

# A Comparative Study of the French Pronoun *On* and Its Equivalents in Jordanian Arabic

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**Abstract**—This study examines the French pronoun *on* and its functional equivalents in Jordanian Arabic, exploring linguistic strategies used to achieve equivalence. The pronoun *on* conveys versatile meanings, including generic, indefinite, and universal agency, often expressing collective or unspecified action. Jordanian Arabic, lacking a direct equivalent, relies on alternative strategies such as reflexive verbs, passive forms, and explicit or indefinite subjects like إنا /iḥna/ (we), الناس /al-nās/ (people) and الواحد /al-wāḥed/ (one). A bilingual corpus of 200 French sentences with *on* and their 400 Jordanian Arabic equivalents is analyzed to categorize syntactic structures and pragmatic functions. Findings reveal distinct preferences in Jordanian Arabic: explicit plural subjects with verbs (35%) for inclusivity, first-person plural affix marking with non-reflexive verbs (25%) for generic actions, reflexive affix marking (15%) for reflexive actions, passive constructions (10%) for indefinite agency, and singular subjects (15%) for collective and abstract meanings. These differences reflect a semantic shift where French emphasizes agency, while Jordanian Arabic prioritizes outcomes. The study also highlights the pragmatic functions of *on* in French—deictic, anaphoric, and presentative—and Jordanian Arabic's use of explicit markers, verb conjugations, and indefinite expressions to achieve equivalence. By addressing these cross-linguistic differences, this research advances translation studies, second-language acquisition, and contrastive linguistics, providing practical insights for educators, translators, and researchers. It underscores the influence of linguistic and cultural norms on strategies for expressing abstract and indeterminate meanings.

**Index Terms**—French pronoun *on*, Jordanian Arabic equivalents, functional equivalence, pragmatic functions, cross-linguistic analysis

## I. INTRODUCTION

The study of pronouns provides insight into how languages express abstract or indeterminate ideas. In French, the pronoun *on* serves as a versatile tool for denoting indefinite agents, generalizations, and collective actions, enabling discourse without explicitly identifying the subject. Translating *on* into non-Romance languages like Arabic presents challenges due to syntactic and pragmatic differences (Abdul Hay & Algharibeh, 2024; Abdul Hay, 2024; Al-Ghammaz et al., 2024).

This paper conducts a contrastive analysis of the French pronoun *on* and its equivalents in Jordanian Arabic, focusing on their functional similarities and differences. Drawing on a bilingual corpus of 200 French sentences and their 400 Jordanian Arabic translations, the study identifies equivalents such as plural verb forms (Bani Ata, 2020), reflexive and non-reflexive constructions, the collective pronoun إنا /iḥna/ (we), and indefinite expressions like الواحد /al-wāḥed/ (one) and الناس /al-nās/ (people). These structures highlight the strategies Jordanian Arabic employs to express generality, collectivity, and abstraction.

The syntactic and pragmatic differences between these systems often challenge Jordanian learners of French and French learners of Jordanian Arabic (Fateh Albab, 2021), as mastering the contextual use of *on* requires significant adaptation (Baker, 1992). These differences also represent a broader challenge in second language acquisition (SLA), which may lead to negative transfer and confusion (Abu Helal et al., 2023). Understanding the constructions and contexts of both languages is crucial for reducing these difficulties (Haspelmath, 1997).

By addressing a gap in cross-linguistic research (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995), which often prioritizes Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) over dialects, this study contributes to linguistic research while offering practical insights for educators, translators, and intercultural communicators. It also highlights how language reflects cultural norms and cognitive frameworks, setting the stage for further exploration of indeterminate subjects across languages.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Foundational works on the syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of *on* in French provide a robust theoretical framework, while revealing gaps in research focused on Jordanian Arabic's strategies for achieving functional equivalence.

Several studies have analyzed the versatility and polysemy of *on* in French, laying the foundation for understanding its dynamic use. Rabatel (2003) highlights the polysemous nature of *on* and its ability to adapt to various discourse contexts,

reflecting the speaker's perspective. His work is crucial for understanding how *on* functions beyond its surface grammar, shifting between pragmatic roles such as deictic, anaphoric, and presentative, depending on the speaker's intention and the context. This adaptability underscores the complexity of translating *on* into languages like Jordanian Arabic, where equivalent structures are more rigid and explicit (Haspelmath, 1997).

