

**“Navigating politeness strategies in
Stressful Situations in Academic
Contexts”**

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INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

2025

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IIUI

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2025

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I hereby declare that the thesis submitted by me in partial fulfilment of MS degree is my original work and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

I also understand that if evidence of plagiarism is found in my thesis at any stage, even after the award of a degree, the work may be cancelled and the degree revoked.

ALEEZA TAHIR

Signature

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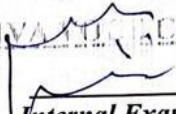
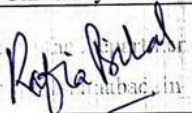

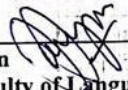
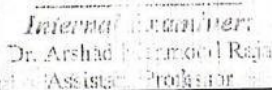
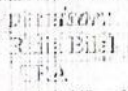
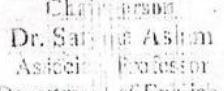
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my dear parents

Tahir Mehmood Khan and Zahida Tahir,

and my respected supervisor

Dr. Rafia Bilal

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Abstract

This study is a comparative analysis of gender-based use of speech acts and politeness strategies during stressful interactions in academic contexts. Anchored in Speech Act Theory by Austin & Searle (1969) and Brown & Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model (1987), the research aims to examine the way both male and female university students adapt their language to manage conflict-laden situations and interpersonal dynamics. A mixed-method research design was employed, using five role-play scenarios that reflected real-life academic stressors. Data was collected through purposive and random sampling to yield a balanced sample of fifty participants (twenty-five males and twenty-five females). The focus of analysis was both "speech act types" and "politeness strategies". The findings reveal that female participants were more concerned about maintaining social harmony and, hence, they frequently employed cooperative and mitigating strategies, particularly negative politeness and commissive speech acts. On the other hand, male participants had a relatively direct approach in language choices and, therefore, were often found relying more heavily on expressives and a blend of bald-on-record and positive politeness strategies, with occasional inclusion of humour. These findings directly address the study's central research questions by accentuating the use of linguistic tools and impact of gender on choosing communication strategies in stressful academic encounters.

Keywords: Speech acts, Politeness strategies, Stressful situations, Academic context, Gender-based linguistic variation.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Language is a powerful tool that facilitates the transmission of ideas, feelings, and experiences. It is the fundamental means of human communication. People frequently need to navigate the challenging work of negotiating language responses within the varied fabric of social circumstances. This process gets much more complicated when people are under pressure. This study, therefore, focuses on the art of responding linguistically in the state of hardship, with a specific focus on investigating language use dynamics in high-stress environments of universities.

It takes careful consideration of context, audience, and the possible influence of one's speech to navigate linguistic responses as it goes beyond simply choosing words. This process is particularly difficult under stressful conditions since decision-making is influenced by elevated emotions and cognitive strain. These language reactions are greatly influenced by politeness techniques, which are essential for effective communication. Moreover, interpersonal behaviours in a variety of contexts are greatly influenced by cultural standards. Regional customs, family values, expectations of society, and religion are some of the elements that frequently impact these norms. In Pakistani society, for example, deference to elders and other authority figures is firmly engrained and manifested in courteous gestures and deferential communication techniques. Furthermore, collectivism is a strong cultural characteristic that emphasizes the need to preserve social cohesiveness and group harmony. This emphasis on collectivism has the potential to affect how decisions are made and how people communicate, giving collaboration and reaching consensus precedence over individual liberty.

Furthermore, Pakistani society is characterized by a lot of hierarchical arrangements, especially in educational institutions where students frequently submit to their professors, seniors, and other academic authority. These cultural norms influence how people handle inconvenient situations in the academic setting, including resolving conflicts and expressing themselves. These reactions are greatly influenced by politeness techniques, which are

essential for good communication. People who manage their expressions under pressure need to pay close attention to politeness tactics.

Politeness has been defined in diverse ways by various authors. Lakoff (1976) states that politeness is forms of behaviour which have been developed in societies to reduce friction in personal interaction, whereas Sifianou (1992) formulates politeness as “a means to restrain feelings and emotions to avoid conflicts”. According to Leech (1983), politeness refers to speak and act in a way that takes the needs and feelings of the hearers into account. This implies that acts can convey politeness both verbally and non-verbally. Moreover, Brown and Levinson (1987) state that politeness is the intentional, strategic behaviour of an individual meant to satisfy self’s and other’s face wants in case of threats, ratified via positive and negative styles of redress. Additionally, Richard Watts, through his definition of politic behaviour advances our knowledge of the larger communication landscape.

