

المصطلحات اللغوية الخاصة بالمساجين الفلسطينيين في السجون الإسرائيلية: منظور براغماتي

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الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة اللغة الغامضة التي يستخدمها السجناء الفلسطينيون بشكل يومي؛ لإيصال رسائل سرية مشفرة فيما بينهم، ولتضليل السجناء الإسرائيلي. يعكس المعنى البراغماتي لهذه اللغة الخاصة الظروف القاسية للأسرى الفلسطينيين، في جميع مناحي حياتهم الروتينية، الاجتماعية والعسكرية والأمنية، داخل السجون الإسرائيلية. جمعت هذه المصطلحات من مقابلات مع خمسة أسرى فلسطينيين أُطلق سراحهم حديثاً، وقضوا فترات طويلة في السجون الإسرائيلية. ولتحليل أفضل للمصطلحات؛ صنفت إلى مصطلحات مجازية وأخرى غير مجازية؛ وذلك بناءً على استخدامها السياقي في بيئة السجن. تبين الدراسة أنه على الرغم من أن هذه المصطلحات قد انحرفت عن استخداماتها الدلالية الأصلية، واكتسبت تطبيقات براغماتية جديدة مدفوعة باحتياجات السجناء الفلسطينيين؛ للتواصل الاجتماعي والمناورة ومخاوف أمنية، فإنها لا تزال تظهر ارتباطاً قوياً بين معانيها الحرفية والبراغماتية. وبعبارة أخرى وفي بعض الحالات قد يدل المعنى البراغماتي للمصطلحات داخل السجن من الناحية المفاهيمية على معناها الحرفي خارج سياق السجن. وبينت الدراسة أيضاً أن هذه المصطلحات تنقل أفعال كلام مختلفة (غير مباشرة): من التنبيه والتهديد والأمر والطلب في سياق السجن. نوصي الباحثين الآخرين بالتركيز على اللغة الغامضة للسجينات الفلسطينيات اللواتي قد يكون لديهن احتياجات ومخاوف مختلفة عن تلك الخاصة بالسجناء، الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة البراغماتية، اللغة الخاصة في السجناء الفلسطينيين، السجناء الأميون، المعنى المجازي، السياق الظرفي.

Palestinian Inmates' Jargon in Israeli Jails: A Pragmatic Account

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to pragmatically examine cryptic language Palestinian inmates employ on daily basis to communicate coded, secret messages among themselves and to mislead Israeli jailers. The pragmatic meaning of this special language reflects the harsh conditions of Palestinian security prisoners in all aspects of their routine social, military, and security life inside Israeli prisons. The data of the study have been collected from interviews with five newly freed Palestinian prisoners who served long sentences in the Israeli jails. For a better analysis, the data have been classified into metaphoric and non-metaphoric based on their situational use in the prison environment. The study found that although these terms have drifted from their original semantic usages and acquired new pragmatic applications initiated by Palestinian prisoners' needs for socializing, maneuvering, and security concerns, they still exhibit strong connection between their literal and pragmatic meanings. Put differently, in some cases, the pragmatic meaning of the terms used inside the prison conceptually maps their literal meaning outside the prison context. The study also has revealed that these terms convey different (indirect) speech acts of warning, threatening, command, and request in the prison context. We recommend other researchers to focus on the cryptic language of Palestinian female prisoners who might have needs and concerns that are different from those of the males'.

Keywords: pragmatic language; Palestinian inmates' jargon; security prisoners; metaphoric illocutions; situational context

ISSN : 1026-9576

DOI : 10.34120/0117-040-160-008

1. Introduction

Palestinian security prisoners' culture seems to be neglected in studies even though it represents a unique phenomenon in the language area. The prisoners use their own cryptic anti-language/terms to communicate (secret) messages among themselves in the prison environment. Interestingly, these terms have drifted away from their original semantic meanings and acquired new pragmatic applications prompted by Palestinian prisoners. These terms are initially classified as prison culture-specific items; they refer to lexical units circulated within a specific community inside a specific prison culture and have acquired additional connotative, pragmatic meanings in the context of everyday prison life. They are classified into social, military, and security terms. Social terms are used to express the restrictions on prisoners' gatherings inside the prison cell. Military terms are meant to describe the provocation procedures jailers oblige Palestinian prisoners to go through. Security terms, however, are used to deliver hidden messages and deceive the jailer. In this article, we intend to point out the intentional pragmatic ambiguities created using these cryptic terms and show how these terms operate at two levels of meaning: The literal (outside the prison context), and the pragmatic (inside the prison context).