Grevisse and Goosse (2016) provide a detailed syntactic analysis of *on*, focusing on its agreement with third-person singular verbs regardless of its referential scope—be it generic, inclusive, or indefinite. This analysis highlights *on*'s unique grammatical role in French, which allows for abstraction and flexibility. Such characteristics are particularly challenging to replicate in Jordanian Arabic, where the preference for explicitness often necessitates alternative linguistic strategies, such as using plural verb forms or specific pronouns.

Hudson (2017) complements these syntactic insights by exploring the cognitive and semantic aspects of *on*. His work focuses on how *on* frames generic and indefinite statements, situating it as a linguistic tool for abstraction. This perspective is instrumental in contrasting French's reliance on *on* for generalization with Jordanian Arabic's explicit markers<sup>1</sup> (Holes, 2004), such as الواحد/al-wāḥed/(one) or حدا/hada/(someone), which convey similar meanings in a more concrete manner.

The evolution of *on* as a marker of generality to a flexible pronoun capable of expressing inclusivity and specificity is discussed in Adamczewski (1982). His work emphasizes the diachronic development of *on* in spoken French, shedding light on how it balances its multifunctionality (indefinite, generic, collective...etc.) across different registers. Understanding this evolution is critical for analyzing the absence of a comparable multifunctional pronoun in Jordanian Arabic, where linguistic strategies vary widely based on context and social norms.

Jordanian Arabic, as part of the Levantine dialect group, employs distinct strategies to express generality and impersonality, diverging significantly from Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and even other Arabic dialects. Haspelmath (1997) provides a typological perspective on indefinite pronouns across languages, offering insights into Jordanian Arabic expressions like الواحد/al-wāḥed/(one) and حدا/hada/(someone). These expressions serve as key tools for conveying generality and impersonality in Jordanian Arabic, demonstrating the linguistic ingenuity required to compensate for the lack of a direct equivalent to *on*.

Comrie and Eid (1991) examines Arabic sentence structures and the interplay between syntax and pragmatics, emphasizing Arabic's preference for explicitness. This contrasts sharply with the abstraction characteristic of Romance languages like French. Comrie's findings are essential for understanding why Jordanian Arabic relies on overt pronouns إنا/iḥna/(we); الناس/?an-nās/(people) to achieve the same functions as *on*.

Owens (1988) discusses dialectal variations in Arabic grammar, emphasizing the need for more research into spoken varieties like Jordanian Arabic. His work highlights the structural diversity within Arabic, which influences the choice of linguistic strategies to express generality and impersonality. In this context, the Jordanian Arabic equivalents for *on*—including reflexive constructions, plural forms, and indefinite expressions—reflect both the language's grammatical structures and its cultural emphasis on explicit communication.

The challenges of achieving functional equivalence between *on* and its Jordanian Arabic equivalents are not limited to syntax and semantics but extend into translation and second language acquisition. Newmark (1988) discusses the concept of functional equivalence in translation, emphasizing the importance of maintaining meaning and intent across languages, particularly for culturally loaded constructs like pronouns. His framework underscores the difficulty of translating *on* into Jordanian Arabic, where the absence of a multifunctional pronoun requires creative adaptation to ensure communicative intent.

Despite the extensive research on *on* in French, significant gaps remain in studying its equivalents in Jordanian Arabic. Existing works on MSA, such as those by Haspelmath (1997), Comrie and Eid (1991), and Owens (1988), often overlook how dialects like Jordanian Arabic employ reflexive constructions, plural verb forms, and generic expressions to achieve functional equivalence. The lack of direct research on these strategies raises critical question: How does *on*, with its abstract and flexible usage, align with the concrete and explicit linguistic preferences in Jordanian Arabic? This comparative exploration highlights the linguistic ingenuity required to bridge the gap between French and Jordanian Arabic, offering valuable insights into cross-linguistic dynamics and the interplay between language, culture, and cognition.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Corpus

##### (a). French Corpus

A total of 200 sentences containing the pronoun *on* were manually extracted from the website <https://context.reverso.net>. These sentences were annotated manually and categorized according to their semantic values and contextual uses, with particular care taken to ensure balanced representation of all semantic meanings of *on*.

##### (b). Jordanian Arabic Corpus

<sup>1</sup> Explicit pronouns or subject markers are explicitly stated in the sentence. These pronouns or nouns provide a clear and overt subject, leaving no ambiguity about who is performing the action.