Watts (1989) defines politic behaviour as “socioculturally determined behaviour directed towards the goal of establishing or maintaining a state of equilibrium in the personal relationships between the individuals of a social group”. Navigating language responses becomes even more challenging in various social circumstances where a range of social and interpersonal elements are at play. This research uses a gender-based sociolinguistic approach to examine politeness techniques adopted by individuals to control their language choices under stress. It focuses on the precise ways that people use to avoid face threatening acts. The research seeks to provide thorough knowledge of the complex interactions between language, politeness techniques and stress in different contexts by examining linguistic responses through this lens in order to identify trends, variances, and potential inequities.

1.2. Problem Statement

Despite the growing body of research on politeness strategies, existing scholarship has primarily examined their use in casual conversations and workplace interactions. However, there remains a significant gap in exploring how politeness strategies are employed in stressful or high-stakes academic contexts, where emotions, conflicts, and confrontations are more pronounced. Current research seldom addresses how stress influences the choice and effectiveness of politeness strategies in communication.

This gap directly affects both students and academic staff, who are the most vulnerable to breakdowns in communication during tense academic encounters such as classroom disputes, supervisor–student negotiations, and peer conflicts. If left unaddressed, these gaps risk reinforcing miscommunication, escalating conflict, and hindering respectful dialogue within learning environments.

Several recent studies highlight this need. For example, Haugh (2015) examined politeness in workplace conflict and noted that stress alters the perception of politeness strategies, recommending further research in educational settings. Similarly, Mullany (2020) investigated gender and politeness in professional discourse, finding significant variation but calling for studies beyond the workplace to test transferability. In the academic domain, Locher and Graham (2010) focused on interpersonal pragmatics but did not sufficiently consider high-stakes or emotionally charged contexts, recommending more research on how stress and institutional settings affect language choices. These studies consistently underscore the necessity of investigating politeness in contexts where stress is a defining factor.

The present study addresses this gap by examining gender-based differences in the use of politeness strategies during stressful academic encounters, with the aim of contributing to sociolinguistic scholarship and providing practical insights for fostering respectful and constructive communication in educational institutions.

1.3. Research Objectives

1. To explore the nature of linguistic responses elicited by both male and female participants across the five selected stressful situations.
2. To examine these responses with reference to gender-based use of politeness strategies and speech acts.

1.4. Research Questions

1. What is the nature of linguistic responses produced by male and female participants in the five selected stressful academic situations?
2. How do male and female participants differ in their use of politeness strategies and speech acts when responding to stressful academic situations?

1.5. Delimitation

This study is delimited to the International Islamic University, Islamabad, focusing solely on male and female students to ensure a balanced gender-based comparison. It covers stressful interactions in academic contexts through researcher-designed role-play scenarios, while excluding other institutions, age groups, and naturalistic interactions. The analysis is restricted to speech act types and politeness strategies, not broader linguistic, cultural, or psychological variables. These boundaries were set to keep the research focused, manageable, and directly aligned with its aim of exploring gendered politeness strategies in academic stress situations.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This study makes significant theoretical contributions by expanding knowledge on the use of politeness strategies within stressful academic contexts, particularly in relation to gender-based differences. By applying Speech Act Theory and Brown and Levinson's model of politeness, it advances scholarly understanding of how language is strategically adapted to maintain or challenge social harmony during conflict-driven interactions in educational settings. In practical terms, the study offers valuable insights that may be applied to improve communication in academic institutions. Its findings can support the development of training programs for students and educators, enabling them to navigate stressful conversations with greater sensitivity and effectiveness. They may also guide administrators in fostering inclusive environments where conflicts are addressed constructively, thereby enhancing the overall quality of academic experiences. The study is further expected to benefit a wide range of stakeholders: students who will gain awareness of effective communication strategies, educators who can integrate these insights into pedagogy, administrators seeking to reduce conflict within institutions, linguists interested in the sociolinguistic dimensions of stress and communication, and policymakers aiming to design supportive frameworks for higher education.

