animal proverbs in English and Iraqi Arabic are "contradictory and problematic". It aims at showing how English and Iraqi Arabs behave linguistically in their use of animal proverbs to cope with the demands and restrictions of a given society. It hypothesizes that there are different interpretations and values

given to the same animal by English and Iraqi Arabic cultures as reflected in their proverbs which in turn leads to statistical significant difference in their usage with regard to social factors. The procedure to be followed in this study is that the proverbs are analyzed culturally and sociolinguistically. This analysis includes cultural interpretations of the animal image in the proverbs and also the influence of the social variables on proverbs. In addition, t-test formula is used to compare the nature of the relationship between social factors and dog proverbs between English and Iraqi Arabic languages.

2. Data Population and Sample of the Study

The data of the present study include randomly selected dog proverbs. The population of the current study is England and Iraq. In England, the people who represent the sample of the current study enrolled in London and Leeds universities. In Iraq, the sample is those who enrolled in Tikrit and Anbar universities. They have high academic background. Since the test is applied in the dormitories of the previously mentioned universities, they are thought to be representative of the countries under consideration. The people of England involved in the current study speak English as a native language. And the Iraqi people involved in the present study involves only those whose native language is Arabic. Those whose native language is different are excluded in order to avoid any influence of their cultural interpretation of the dog proverbs.

3. Methodology

The current study employs a mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches because they validate each other. The qualitative approach represents the number of data and the first level of analysis (i.e., cultural interpretation of the proverbs). It is used to give detailed information related to each proverb. The quantitative approach represents the statistical results obtained by the application of a recognition survey in England and Iraq. It is used as a helping tool to figure out and prove the nature of the relationship between the social variables and the use of dog proverbs. The people engaged in responding to the questionnaire aged between 20-30 because this is the model age of university students. The net number of the study subjects is 100, in that 50 participants are taken from each country. They reveal their recognition of the use of forty animal proverbs. Ten are included in the present study for the time and space

available. It is to be mentioned that the researcher takes part in responding to the Arabic version of the questionnaire since he is a native speaker of Iraqi Arabic. The proverbs listed in the survey are taken from dictionaries and showed to experts in both countries (e.g., Prof. Dr. Muslih Shwaysh in Iraq, University of Anbar; and Prof. Dr. James Wilson in England, University of Leeds) to see if they are still in use today. After that, some proverbs are excluded because they are either not widely used in society or they include a taboo and offensive word(s)

The choice of dictionaries in gathering the English data is after Estaji and Nackhawali (2011:1213) in their article, where they (2011:1214) state that the availability of dictionaries in bookshops, academic institutions and online resources leads to give them a privilege in collecting proverbs. Then, after Ambu-Saidi (2010), they are written down on questionnaires and distributed to a large number of study subjects. The questionnaire is checked and amended by jury members of thirteen experts in the field. Finally, the results are worked on with the help Asst. Prof. Dr. Ahmed Hussein Battal, (University of Anbar).

4. Related Sociolinguistic Matters

Hudson (1996:3,105) says that sociolinguistics is the study of connections between social variables (such as social status, age, gender, etc.) and language use. Trudgil (2000:32) adds the effects of the cultural norms may be considered under the scope of sociolinguistics. Moreover, Wardaugh (2010:12) adds that the goal of sociolinguistics involves a better understanding of how language functions in communication. The current study is concerned with analyzing the different cultural interpretations of the image of dogs in proverbs and the effect of certain social variables on the use of dog proverbs. These variables are explained below.

4.1. The Cultural Variable

The connotation of the animal word means the information which is given to the animal word by the society. Leech's connotation is used as one of the framework of the analysis. Leech (1981:12) hypothesizes that the additional meaning of a word reflects the viewpoint adopted by a group of people in a speech community that vary from one society to another. For instance, regardless of the conceptual content of the

words of animals in some proverbs, such words can communicate positive connotations (e.g., loyal) or negative ones (e.g., disloyal).