Given the limited availability of transcribed examples of sentences containing the pronoun *on* in Jordanian Arabic, we relied on translations of the 200 French sentences. These translations were provided by two bilingual native speakers of both Jordanian Arabic and French. Each participant generated two translations for each sentence, accompanied by contextual explanations, resulting in a total of 800 Jordanian Arabic sentences. From this dataset, 324 sentence pairs were selected based on their frequency of use and relevance to the study. These pairs were transcribed and annotated to highlight relevant constructions and contexts. The selection was validated by two linguists proficient in both languages, who also transcribed the Jordanian Arabic equivalents and cross-checked the data for accuracy to ensure reliability.

### B. Analysis Methodology

The analysis was conducted in two phases, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to explore how functional equivalence is achieved between French and Jordanian Arabic. The qualitative aspect focused on contextual and semantic interpretations, while the quantitative analysis examined the frequency and distribution of linguistic constructions within the corpus. This dual approach facilitated a comprehensive investigation of both structural and contextual factors:

#### Phase 1: Syntactic and Semantic Analysis

This phase focused on classifying the equivalent phrases in the Jordanian Arabic corpus based on their syntactic structures and mapping each class to the semantic values of *on* preserved in the equivalent Jordanian Arabic phrases. These semantic values included inclusivity, generality, collectivity, indefiniteness, reflexivity, and abstraction. Quantitative analysis highlighted the frequency of each syntactic structure, while qualitative analysis explored the linguistic strategies Jordanian Arabic employs to achieve functional equivalence. Particular emphasis was placed on analyzing verbal forms, affixes, and syntactic patterns.

#### Phase 2: Pragmatic Analysis

This phase examined the pragmatic functions of *on* in French, focusing on how its features influenced the selection of equivalent expressions in Jordanian Arabic. The qualitative analysis identified the contextual factors guiding the use of Jordanian Arabic constructions, while the quantitative aspect assessed the prevalence of these strategies in fulfilling deictic, anaphoric, and presentative functions.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal distinct syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic strategies employed in Jordanian Arabic to achieve functional equivalence with the French pronoun *on*. Using a combined qualitative and quantitative approach, the analysis explores the frequency and contextual use of these strategies within the corpus.

### A. Syntactic and Semantic Analysis of *On* and Its Equivalents in Jordanian Arabic

This section examines the syntactic and semantic behavior of *on* equivalents in Jordanian Arabic. The analysis highlights verbal forms, sentence structures, and derived verb patterns while also exploring how these constructions convey meaning in different contexts. Particular attention is given to the distinct linguistic strategies Jordanian Arabic employs to achieve functional equivalence. Examples are provided for each linguistic feature to clarify its role, meaning, and frequency in the corpus. The linguistic features are presented in order of their frequency as observed in the data.

#### 1) Explicit Separate Subject with Plural Verbs (35% of Jordanian Arabic equivalents in the corpus)

In Jordanian Arabic, explicit subjects are often stated separately from the verb. Examples include *إحنا/iḥna/ (we), الناس/al-nās/ (people), or الجميع/al-jamīʿ/ (everyone)*. These explicit subjects are paired with plural verbs to express generic or collective actions. This construction parallels the French *on* when used to denote general truths, societal practices, or norms.

- French:

On célèbre la fête chaque année. (People celebrate the holiday every year.)

Jordanian Arabic equivalent:

الناس بيحتفلوا بالعيد كل سنة./Al-nās byaḥtifu bil-ʿīd kull sana/

Explicit Separate Subject: الناس/al-nās/, (people).

Plural Verb: بيحتفلوا/byaḥtifu/, (they celebrate).

Syntactic structure: Explicit separate subject + plural verb.

Semantic Value: Generality.

#### 2) Explicit Affix Subject marking First-Person Plural with non-reflexive verbs (25%)

In French, *on* can inclusively refer to the speaker and others (similar to *we* in English). In Jordanian Arabic, this meaning is typically conveyed through first-person plural verb conjugations. The explicit pronoun *إحنا/iḥna/ (we)* is less commonly used in this context and is often omitted, as the subject is expressed through نون المضارعة/nu:n ʔal-mu.da:ra.ʕa/, the prefix marker for first-person plural, ن/n/, in the present and future tenses, and a suffix in the past tense. This demonstrates Jordanian Arabic's preference for embedding grammatical information within the verb, streamlining its syntactic structure.