To begin with, the word term is defined as "a word or phrase used to describe a thing or to express a concept, especially in a particular kind of language or branch of study." (Strehlow, 1993, p. 258). The terms within this study are either coined or have acquired new meanings to reflect the environment in which the language users live and operate, namely in Israeli prisons. Choi (2006, p. 89) uses the phrase "social neologisms" in talking about such terms which are related to a specific society, and he describes how languages grow their terminology stock by coining or borrowing specialized words for specific environments:

All languages will continue to grow and develop to express new situations and new concepts. Thus, (1) new words and phrases will be created, (2) new loan words will be brought in from foreign languages, and (3) new meanings will be given to existing words.

The three mentioned processes have resulted in the emergence of prison culture-specific items that are idiomatic, and their new meanings are only recognizable to the prison community. Based on the practice of the speech community within which these terms circulate, it is usually impossible for an outsider to guess what a neologism denotes based on the verbal sign alone (cf. Al-Harashsheh et al. 2020). White (1984, p. 11) maintains that terms usually acquire their "richness" and "complexity" step by step like the gradual effect of their usages by many speakers and writers. Gradually, simple words and empty clichés develop new significance and richness. For example, among

the Palestinian prisoners' community, the term *asfur* (lit. bird) has evolved to mean a "collaborator" or a "spy", referring to a Palestinian prisoner who collects information about other prisoners on behalf of the Israelis (see section 6.3 below).

Hurst (2019, p. 124) talks about Tsotsitaal, which is a linguistic variety used by South African urban youth as a form of resistance against "the monolingual, anglo-normative linguistic hegemony of western modernity". This vernacular was used in the 1940s during the apartheid era in South Africa as a revolt against "the conditions of inequality in colonial, and later, postcolonial societies, in imposed nation-states where the dominance of European languages and capitalist consumerism further disadvantages those outside the western episteme" (Hurst, 2019, p.123).

Al-Harabshe et al. (2020, p. 1) study Jordanian inmates' anti-language and discuss the relexicalization processes such as neologisms, metaphors, idiomatic expressions, and euphemisms, which are used by Jordanian prisoners to distinguish themselves from the wider Jordanian community and establish their subculture. The authors (p.2) maintain that "when a group of interlocutors is socially isolated for a certain reason, they tend to create their own code or jargon that has a completely different pragmatic import which reflects their counter-society (anti-society), technically known as anti-language". They also add that the users of an anti-language try "to protect themselves by generating words, expressions, or giving some existing words new meanings that can be understood only by the members of their group" (Al-Harabshe et al., 2020, p.2). Similarly, Halliday (1976, p. 569) explains that anti-language can be seen as "a conscious alternative to a society", which is built within another society whose members use anti-language as a way of resistance or revolt against oppression.

The purpose of the present paper is to give a pragmatic account of the special terms (anti-language) Palestinian security prisoners use inside Israeli prisons. The origins and implications of these terms were subsequently elaborated in the interviews with five Palestinian informants who served long sentences in Israeli prisons and had their freedom. The specific pragmatic meanings of these terms are then compared with their literal significance as used in Palestinian spoken Arabic. Such comparisons allow the researchers to identify their pragmatic imports which are used for maneuvering and security reasons.

2. Methodology

This study depends on collecting data from three main sources. Firstly, personal interviews were conducted with five freed male Palestinian prisoners who served long sentences in different Israeli jails to collect data related to the prisoners' intentions behind using the coded terms. Serving a long sentence was an important requirement in

selecting the informants since these prisoners will more likely have precise knowledge of the prison culture and its daily activities. Their prison periods varied from the 1980s until 2016. Some of them served their sentences over intermittent periods, where they would be released and then recaptured and sentenced back to prison. The five prisoners appeared to be more educated than the average prisoners which facilitated the process of gathering these terms. The second source is the Encyclopedia of Palestinian and Arab Detainees Experience published by the Abu Jihad Museum for the Prisoners Movement Affairs in 2015. The third source is the prisoners' diaries and literary writings. Thirteen terms were collected and the reason behind examining these particular terms is that they have deviated from their original meanings, generated different speech acts, and developed a new set of conventions within the prison context.

The gathered terms have been classified into three categories: social, military, and security (see table 1 below). The security terms have been duly classified as metaphorical ones, while the social and military terms have been deemed non-metaphorical. Still, whether or not the term has pragmatic connotations, or whether or not it is void of such connotations, it has certain prison-culture implications which do not exist outside the prison context. A twofold analysis is then conducted: the original terms are examined and analyzed first, and then their intended social, pragmatic prison contextual meaning is given. These prison-specific meanings are then compared with the literal significance of the words as used in Palestinian spoken Arabic.