4.2. The Occupational Variable

The occupation chosen for the current study belongs to different social status as indicated by Herk (2012:49). In this regard, Holmes (2013:10) indicates that the speaker's superiority(gained by many factors including his occupation) is a relevant factor in linguistic choices. Consequently, the subordinate participant will not use language in the same way as the superior does(Holmes, 2013: 10). The occupation of a speaker reflects his status. Some occupations (e.g., college professor) are more prestigious and belong to those of the higher status (see Herk, 2012:49). Therefore, such people are very careful in their use of linguistic expressions (e.g., dog proverbs). Hence the linguistic choice a speaker makes signals his/her social status in a given speech community.

4.3. The Social Distance Variable

It means that how well the speaker knows the addressee is a relevant factor in effecting linguistic choices a speaker makes (Holmes, 2013: 9). The choice of the appropriate linguistic item in interaction with family, friend, or a foreigner involves taking into consideration whether the social distance is close or remote (Holmes, 2013: 9).

Consequently, language user needs to recognize the social value of any speech community for the sake of speaking appropriately (Holmes, 2013: 285). This approach encourages a sociolinguist to review every linguistic choice as meaningful. For instance, some proverbs are not to be used if the relationship between participants is remote because of the negative connotations such as the Iraqi Proverb: **الديج رجله** "بالخره ويعوعي" (Though the cock's foot is in dirtiness, it cackles)(At-Tikriti, vol. 2, 1978: 245). Otherwise, it would be impolite and offensive.

4.4. The Formality Variable of Setting

The formality ranges from formal to informal type of interaction. Formal settings such as law courts or a graduation ceremony and formal situations like a formal interview with a bank manager or head-teacher will require the choice of appropriate language expressions including proverbs (Holmes, 2013: 448). This can

be applied on animal proverbs in the sense that certain animal proverbs contain specific items that make them inappropriate to be used in formal setting. For example: "تموت الدجاجة وعينها على المزبلة" (At-Tikriti, vol.2: 1978: 166). (A hen dies and its eyes remain gazing at dump or dunghill). This is because the language is prescribed by the careful use of language in formal setting (ibid: 448).

5. Dog Proverbs in English and Iraqi Arabic: Data Presentation

This section presents some English and Iraqi Arabic dog proverbs. These proverbs are selected from English and Iraqi Arabic written sources. The first column in the following table presents the English proverbs while the second column presents the Iraqi Arabic propositional equivalent dog proverbs.

No	English Dog Proverbs	Iraqi Arabic Dog Proverbs
1.	"Love me, love my dog" (Speake, 2008: 316).	"يَعِزُّونَ الْجَلْبَ لِعُيُونِ أَهْلِهِ" (At- Tikriti, vol.6; 1991: 271). (They respect the dog for the sake of its family's eyes)
2.	"The dogs bark, but the caravan goes on" (Simpson, 2003: 88).	"نبح الجلاب ما يضر السحاب" (At- Tikriti, vol.6; 1991: 35). (The dogs' barking does not hurt the clouds)
3	"Take a dog for a companion and a stick in your hand" (Stone, 2006:72).	a) "الجلب ما يطهر" (Ad-Dulajshi, vol.1;1968: 243)(The dog never cleanses) b) "الكلب كلب ولو طوقته من ذهب" (At-Tikriti, vol.4; 1986: 296). (A dog remains a dog even if you dressed it with gold)
4	"A man's best friend is his dog" (Manser, 2007: 58).	-----
5	"Every dog is a lion at home" (Manser, 2007: 76).	"كل جلب ببابه نباح" (At-Tikriti, vol.4; 1986 354).