- French:

On paie tellement d'impôts qu'on alimente l'économie du pays. (We pay so much in taxes that we support the country's economy.)

Jordanian Arabic equivalent:

بندفع ضرايب كثير لدرجة بندعم اقتصاد البلد./Bindaffa' darāyib ktīr la-darajeh binda'im iqtisād il-balad/

Explicit prefix Subject: نون المضارعة /nu:n ʔal-mu.da:ra.ʕa/.

Non-reflexive Verb: دفع /daffa' / (pay).

Syntactic structure: Explicit affix Subject marking first-person plural + non-reflexive verb.

Semantic Value: Inclusivity and shared agency.

### 3) Explicit affix Subject with reflexive Form V verbs (15%)

Jordanian Arabic uses Form V verbs, تَعَلَّلَ /tafa'ala/, marked by the reflexive infix -ta-/ (known as *tā' al-muta'āwa* /تاء المطاوعة/; Fleisch, 1956; Roman, 2010), to indicate actions performed on the subject itself. This form is combined with various subject markers:

- نون المضارعة /nu:n ʔal-mu.da:ra.ʕa/, the explicit prefix subject marker for first-person plural, -n/ (9%).
- واو الجماعة /wāw al-jamā'ah/, the explicit suffix subject marker for third-person masculine plural (5%).
- نون النسوة /nūn al-niswah/, the explicit suffix subject marker for third-person feminine plural (1%).
- French:

On se libère des soucis. (We free ourselves from worries.)

Jordanian Arabic equivalent:

بنتحرر من الهموم./bintaḥarrar min al-humūm/

Reflexive Verb: تحرر /bintaḥarrar/ (we free ourselves).

Syntactic structure: Explicit affix Subject marking first-person plural + reflexive verb using form V تَعَلَّلَ /tafa'ala/

Semantic Value: Reflexivity and self-agency.

### 4) Passive Constructions (10%)

Passive constructions using Form VII, /infa'ala/ (Fleisch, 1956; Roman, 2010), in Jordanian Arabic express indefinite or agentless actions, analogous to the indefinite use of *on* in French.

- French:

On a volé mon sac. (Someone stole my bag.)

Jordanian Arabic equivalent:

انسرفت شنتتي./Insaraqt shantīti/

Passive Verb: انسرفت /insaraqt/ (was stolen).

Syntactic structure: Passive construction using Form VII /infa'ala/.

Semantic Value: Indefiniteness.

### 5) Explicit Separate Subject with Singular Verbs (8%)

Jordanian Arabic occasionally uses definite noun subjects stated separately from the verb, such as الكل /al-kull/ (everyone), with singular verbs to denote collective actions. This parallels the use of *on* in French to express collective actions

- French:

On m'a félicité pour mon anniversaire. (Everyone congratulated me on my birthday.)

Jordanian Arabic equivalent:

الكل هناني بعيد ميلادي./Il-kull hannāni b-īd mīlādi/

Explicit Separate Subject: الكل /al-kull/, (everyone).

Singular Verb: هناني /hannāni/, (congratulated me).

Syntactic structure: Explicit Separate Subject + singular verb.

Semantic Value: collectivity

### 6) Indefinite expressions with Singular Verbs (7%)

Indefinite pronouns like حدا /ḥada/, (someone) or the noun الواحد /al-wāḥed/, (one) are commonly used with singular verbs in Jordanian Arabic to express abstract concepts without specifying the agent. This corresponds to the abstraction use of *on* in French.

- French:

On m'a dit cette histoire. (Someone told me the story.)

Jordanian Arabic equivalent:

حدا قال لي القصة./Ḥada qāl li il-qīṣṣa/

Indefinite Pronoun: حدا /ḥada/, (someone).

Singular Verb: قال /qāl/, (told).

Pattern: Indefinite pronoun + singular verb.

Semantic Value: abstraction

## B. Semantic Shift in Verbal Valenc

One notable phenomenon is the shift in semantic orientation of verbal valency between French and Jordanian Arabic. In many cases, direct objects in French become subjects in Jordanian Arabic, altering the subject-object relationship to emphasize the action's outcome rather than the agent.

- French:  
On trouve *des solutions* seulement quand on est unis. (Solutions are only found when people are united.)  
*Des solutions* (solutions) functions as a direct object.

Jordanian Arabic equivalent:

الحلول يجو بس لما نكون متحدين./Al-ḥulūl bijū bas lammā nkūn muttaḥidīn/

الحلول/al-ḥulūl/, (solutions) shifts to the subject position.