Table 1: Classification of Inmates' Terms

Category	Term
1. Social Terms	1. Jalse 2. Il-fora
2. Military Terms	3. Il-eks 4. Daqdaqa 5. Bastara
1. Security Terms	6. Asfur 7. Bidlef 8. Iz-zawyah 9. Ghayyamat 10. Adet Kusayeh 11. Ninja 12. Ghazal 13. Kabsole

3. Significance of the Study

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study which pragmatically examines the anti-language Palestinian prisoners use during their daily life inside the Israeli jails. To this effect, the study sheds light on the origins of these terms and their acquired connotations which are not listed in standard dictionaries. This would benefit researchers since dictionaries do not include all terms, and even when they include a term, they may not list all of the possible connotations of that term. Moreover, even if these terms have corresponding explanations in English, these explanations may not reflect the exact connotations implied in each instance. To find the best contextual meaning, we go beyond the dictionary meaning in this study, and we closely examine the implied meanings and the pragmatic aspects of these terms.

Another reason which lends importance to this study is that Palestinian prisoners' culture in Israeli prisons has been neglected in research studies although this culture represents a unique phenomenon in the language area. In our discussion of the data of the study, we have shown that the prisoners' terms have drifted away from their original semantic meanings in this prison context, but they still continue to have a connection with the original literal meaning. Thus, this study contributes to the efforts already made to create a repository of prison terminology which may benefit researchers in the field, and critics and writers of prison literature.

4. Theoretical Framework

Over time, Palestinian prisoners developed their unique speech community complete with their own culture and language. Morris (1971) was the first to expand the field of linguistics to include the study of such phenomena. Before Morris, language was viewed merely in terms of linguistic signs and their meanings. Morris, however, redefined language as a tool used by a group of people and affected by their usage. Later researchers built upon Morris' theories, and the discipline of pragmatics has developed. Levinson (1983, p.24) says that pragmatics concerns the meaning in context, and it studies how utterances are interpreted, taking special note of the situation(s) surrounding such utterances. He asserts that "it is a branch of study concerned with the ability of language users to pair sentences with the context in which they would be appropriate".

Austin (1962) identifies certain statements as "performatives" because the very act of saying such statements performs the desired task. To make these performative actions valid, the context must be appropriate. Austin notices that ordinary language often uses sentences to do things rather than to merely describe states of affairs. His theory of speech acts is based upon the assumption that human languages combine sound

and meanings to accomplish specific actions. The central assumption of this theory is described by Martin (1987, p. 83) who asserts that "(it) is to see language as a tool for doing things and to explain what bits of language mean in terms of what they are used to do".

Austin's (1962) point of view, however, assumes that truth conditions are not central to language understanding. He maintains that declarative sentences are not always used to make true or false statements but to perform acts under certain circumstances. Austin (1962, p. 107) distinguishes between three kinds of activities associated with any utterance: locutionary act i.e., the utterance of a sentence with determinate sense and reference; illocutionary act i.e. the communicative force of the utterance such as to request or order; and perlocutionary act i.e. the effect of the utterance on the hearer. Searl (1969, p. 22), on the other hand, proposes five categories of illocutionary acts:

"We tell people how things are (assertive); we try to get them to do things (directives); we commit ourselves to do things (commissives); we express our feelings and attitudes (expressives), and we bring about changes in the world through our utterances (declarations)".

The problem with this classification, Searle argues, is that one and the same utterance will often fit into more than one category. For example, a speaker in uttering "It is cold in here" is not making an assertive but might also be requesting the hearer to close the window in an indirect way. The case here is that the hearer may encounter difficulty in moving from the literal assertive sentence meaning to the implied indirect meaning. Put differently, in most cases of meaning, the intended speaker's utterance meaning differs from the literal meaning of the expressions uttered. This fact pushes Searl (1969, p. 30) to suggest that.

The simplest cases of meaning are those in which the speaker utters a sentence and exactly and literally means what he says. But, notoriously, not all cases of meaning are this simple: in hints, insinuations, irony, and metaphor, the speaker's utterance meaning and the sentence meaning come apart in various ways.