Table (1) English and Iraqi Arabic Dog Proverbs

5.1. Analysis and Discussion of Dog Proverbs

Out of the given proverbs, three proverbs from each language is analyzed in the next subsections for the sake of time and space. The other proverbs are left to the

reader to draw parallelism in their meaning and their socially appropriate use. This technique is after Strugiselska and Alonso, 2013: 3). The following subsection deals with the English proverbs as follows:

5.1.1. English Dog Proverbs Discussion

For a long time, people are in contact with animals. They understand animals' habits and behaviors. Consequently, they use animal characteristics to describe human traits indirectly. Moreover, the connotations of the animal proverbs may affect their use and interpretations as shown in the following dog proverbs.

Concerning the first English proverb in the previous table, the literal meaning is that in order to love me, you must love my dog. This proverb expresses the theme of association and the dog is portrayed as a trivial creature that receives attentions *only* for the sake of its owner. Though a dog is considered as pets and valuable by English people, it is portrayed as a trivial creature that is given respect for the sake of its owner only. The implied meaning of this proverb is that sometimes if you respect somebody, you should respect everything connected with him. The following Irish proverb makes it clearer "if you hit my dog, you hit myself" (Manser,2007:144). Thus, there are certain good manners given to trivial people for the sake and want of their relatives or the like.

The second English proverb given in the previous table literally means that the dogs are barking at the caravan, but the caravan does not care and it moves on. The dog which is described in a pejorative term is barking at the peaceful caravan. The dog is described as being nuisance. The "caravan" has two meanings: "a mobile home or a group of people moving together". The second meaning is intended in this proverb. The barking of the dog stands for the negative criticism of the lower and wicked people. The point of the proverb is that the complaint and dispute of some lower people should be ignored by the righteous and higher position people (see also Manser, 2007:58). This proverb is commonly used in English. It has its origin in Arabic as "though the dog may bark, the caravan (*kafila*) moves on".(Speake,1997:144 ; Stone, 2006:27). The implied meaning of this proverb is that the superiority of the goodness of great people leads them to ignore the negative interventions and objection of others since some people put their nose in everything.

Surprisingly, the literal meaning of the third proverb is that when you take your dog for a companion, hold sticks in your hands for your own safety. The dog is depicted as being sometimes aggressive, and can be a nuisance; dogs therefore have to be held off with a stick. The dog in this proverb stands for the wicked people because they both share the characteristics of betrayal and perfidy. This proverb expresses the theme of loss of confidence and the betrayal of others. The previous proverb praises the dog as the best friend whereas this proverb makes no exception saying that never trust anybody including your dog which is supposed to be your trustful companion. Having dogs as companions is the custom and tradition of English people. They also tend to have dogs as pet animals and take their dogs out for a walk. Thus, this sociocultural element is reflected in their language. With this in mind, the implied meaning of this proverb is that one should constantly be ready to take actions himself if necessary (see also Manser, 2007:229). The following proverb makes the meaning of the fourth proverb clearer: "three things are not to be trusted,[among them] a dog's tooth", which means that a dog (which represents the bad people) is not to be trusted since it is likely to hurt you. Therefore, you should treat it with caution (Manser, 2007:273).

5.1.1.2. Sociolinguistic Variables vs. English Dog Proverb

Furthermore, according to Holmes (2013:8), the use of certain linguistic expression is governed by certain social factors. Some of these factors are related to language users (e.g., relationship between participants, etc.), some of them are related to language uses (e.g., formality of interaction, etc.). The following table visualizes the relationship between dog proverbs and certain social factors.

No	Social Variable	Factors of value higher than 25.00	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Cultural Variables:	Positive	33.50	8.26
2.	Social Distance variable:	close	30.50	8.16
3.	Formality variable:	informal	38.00	7.68

At this point, for the cultural variable, the mean score for the positive sense of the analyzed dog proverbs is 33.50 . It seems that English native speakers recognize that the dog proverbs usually have positive senses in their culture. This is because the way they value their dogs. Interestingly, the mean scores of the given occupations are less than 25.00, which shows that there is no preference of the use of dog proverbs by one occupation on the advantage of the others. This reflects the fact that English people of various social status keep this animal. This leads to the common use of such animal proverb without significant noticeable differences between social status. Besides, for the social distance variable, the mean score for the close relationship between participants is 30.50. It means that the dog proverbs are frequently used when there is solidarity between speakers. For the formality variable, the mean score for the informal choice is 38.00. This sustains that although dog proverbs have positive senses, they are commonly used in informal interactions.