Verb: يجو /bijū/, (come) agrees with the new subject.

### C. Pragmatic Analysis of *On* Functions and Its Equivalents in Jordanian Arabic

In addition to its semantic versatility, *on* serves several pragmatic roles in French (Rabatel, 2003), including deictic, anaphoric, and presentative functions. These roles highlight its flexibility in discourse, enhancing its effectiveness in structuring conversations and narratives. In contrast, Jordanian Arabic achieves functional equivalence through distinct strategies, often using explicit pronouns, nouns, or verb conjugations to fulfill similar roles. Below is an analysis of each function, accompanied by examples and explanations of the Arabic equivalents.

#### 1) Deictic Function

In French, the deictic function of *on* refers to both the speaker and the interlocutor, functioning similarly to *we* in English. In Jordanian Arabic, 25% of equivalents rely on verb forms that inherently convey inclusivity, encompassing both the speaker and the interlocutor through the use of an explicit affix subject marker attached to a non-reflexive verb.

- French:  
On a mangé ensemble. (We ate together.)

Jordanian Arabic Equivalent:

أكلنا سوا./Akalna sawa/ (We ate together.)

In this case, the subject إحننا/iḥna/ (*we*) is omitted. The verb أكلنا/akalna/ (*we ate*) inherently encodes the plural and first-person inclusive meaning through the suffix -نا/*na*/, making the explicit pronoun إحننا unnecessary.

While French *on* relies on context to express inclusivity, Jordanian Arabic typically omits the pronoun إحننا/iḥna/ (*we*) in favor of verb forms that inherently encode the subject. This reflects Arabic's preference for grammatical clarity, where explicit affix subject markers are commonly used to indicate both person and number.

#### 2) Anaphoric Function

In French, *on* often functions anaphorically, referring back to a previously mentioned or implied subject without repeating it. In 11% of Jordanian Arabic equivalents in the corpus, this function is achieved through explicit affix subject markers encoded in verb conjugations.

- French:  
*Tout le monde est actif ici. On se promène souvent.* (Everyone is active here. They often go for walks.)  
In this example, *on* refers back to *tout le monde* (everyone), avoiding repetition while maintaining coherence in the discourse.

Jordanian Arabic Equivalent:

الناس نشيطين هون، بتمشوا كثير./An-nās nasheeteen hoon, bitmash-shu kiteer/.

The first clause introduces الناس/il-nā/s, (people), explicitly identifying the subject.

In the second clause, بتمشوا/bitmash-shu/, (they go for walks) uses the explicit suffix pronoun marker واو الجماعة/wāw al-jamā'ah/, (the wāw of plurality). The explicit suffix subject marker for third-person masculine plural (Aoun et al., 2009) is encoded within the verb conjugation to refer back to الناس without repeating it.

Jordanian Arabic verb conjugations may also combine with other subject markers, such as:

- نون المضارعة/nūn al-muḍāra'ah/, the explicit prefix subject marker for first-person plural -ن/n/.
- نون النسوة/nūn al-niswah/, the explicit suffix subject marker for third-person feminine plural.

#### 3) Presentative Function

In French, *on* can introduce an agent or action without specifying its origin, focusing instead on the event or process. In Jordanian Arabic, 7% of equivalents in the corpus use explicit indefinite pronouns like حدا/hada/, (someone) to achieve the same effect, while 10% employ the passive construction, which omits the agent entirely and emphasizes the action.

- French:  
On frappe à la porte. (Someone is knocking at the door.)  
Here, *on* highlights the action of knocking, leaving the agent undefined.  
Jordanian Arabic Equivalent:  
Using an Indefinite Pronoun: حدا بيق عالباب./Hada bduqq 'al-bāb/. (Someone is knocking at the door)  
The indefinite pronoun حدا/hada/ (someone) explicitly introduces the unknown agent, while the verb بيق/bduqq/ (is knocking) emphasizes the action.
- French:  
On diffuse rapidement la nouvelle (the news spread quickly)

Jordanian Arabic Equivalent:

Using the Passive Voice: الأخبار تنتشر بسرعة. /Il-akhbār btintšir b-sur'a/ (The news spread quickly)

Here, the passive verb *تنتشر* /btintšir/ (spread) focuses on the event of spreading, leaving the agent unspecified.