To illustrate, the security prison Arabic term "Kabse" is originally the name of a popular dish in the Gulf countries made of rice, chicken, tomato sauce, carrots, ginger, garlic, and many other spices. The word is commonly used in Palestinian spoken Arabic to mean "the press of a button" or "one-touch pressing". In the prison context, the term's illocution refers to a sudden and surprising raid by the prison guards on detainees' cells. The raid is usually unannounced and done secretly to ensure that the prisoners are not doing any forbidden activities inside their cells. Although the literal and pragmatic meanings of the word "kabse" seem to be at a great variance, but they are still connected. The literal meaning connotes something done hastily or quickly such as

pressing a button to turn on the lights. Similarly, the prisoners use the new illocutionary meaning to describe the quick surprise raid on them. Within the context of the prison, when a prisoner utters the term “Kabse”, he intends to communicate a speech act of warning; it is a cautioning speech act to the other prisoners. The intended illocution of this speech act is “Beware of a sudden raid” as it implies quickness and surprise within the prison context and may conjure up the action and motion which ensues from such a warning.

5. Metaphorical and Non-metaphorical Terms

Prisoners use metaphorical and non-metaphorical terms in the prison for different purposes. On the one hand, the security terms use metaphors to allow the prisoners to send coded messages to each other to avoid the guards’ detection and deceive them. On the other hand, some terms have emerged in the prisoners’ lexicon to record their experiences in the prison context even though they do not have metaphorical references; nonetheless, these terms have acquired certain pragmatic features in the peculiar prison context, and they can be found in the social and military categories .

When Palestinian prisoners use metaphorical terms, they say one thing but mean something else entirely. Searle (1969, p. 60) describes this sort of indirect speech as a situation where “one illocutionary act is performed indirectly by way of performing another”. This indirectness creates a range of freedom for prisoners to pass certain illocutionary acts. When the utterance means something other than its literal meaning, the hearer may be unable to understand the indirect speech. In other words, comprehension depends on shared background information which over time develops among prisoners within the prison environment. This gives prisoners the ability to use and understand such indirect terms which are non-communicable to those outside the prison environment. As a result, these acts depend on the shared background knowledge of the actual speakers and not on the semantic meaning of the terms. However, even though social and military terms do not have metaphorical references, they represent elements only found in the prison culture. Thus, the conventions of their production and reception are again dependent upon the prison environment and all its specific details.

Metaphoric speech acts are used in a prison environment for the purpose of misleading the jailers. For example, Antoni Gramsci, an Italian Marxist theoretician, and politician, who was imprisoned by Mussolini’s fascist regime, wrote his famous book *The Prison Notebook* while he was in jail. By using words and expressions to express hidden revolutionary concepts, Gramsci’s words passed beyond the walls of the prison and were published later in his famous book. Gramsci referred to Lenin as “Ilyich”, Marxism as “the philosophy of practice”, and the revolutionary party as “the modern prince”. These terms disguised the true meaning of what he was writing (cf. Harman 2007).

Similarly, Palestinian prisoners use certain terms that have acquired new pragmatic applications to evade guards' surveillance. This metaphorical anti-language is the main linguistic characteristic of Palestinian prisoners' community in Israeli jails. The language has circulated in the prison community for many years and has become part of Palestinian prisoners' linguistic repertoire.

6. Analysis and Discussion

This section analyzes Palestinian inmates' jargon and its pragmatic impact on the prison culture. The data are classified into social, military, and security terms. The discussion of the terms begins with their original, literal meanings, and then it proceeds to examine how they have acquired new illocutions inside the prison environment. Each category will be discussed with illustrative examples below.

6.1. Social Terms

The terms in this section have gained new contextual meanings derived from the environment surrounding Palestinian inmates during their own daily life in Israeli jails. By way of illustration, let us consider the following examples:

1. Jalse (lit. manner of sitting)

Literally, the term "jalse" in Arabic is a meeting of a group of people to simply talk or discuss a certain issue or topic. The term could mean in English "a sitting", which refers to the way you sit or a "séance", which means to conjure spirits. The idea of "gathering" is common among all these literal meanings. In the prison context, a "jalse" is defined as a tradition where inmates gather in circles inside their prison cells to discuss cultural, political, or internal issues. There are two types of sessions related to the prison context: public sessions which are attended by all inmates in the cell and discuss topics of general interest and private factional sessions which are attended by members of a certain faction and discuss security issues. The sessions are well-organized and disciplined and participant detainees are very committed to them and hold them regularly despite prohibitions of any kind of learning or amusement inside the prison. When the word "jalse" is uttered, the prisoners inside the prison cell should be prepared to gather to learn different subjects, read books, or discuss certain issues concerning their daily life. Some of these meetings result in important decisions, especially during prisoners' strikes. There is a connection between the term's original meaning and the prison context which adds an exclusive pragmatic difference related to how the prison environment defines this type of gathering. The English phrases "prisoners' meeting" or "prisoners' seminar sessions", which reflect the educational and knowledge sharing nature of the meeting, could be used to spell out the illocution of the term Jalse.