5.1.2. Iraqi Arabic Dog Proverbs Discussion

Although a dog has positive and negative connotations (e.g., loyal and disloyal), all the dog proverbs in the sources of this study portray dogs as having negative connotations. Among the surveyed dog proverbs, the following show that the dog is depicted as trivial (see proverb no 1); coward and useless (proverb no 2); dirty (proverb no 3); scruffy and unkempt (proverb no 4).

The literal meaning of the first Arabic proverb is that they respect the dog for the sake of its family. This proverb has many variations such as *يكرم الجلب لخاطر اهله* and *"يحشمون الجلب لخاطر اهله"* (At-Tikrity, vol.6;1991: 271). It means that the dog does not deserve respect by itself. However, the merely reason that people honor a dog is to show respect to its owner. The dog stands for low-down, roguish and disrespectful people because the only reason that that dogs are respected is for the sake of their family who, conversely, deserve respect. The following saying makes the meaning of the proverb clearer " لأجل عين الف عين تكرم " (one thousand eyes for an eye are honored ,which implies that many people are being honored for the sake of one respectful person). It resembles the proverbs in that the undeserved person (in the given proverb referred to as a "dog") is honored for the sake of his respectful

family. The point of the proverb is that though some people are roguish, they should be respected for the sake of the good reputation of their families which is part of the traditions of Iraqi Arabic culture.

The second proverb means literally that the barking of dogs never bother the clouds. It is due to the highness of clouds that makes the barking of the lower dogs as harmless. Here, the "dogs barking" represents the objections of degraded people whereas the "clouds" refers to the greatness and high position of the good people. This proverb comes out of the situation that the dogs fear the rain so they usually bark when they expect rain as the clouds are gathering. However, their attempts to prevent rain is in vain and worthless. Thus, the point of the proverb is that the good deeds of the good people are not influenced by the saying (symbolized in the proverb by the word "barking") or negative criticism of bad people. Some aspects of this proverb is similar to the English proverb " Barking dogs never bite" (Speake, 2003:16) which tries to make people feel safe and never care about the "barking" or the objection of non-righteous people. It is also equivalent to the famous Arabic poetic quote which reads as "وإذا خاطبك اللئيمُ فصدِّ سمعَكَ عَنْ سَمَاعِهِ" (if the roguish address you with sarcastic tone, never listen to him).

The third proverb depicts the dog with a pejorative term "ما يطهر" (never cleanses). The meaning of this proverb is that never waste effort trying to clean a dog because it never cleanses. Obviously, Iraqis are influenced by Islamic instructions which tell that dogs are dirty and stinky. Consequently, if somebody touches a dog, s/he should wash his hands many times before doing many actions such as going to prayer, etc. The idea of the dirtiness of dogs is emphasized in other Arabic proverbs such as "أبول من كلب" (Cited in Sameer, 2016:138), which demonstrates that dogs are dirty to the extent that they do not care about the place where they urinate. Furthermore, the proverb "الجلب ما يطهر" shows that the Iraqis do not have dogs as pets inside their houses because they are dirty. Iraqis who are occupied as farmers or sheep owners in the rural areas have dogs for guarding their houses and sheep. This proverb is equivalent to the English proverb which reads "To wash a pig is to waste both water and soup" where the same idea is indicated but using different linguistic vehicle which is "a pig". The point of the Iraqi Arabic proverb "الجلب ما يطهر" is that whatever effort you exert to get some people on the right track, they still have bad characteristics, they treat you with disrespect and they try to seek opportunity to

make use of you (see also Ad-Dulajshi ,1966: 243). From this idea, the concomitance of dirtiness to dogs is used to describe the concomitance of the wickedness to some people. Thus, The implied meaning is that do not expect good things from disloyal people.