In these two examples French *on* leaves the subject undefined, Jordanian Arabic handles the presentative function through two main strategies:

The indefinite pronoun *حدا* /hada/ (someone) explicitly marks the agent's indeterminate nature, reflecting Arabic's preference for subject clarity.

The passive voice, often formed with verb Form VII *انفعل* /infa'ala/, shifts the focus to the action or event, mirroring the French approach to highlight the process rather than the agent.

This dual approach demonstrates the linguistic adaptability of Jordanian Arabic, allowing it to accommodate the presentative function of *on* while adhering to its grammatical norms.

Building on the observed patterns in the results, this study provides an in-depth analysis of the French pronoun *on* and its equivalents in Jordanian Arabic, exploring their syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic dimensions. The findings highlight distinct linguistic strategies employed by each language, reflecting broader cultural and cognitive frameworks.

Jordanian Arabic compensates for the absence of a direct equivalent to *on* through a diverse array of constructions, each tailored to convey a specific meaning. These include explicit separate subjects with plural verbs to express generality (35%), explicit affix subjects marking first-person plural with non-reflexive verbs to convey inclusivity (25%), and explicit affix subject markers combined with reflexive Form V verbs to indicate reflexivity (15%). Other strategies include passive constructions for expressing indefiniteness (10%), explicit separate subjects with singular verbs to denote collective actions (8%), and indefinite expressions with singular verbs for abstraction (7%). These constructions illustrate Jordanian Arabic's method of achieving functional equivalence while adhering to its grammatical and cultural norms.

The findings underscore Arabic's reliance on explicit markers like *إحنا* /ihna/ (we) and *الناس* /al-nās/ (people) to express generality. This contrasts with the abstract subjectivity often conveyed by *on* in French, highlighting Arabic's preference for clarity and agent identification. Plural verb conjugations frequently encode inclusivity in Jordanian Arabic, allowing the subject to be omitted without ambiguity. This reflects the language's morphological efficiency, aligning semantically with the inclusive meaning of *on*.

Reflexive actions denoted by *on* in French are commonly translated into Jordanian Arabic using Form V verbs (*تَفَعَّلَ* /tafa'ala/), combining reflexive morphology with explicit subject markers to maintain semantic equivalence. Similarly, passive constructions in Jordanian Arabic, often formed with Form VII verbs (*انفعل* /infa'ala/), parallel the indefinite use of *on* in French by focusing on the action rather than the agent.

Less common strategies, such as explicit separate subjects like *الكل* /al-kull/ (everyone) or indefinite expressions like *حدا* /hada/ (someone), further emphasize Arabic's preference for explicitness when denoting collectivity or abstraction, while maintaining the semantic scope of *on*.

Figure 1 summarizes the frequency of Jordanian Arabic constructions corresponding to the semantic values of the French pronoun *on*.