2. *il-fora* (lit. boiling)

In its literal sense, the term "*il-fora*" in Arabic describes the severity of boiling heat and it can also describe a sudden burst of activity. It is derived from the Arabic verb "to boil" and has emotional connotations, as it can refer to someone who bursts into passion, flames up with rage, or loses his temper. In the prison context, however, inmates use the term to imply that the 30-minute break during the day passes quickly. "*Il-fora*" is a half-hour intermission in the outside prison yard during which detainees can exercise, walk, or meet with other detainees. As there are many prisoners who all have only half an hour to walk in such a small space, they create a lot of noise as they walk and talk in circles because of the limited space. In other words, the crowded place where they walk seems to boil because of the noise made of walking and talking. Using the English word "break" to refer to the term "*il-fora*" would partially reflect the intended illocution of the term. In English, a break can be any physical activity. For example, if a student spends all evening studying for an exam, s/he can take a break by going for a walk. Similarly, in the prison context, prisoners get a break from the confines of their cell but using "a break" to refer to "*il-fora*" would deprive it of its implied meaning of the cramping of hundreds of prisoners in a small space for a very short time. In order to pragmatically account for the continuous noise and activity encapsulated in the term, the English phrase "prison intermission stroll" could be used.

6.2. Military Terms

Unlike security terms, Palestinian prisoners' military terms do not have metaphorical references and they describe the procedures which Israeli prison authorities use inside the jail. The prisoners live under rough circumstances, and they consequently coin new terms to reflect the cruelty of their situation and color their anti-language with interestingness, forcefulness, and emotiveness (Harahsheh et al. 2020). Like other terms which emerged in the prison environment, these terms describe the miserable and harsh conditions prisoners go through every single day. An analysis of their literal and pragmatic meanings is given below to show their intended illocutions.

3. *Il-eks* (lit. the letter X)

Originally, "*il-eks*", which literally refers to the Latin letter "X", means that something, is unknown. In Palestinian Arabic, when something or someone is called "*il-eks*", it means that it no longer exists in one's life. In its prison context, this term is commonly used to refer to a windowless solitary confinement chamber where prisoners can be locked up for a period of 60 days or more (see figure 1 below). This cell is often 2 square meters or less in size and has a long concrete slab for sleeping and a tiny toilet. This toilet is deliberately made small to make it difficult for detainees to use it. The

cell's walls have gloomy features painted with a depressing grey color; it may have a very bright light bulb to strain the detainee's eyes, or it may not have any light at all to make it difficult for the detainee to distinguish anything in the darkness. Pragmatically speaking, a detainee held in such harsh solitary confinement is referred to as "il-eks" to implicate that he no longer exists.

Figure 1

Il-Eks

(Source: Abu Jihad Museum)



4. Daqdaqqa (lit. a knock)

"Daqdaqqa" means to strike something with a sharp blow or to make noise by striking something, e.g., knocking the door. In the prison community, when the term is said by inmates, it implies a speech act of warning; Israeli prison authority usually searches the prison cells by bumping on tiles, concrete walls, or windows with a long stick to detect any attempt by inmates to dig an escape route. The term's illocution is connected to the literal meaning as both meanings imply an intensive operation of beating something with a sharp blow and making noise by striking it. The term is used by inmates to warn other inmates to be prepared for this surprise search method. Sometimes prisoners hide mobile phones or any prohibited items under the ground or in the wall and when the term "daqdaqqa" is uttered; they should change their places or move their items to another prison section until it is safe again.

Figure 2

Prisons' Concrete Walls

(Source: Abu Jihad Museum)



5. Bastara (lit. putting on boots)

At the literal level and outside the prison context, the term "bastara" is derived from the Arabic word bustar (lit.boot) and it literally means to put on boots. In the prison environment, the term "bastara" is used in three different situations. First, prisoners

use the term among themselves as a speech act of warning in the sense that every prisoner should wake up in the morning and put on their boots and be ready for the guards' daily headcount. The illocutionary force of this speech act communicates a warning and a command to inmates to get ready in a short time for the lineup. Another pragmatic use of this term implies a speech act of command; the prisoners use this term among themselves as a command to other inmates to wear their boots and get ready to attack a prisoner who disobeys the rules governing daily life inside the prison cell. For example, if a new inmate refuses to obey their rules regarding the food shares by eating more pieces of, let's say, breakfast bread than those allocated to him, the old prisoners punish him by asking him to clean the prison room for some days. When he continues in his refusal, they decide that he should be punished, and they utter the term "bastara"; it is a command to wear their boots and beat the disobeying inmate with them until he surrenders and agrees to obey all the rules. Finally, prison life generates a lot of friction between prisoners and Israeli jailers which requires issuing a warning illocution. Thus, the term is also used when prisoners feel threatened inside their prison rooms; they wear their boots to defend themselves and are ready to any clashes with the prison guards.