5.1.2.2. Sociolinguistic Variables vs. Iraqi Arabic Dog Proverbs

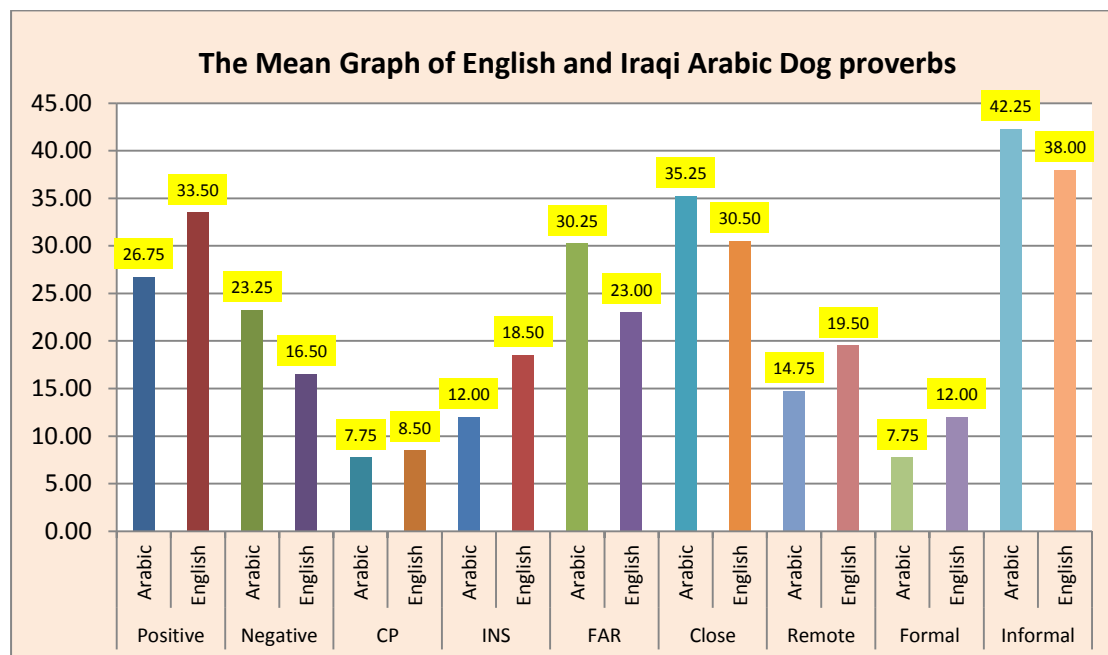
The previous discussion of the meaning and connotations of proverbs paves the way to the understating of the variation of the use of the dog proverbs in Iraqi society. The way, with which Iraqi Arabic speakers value their dogs and their attitude towards them, is reflected in their proverbs. Thus, it is expected that certain dog expressions are associated with certain social factors rather than others. The test administrated by the researcher in the Iraqi Arabic society shows the following results:

No	Social Variable	Factors of value higher than 25.00	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Cultural Variables:	Positive	26.75	8.26
2.	Occupational Variable	farmer	30.25	7.63
3.	Social Distance variable:	close	35.25	5.50
4.	Formality variable:	informal	42.25	5.68

The means scores of the social variables in the previous table are higher than (25.00). This sustains that the Iraqi study subjects recognize the given proverbs as culturally having positive senses. Among the given occupations, The use of dog proverbs are highly associated with farmers who represent the lower status people. The other given occupational variables (e.g., professors, high school instructors, and the like) less frequently use such proverbs. It is due to the prestigious status of those people who are often connected with formal interactions. Moreover, such proverbs are used when there is closeness between participants. Very often, they are commonly used in informal interaction because in such setting, people are less constrained in using linguistic expressions.