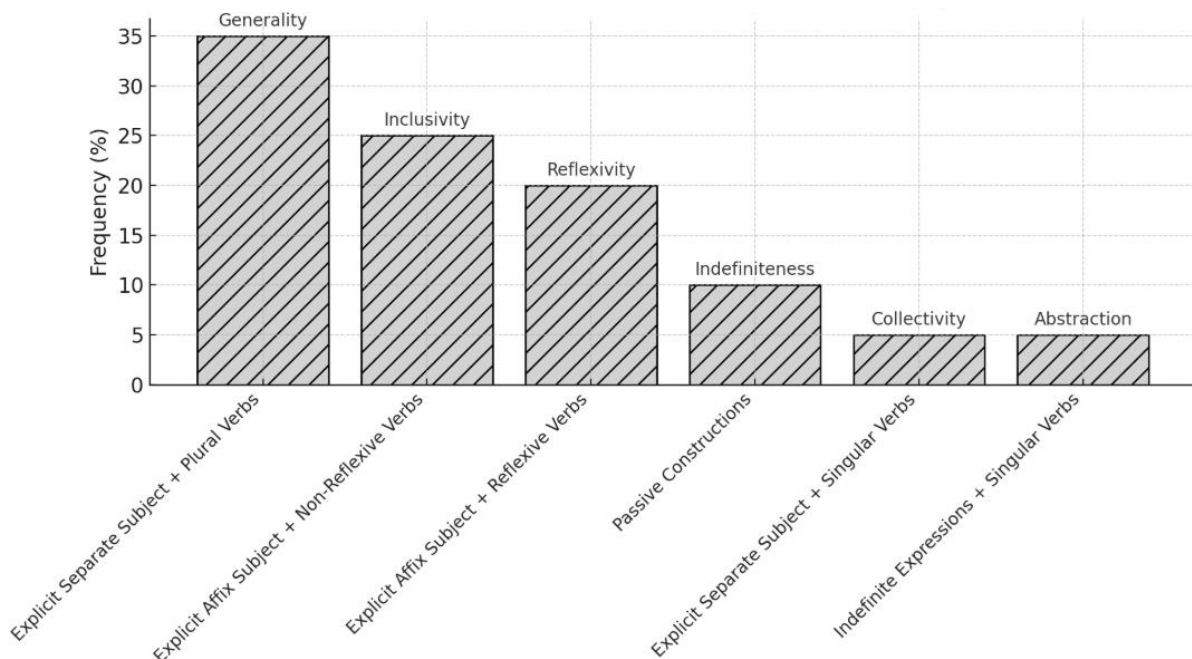


Figure 1. Frequency of Jordanian Arabic Constructions Corresponding to the Semantic Values of the French Pronoun *On*

A key finding of this study is the semantic shift in verbal valency between the two languages, revealing differing emphases on agency and outcomes. French often foregrounds agency, as in *On commence les cours tôt* (We start the

lectures early), where the focus is on the agents initiating the action. In contrast, Jordanian Arabic uses a plural verb to express the same meaning but emphasizes the occurrence of the action, as in *المحاضرات بيلشوا بكير* /Al-muḥāḍarāt bibalashu bkir/ (The lectures start early), where the subject *المحاضرات* /al-muḥāḍarāt/ (the lectures) is pluralized, and the verb *بيلشوا* /bibalashu/ (they start) shifts focus to the event rather than the agents performing the action.

The pragmatic analysis further reveals that *on* fulfills three primary functions in French: deictic, anaphoric, and presentative. Jordanian Arabic achieves these functions through distinct linguistic strategies, as illustrated in Figure 2.