6.3. Security Terms

Security metaphoric terms are used by Palestinian inmates to deceive Israeli guards and communicate secret messages. In most cases, the conceptual mapping in the metaphors is accessible only to the community of inmates. It would be impossible for an outsider to guess what is denoted by these creative metaphors based on familiar conceptual mapping (see harahsheh et al. 2020). By way of illustration, let us consider the following examples:

6. Asfur (lit. bird)

In its literal sense (outside the prison environment), the term "asfur" in Arabic refers to a small, light bird and it may signify freedom. Contextually, the colloquial Arabic phrase "ṭar mithl il asfur" (lit. 'flew like a bird') is used to signify speed or escape to the outer space. In the prisoners' pragmatic usage, "asfur" is a name given to a spy - a prisoner who is planted by Israeli prison authority among his inmate prisoners inside the cell to spy on them. That person is branded "asfur" only after he has been discovered. When exposed and forced to confess, "asfur" is advised to regret his treason and stop spying for the Israeli jailers. If he refuses to cooperate with his inmate prisoners, he is killed by his fellow inmates following an intense interrogation that usually takes place between midnight and dawn. Another term derived from the word "asfur" is "asfar" (lit. managed to fly) and is used to refer to a spy prisoner who manages to escape torture and does not confess inside the prison cell during his intense interrogation. The spy

usually makes his way out of the prison room during the regular check and count of the prisoners by the Israeli jailers; sometimes he escapes by means of a break, visit, or when he is transferred from his prison room into another, pretending to be sick etc. Palestinian prisoners thus created a new function and pragmatic meaning for "asfur". The use of this term to describe the exposed spy is compared to a small bird which moves among prisoners and passes important information to the jailers, only to disappear once he is discovered.

There are different consequences for those who are called "asfur" inside the jail context. The first one is that the prisoner is considered a traitor and should be shunned by fellow inmates. The term conveys a speech act of warning to other prisoners that jailers are using him (the asfur) to gather clandestine information. It also implies that this person is no longer faithful to his people or prison inmates and should sit in "iz-zawyeh" (lit. The corner) (see example 8 below) once other prisoners are certain about his ties to Israeli prison authorities. The pragmatic meaning of the term "asfur" is remarkably different from its semantic origin. An expression in English which may offer us a similar function is "stool pigeon". This term is used by pigeon hunters to mean that one pigeon is used to lead other pigeons into the trap. Similarly, police often send someone undercover to join a group of criminals to spy on them or to help arrest them. However, since the prisoners' intention in using such a metaphorical, indirect speech act is to connote treachery and disloyalty and to cast this "asfur" out of the prisoners' community once he is exposed after interrogation, words in English like "traitor", "spy", or "informant" are appropriate illocutions that manifest the pragmatic imports of the term "asfur" in the prison context. Moreover, in British English slang, "do bird" means "to spend time in prison" (Cambridge.org, 2017); therefore, a "do bird traitor/ spy doing bird" is another possible illocution of "asfur".

7. Bidlef (lit. it leaks)

In colloquial Arabic and semantically speaking, the locution of the term "bidlef" usually describes a ceiling which leaks water in wintertime. The term means that the ceiling should be fixed, and the leak should be stopped before it causes further damage. Pragmatically, in the prison context, "bidlef" is a term invented to describe a prisoner who is suspected to have given in to the Israeli jailers' pressure and is on his way to become a traitor (i.e., "asfur"). As a ceiling leaks water, this prisoner "leaks" information and is no longer to be trusted. Therefore, some action is required to protect the prisoners' secrets. The English term "leaker", which refers to someone who lets people know secret information about others' lives, could pragmatically connote the illocution of the term "bidlef" in the prison environment. The term's familiar attribute of "leaking water" may be metaphorically mapped onto the inmate's leaking of information.