5.1.3. Comparison of the Effect of Social Variables on Dog Proverbs

The following graph visualizes the differences between the mean scores of the English and the Iraqi Arabic dog proverbs



The previous graph visualizes the mean scores of the social variables of the two languages. This comparison maintained by the application of the formula of the t-test for two independent samples shows that although there are variations between the mean scores between the social variables and the use of dog proverbs in both societies, only the occupational variables appear to have statistically significant differences at 0.05 degree of significance. Obviously, the mean score of the instructor variable as part of the occupational variable shows that the English mean score of the group of dog proverbs is 18.50, and that of the Iraqi Arabic group recognition is 12.00.

This guarantees that the results of the mean score are in a significantly positive direction on behalf of the English group. It is due to the fact that the comparison of the mean scores displays that the frequency of the English native speaker's recognition of the use of dog proverbs by English instructor is substantially higher than that of the Iraqi Arabic native speakers as presented in the previous mean graph.

Furthermore, the comparison of the other variables shows no significant difference between the English and the Iraqi Arabic groups. Despite this, there are some interesting remarks as shown in the mean graph that the English dog proverbs are more positive than the Iraqi Arabic ones; the Iraqi Arabic speakers associate the

use of dog proverbs more with farmers (who belong to the lower social status) than the English. It is probably because of the negative connotations associated with the dog and reflected in proverbs by Iraqi speakers. There is a tendency to use dog proverbs in Iraq only when there is more solidarity between speakers than the case in English. Finally, there is more association of the use of dog proverbs in informal setting in Iraq than in English.

6. Findings and Conclusions

The analysis of the content of selected proverbs containing the word 'dog' reveals that, for cultural analysis, the English portray (dogs) positively and occasionally negatively. For example, the positive image of dog in the English proverbs such as "A man's best friend is his dog", and the negative image lies in proverbs such as "Barking dogs never bite". However, the Iraqi Arabic speakers portray 'dogs' in *proverbs* negatively only such as the following Iraqi Arabic proverb "الكلب كلبٌ ولو طوقته من ذهب". This coincides with Kreidler's (1998) findings that though dog words have the same conceptual meaning, their connotations have more positive connotations for English than they do in Arabic. This is because their meaning involves people's attitudes towards the animal in the real world

However, the recognition test reveals that many Iraqi Arabic proverbs are judged by the study subjects as being positive in spite of having negative meanings as explained earlier. This indicates that the educated study subjects have certain difficulties in figuring out the connotations of animal proverbs. This observation is significant because it indicates that Iraqi Arabic young speakers of (20-30) years old may misuse of animal proverbs in a given social setting because they already misjudge their interpretations. This observation coincides with Ambu-Saidi (2010 :60), in her study of the Omani Arabic proverbs. She found that some young Omani language users inappropriately use proverbs as they are not efficient in the intended meaning of proverbs like old men who are in turn acquainted with the proverbs.

For the sociolinguistic analysis, among the occupations under consideration, it is established that the study subjects associate that English instructors use dog proverbs more than the Iraqi Arabic do (5.1.3). This variation is due to the different value and attitude given by people of different cultures to the same animal and ,in

turn, their attitude influences their use of proverbs containing "an image of dogs. This coincides with Heish and Jucker (2003). They found that animal words in proverbs are either used to connote negatively as abuse (e.g. scruffy) or positively to praise (e.g., nobility). Because of their social background, certain people vary in their use of those proverbs which connote" negatively.

Furthermore, It was shown that most animal proverbs are either offensive or conveying negative connotations. Therefore, the farmer as a social variable is proved to be the highly influential one among the other occupations to the advantage of using animal proverbs in English and Iraqi Arabic cultures.

For the formality variable, it was found that all the given animal proverbs whether in English or in Iraqi Arabic are frequently used in informal interactions. They are avoided in formal interactions because of their animal image. This agrees with Meider's (2004) findings that many proverbs are dropped out because their imagery do not fit the modern social life.

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