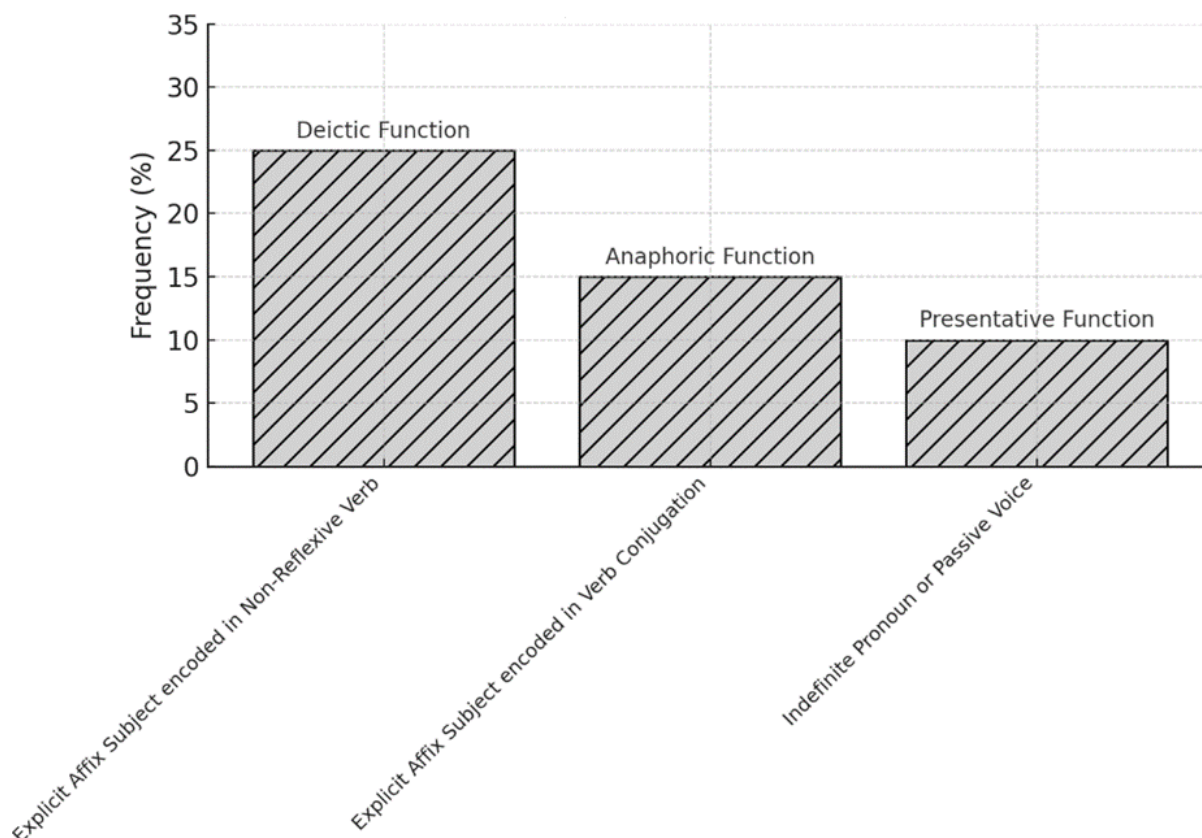


Figure 2. Pragmatic Functions of the French Pronoun *On* and How They Are Expressed in Jordanian Arabic

- **Deictic Function:** *On* implies inclusivity, whereas Arabic often uses explicit subject markers with non-reflexive verbs to ensure clarity.
- **Anaphoric Function:** French *on* maintains subject continuity without repetition, while Arabic relies on explicit subject markers embedded in verb conjugations.
- **Presentative Function:** French *on* introduces actions without specifying agents, a role fulfilled in Arabic through indefinite pronouns like *حدا* /ḥada/ (*someone*) or the passive voice.

These findings demonstrate that while French encapsulates multiple meanings within the versatile pronoun *on*, Jordanian Arabic distributes these roles across a variety of syntactic and morphological constructions. This divergence reflects broader cultural values: French emphasizes abstraction and contextual interpretation, while Arabic prioritizes grammatical precision and explicit agent identification.

The differences in how *on* and its Arabic equivalents are used pose challenges for translation and language learning. Translators must carefully consider the context to select appropriate equivalents, such as plural verbs, reflexive constructions, or indefinite pronouns. For language learners, understanding the structural and cultural motivations behind these strategies is essential to ensure accurate communication and reduce potential confusion.

## V. CONCLUSION

This study has provided an in-depth analysis of the French pronoun *on* and its equivalents in Jordanian Arabic, shedding light on the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic strategies employed by each language to convey similar meanings. The findings underscore the versatility of *on* as a linguistic tool in French, capable of expressing inclusivity, generality, and impersonality through a single pronoun. Conversely, Jordanian Arabic relies on a diverse array of constructions, reflecting the language's structural preference for explicitness and clarity.

From a syntactic and semantic perspective, Jordanian Arabic achieves functional equivalence through constructions such as explicit subjects with plural verbs, reflexive and passive forms, and the use of definite noun phrases and indefinite pronouns. These strategies reveal how Jordanian Arabic adapts its grammar to meet communicative needs while

maintaining its cultural emphasis on agent identification and result-oriented framing. The semantic shift in verbal valency further highlights a key distinction: while French often foregrounds agency, Jordanian Arabic focuses on outcomes, reflecting broader cultural and cognitive distinctions between the two languages.

The pragmatic analysis highlights the unique roles of *on* in French as a deictic, anaphoric, and presentative pronoun. These functions are replicated in Jordanian Arabic through explicit markers encoded within verb conjugations and indefinite pronouns. The analysis reveals that both languages address similar communicative goals but use different linguistic pathways to achieve them. French prioritizes abstraction and linguistic economy, encapsulating multiple functions within the single pronoun *on*, while Jordanian Arabic opts for explicitness and specificity, distributing *on*'s roles across distinct grammatical structures.

This study contributes to the broader fields of comparative linguistics, translation studies, and second-language acquisition. By exploring the linguistic and cultural dynamics underlying the use of *on* and its equivalents, it provides practical insights for translators, educators, and language learners. Translators must navigate the challenges of functional equivalence, selecting the most appropriate Arabic construction based on context, while language learners need to understand the structural and cultural motivations that shape these differences.

Ultimately, this research underscores the importance of cross-linguistic analysis in bridging cultural and linguistic divides. The comparison of *on* and its Jordanian Arabic counterparts highlights not only the diversity of linguistic expression but also the shared human endeavor to communicate abstract, collective, and indeterminate ideas. By doing so, it offers a foundation for future studies into how languages adapt their grammatical systems to reflect their speakers' cultural and cognitive frameworks.

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