8. Iz-zawyeh (lit. corner)

The locution of the term refers to the corner of the room and may imply that something is hidden in that place. As a prison term, its illocution is derived from the fact that the interrogation process with "asfur" (i.e. traitor) takes place in the prison room's corner, adjacent to the jail's only door, invisible to the guards. When a prisoner utters the term "iz-zawyeh", this carries an implied meaning of a directive speech act of command and warning; the "asfur" should be forced to sit by the room's corner for interrogation by his fellow inmates. Israeli jailers pressure Palestinian prisoners to encourage them to confess to certain resistance acts or to implicate other prisoners in subversive acts. When a prisoner is suspected of giving in to the jailers, he will immediately be shunned from the group and dealt with as a traitor.

Usually, a committee of 2-3 inmates is formed to interrogate the "asfur". Once the word "iz-zawyeh" is uttered by the head of the interrogation committee, it implies a directive speech act of command to place the traitor close to the prison room's corner for interrogation which usually takes place between midnight and dawn. During the interrogation, other inmate prisoners sing songs as a diversionary to mask the suspected "asfur" screams so that the prison guards do not realize that an interrogation is taking place inside the cell. Sometimes, prisoners insert dirty wet socks inside the traitor's mouth to prevent him from screaming loud; prisoners use other related utterances: "nizel iz-zawyeh" (lit. 'went down to the corner') and "huto bizzawyeh" (lit. 'put him in the corner') to describe this act (i.e. inmates forcing the asfur to sit by the prison room's corner). It is unlikely for an outsider to figure out that the inmates' "iz-zawyeh" (i.e. corner) connotes 'a certain method of punishment', which is a creative metaphor that finds its legitimacy only within the confines of the prison room.

English words like "intense interrogation" or "pass an interrogation" can be used to refer to the illocutions of "iz-zawyeh" (lit. corner) and "huto bizzawye" (lit. put him in the corner), respectively.

9. Ghayyamat (lit. cloudy)

"Ghayyamat" is a term derived from the Arabic verb "ghayyam" and literally means "to be overcast". It can be used in several contexts in Arabic to mean different things; for example, "ghayyam il-leil" means that the night is falling, and "ghayyam it-teir" means that the bird is hovering close to you. However, pragmatically and in the prison context, the term "ghayyamat" is uttered to convey a speech act of warning by the prisoner who works in the "nikayoon" (a Hebrew word which means "cleaning") in the jail's corridors; he sends an implied message to other prisoners who might be having a

meeting (jalse) in the prison room to disperse and run back to their places to avoid the jailers' punishment. This metaphoric expression likens the gathering of clouds before a storm to the moment which precedes a sudden raid on the prison room by the prison guards. Apparently, the term is figuratively used to denote a sudden raid on the prison cell and its illocutionary force urges inmates to act fast to avoid being captured and punished for taking part in a secret meeting in the prison room. We should note that outsiders might detect such an area of cognitive correspondence that gives rise to this conceptual mapping. However, establishing conceptual mapping between "ghayyamat" and "a sudden raid" would be opaque to outsiders other than inmates because when creating such metaphorical expressions in their anti-language, the inmates construct a cognitive world of their own (cf. Harahsheh et al. 2020).

10. Adet kusayeh (lit. a bite of zucchini)

The term "Adet Kusayeh" literally means a "bite of zucchini"; zucchini is a vegetable which is soft and easy to bite and chew with one's teeth. Palestinian prisoners use this term as an act of congratulating another prisoner on a short prison sentence. This pragmatic meaning is derived from the fact that this term denotes how light the sentence is compared to prisoners with long sentences. Light sentence is metaphorically compared to the ease associated with biting and chewing zucchini. In this regard, when the term is uttered by inmates, it is used as a congratulatory note.

11. Ninja (lit. ninja, Japanese fighter)

The term "ninja" originally refers to a Japanese warrior – a ninja – who has unique strength and skills. In Arabic, calling someone "a ninja" means that he is so strong, and no one can defeat him/her. In the Palestinian prisoners' language, this is relatively a new term prisoners use as a nickname for detainees who clean prison rooms or corridors and take out the garbage. As they do so, these prisoners deliver oral or written messages between other rooms or sections. Once the jailer notices that, a hand fight ensues between the "ninja" (the prisoner who cleans the prison corridors) and prison guards.

For Levinson (1983, p. 111), using some speech acts can bring a change in the "existing state of affairs" if it is in the right context with appropriate conditions. For example, when a Christian pastor says to a newborn baby, "I baptize thee", in a religious context and under the correct circumstances, this utterance itself brings about a change, namely that the baby is from now on considered part of the community of believers. Similarly, when prisoners call someone a "ninja", it is an honorary title used to show gratitude and appreciation towards him for serving other detainees.

12. Ghazal (lit. 'deer')

Palestinian inmates tend to replace familiar words with opaque words in their anti-language mainly for the purpose of secrecy, i.e., it would be impossible for outsiders to guess what the replacements stand for. The term "ghazal" in its literal sense is a deer, an animal known for its speed and ability to disappear when at risk and is difficult to capture. In the prison context, "ghazal" is a new emerged nickname prisoners use for mobile phones. A mobile is smuggled in by detainees' parents or relatives during visits; sometimes it is bought directly from the prison guards at skyrocketing prices. Detainees smuggle it from one prison cell to another using various tricks because it is a prohibited item. Hence, the act of smuggling the mobile phone is compared to the deer for its rapid movement and disappearance when at risk from the hunter's sight. The familiar "ghazal" (deer's) characteristic 'being fast' is metaphorically mapped onto an inmate's act in the domain of speed.

13. Kabsole (lit. 'capsule')

Originally, "Kabsole" is a pill of medicine which encapsulates a treatment dose. The term is derived from the English word "capsule". Like English, Arabic also uses the term to refer to a spaceship with no wings to decrease its weight and increase its ability to fly.

In prisoners' usage, the term "kabsole" is a lightweight and soft paper which can be folded many times to make it the size of a drug capsule (see figures 3 and 4 below). On this very tiny, folded paper, prisoners write about general or private topics and internal security issues. A trustworthy prisoner with the finest possible handwriting prepares it and it is then wrapped with multiple layers of light plastic vegetable bags and sealed completely and firmly by a cigarette tip. Prisoners metaphorically describe these folded letters as a capsule because it is swallowed with plenty of water by a prisoner who is about to be freed. Moreover, prisoners used to smuggle these Capsules-like through the wires' holes during family visits. A lot of these folded tiny letters are sometimes swallowed by prisoners who are about to be freed and they are asked to deliver them on behalf of prisoners who are still inside the jail.

Obviously, the prisoners' usage is related to the original meaning because it is folded into the size of a capsule and then swallowed with water. However, the purpose - communication with family or fellows outside prison- and the painful procedure - painfully swallowed to be later recollected once the freed prisoner reaches his/her family- would make it a special context that is very distinct from the original medicinal sense. Furthermore, if prison guards and Israeli intelligence suspect that the prisoner has swallowed capsules, they keep him until he empties his bowels. At that point, the prisoner must retrieve the capsules, wash, and re-swallow them for fear that the guards would find them.

Figure 3

Kabsole Papers

(Source: Abu Jihad Museum)



Figure 4

Kabsole before being Swallowed

(Source: Abu Jihad Museum)



For ease of reference and easy access to these terms and their meanings, we list them in table 2.

Table 2: Palestinian Prisoners' Terms, their Locution and Illocution

No.	Terms	Locution	Illocution
1.	Jalse	Manner of sitting	Prisoners' meetin/prisoners' seminar sessions
2.	Il-fora	Sudden burst of an activity	Prison intermission stroll
3.	Il-eks	The letter X	An inmate who no longer exists
4.	Daqdaq	Knocking	A search method of bumping on prison's tiles and walls
5.	Bastara	Putting on boots	Wearing boots for defense and attack
6.	Asfur	Bird	Spy or traitor
7.	Bidlef	Leaks water	Leaks out information
8.	Iz-zawyeh	Corner	Intense interrogation
9.	Ghayyamat	Cloudy	A sudden raid on the prison room
10.	Adet Kusayeh	A bite of zucchini	A light prison sentence (A congratulatory note)
11.	Ninja	A Japanese fighter	A warrior prisoner (an honorary title)
12.	Ghazal	Deer	Mobile phone
13.	Kabsole	Ccapsule	A smuggled capsule-like letter

5. Conclusion

The present paper has offered a pragmatic analysis of the illocutions of social, military, and security prison terms which were invented by Palestinian inmates in Israeli jails in response to their life conditions. It has been argued that these terms have drifted from their semantic usages and developed a set of conventions and illocutions in the prison context and culture. Our analysis has shown that the pragmatic meanings of the metaphoric security terms with their indirect illocutionary speech acts are determined based on the interlocutor's shared knowledge about the specific prison environment, and they are non-communicable to those outside the prison community. The study has also shown that the non-metaphoric military and social terms still have their own implications and illocutions inside the prison community. Thus, we have attempted to highlight the intentional pragmatic ambiguities created by the vague nature of these terms to create a repository of prison terminology and facilitate cross-cultural communication when it comes to prison language and jargon. Due to the nature of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, new terms will continue to emerge, and old ones will gain new spectrum of illocutions to describe the phenomena of daily life in the prison context. We therefore recommend that the new created terms be studied and added to the terms handled in this study.

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