1.7. Tentative Structure of the Chapter:

This thesis is formulated in five chapters. First chapter is **Introduction**, includes Research questions, objectives, methodology, delimitation, significance, and thorough overview of the study's background are covered in this chapter. Second chapter is **Review of Literature**, This chapter will explain existing studies related to the influence of language on

moral judgement and the impact of different social environments and situations on language choices. Third chapter is **Methodology**, This chapter will outline the approach and frameworks taken to investigate the language responses made by people in a variety of social contexts where they are under stress. Fourth chapter is **Analysis and Discussions**, The analysis's findings will be shown in this chapter, with an emphasis on the salient linguistic characteristics found in the language data. It will go over language usage patterns under pressure and how politeness techniques influence language usage patterns. The last fifth chapter is **Conclusion and Recommendation**, includes an overview of the main conclusions and their implications for the field of sociolinguistics will be given in the last chapter. Nevertheless, this chapter will conclude with suggestions for more research.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter discusses the body of literature related to current research. With the focus of the current study on academic settings, the review of the literature looks at the role that politeness strategies play in helping people manage communication when under pressure. Additionally, it investigates how language responses are negotiated under difficult circumstances through an examination of prior research, with a particular emphasis on gender-based differences in communication patterns. Navigating complicated communication dynamics, especially in academic contexts where interactions are frequent and varied, requires an understanding of linguistic responses with respect to politeness strategies, particularly in stressful situations. Politeness strategies, which classify linguistic behaviours into positive and negative politeness with the goal of preserving social harmony and controlling face-threatening conduct, are at the Centre of this work. Understanding the distinct types and functions of politeness strategies helps to better understand their subtle impact on social interactions. This literature review explores the specific difficulties that these circumstances present, examining how people manage to communicate while upholding social harmony and etiquette.

2.1. Linguistic Responses

People use language to communicate in various contexts, especially under pressure, is necessary to comprehend linguistic responses. Analyzing the utilization of language for communication in many circumstances, particularly under duress, is essential for understanding linguistic responses. These responses illustrate the utilization of language to navigate social situations, convey emotions, and communicate messages. Green and Mitchell (2007) assert that in daily discourse, our focus is not predominantly on the phrases we exchange, but rather on the speech acts those utterances serve, such as requests, cautions, invitations, promises, apologies, and predictions. This viewpoint underscores that in quotidian discourse, the focus is not on literal interpretation but on the activities or intents underlying words, referred to as speech acts.

The Speech Act Theory, initially proposed by Austin (1962) and subsequently expanded by Searle (1969), asserts that utterances serve not just to communicate information

but also to execute actions. For example, asserting “I promise to return the book” transcends mere expression of purpose and constitutes the performative act of promising. A multitude of research have utilized this idea to investigate language use in institutional and academic settings.

The Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project by Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989) illustrated the cultural and contextual variations in speech acts like requests and apologies, whereas Trosborg (1995) analyzed the strategies employed by learners in making requests and complaints, highlighting the significance of politeness in alleviating face-threatening acts. These studies underscore that speech acts are profoundly influenced by cultural and social influences, especially in stressful or high-stakes contexts.

Politeness techniques, as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), are intricately connected to speech acts, positing that communication frequently entails the management of "face" through positive and negative politeness methods. Positive politeness aims to foster rapport and demonstrate solidarity, frequently through praises or professions of thanks, while negative politeness prioritizes respect for autonomy by mitigating impositions, exemplified by indirect requests. Empirical research has validated the importance of these tactics in educational and conflict-ridden environments. Holmes (1995) demonstrated the equilibrium between authority and politeness in classroom conversation among students and teachers, whereas Kitamura (2000) emphasized the significance of negative politeness in preserving harmony during the negotiation of differences. Locher and Watts (2005) have underscored that politeness should be perceived as relational labor, influenced by environment and the expectations of participants.

Linguistic replies, including apologies, requests, and warnings, exemplify the amalgamation of speech acts and politeness techniques. The phrase “Could you close the window?” serves not as a genuine question regarding capability but as a mitigated request exemplifying negative politeness. Likewise, a phrase such as “Exercise caution, the floor is slippery” functions as a warning, demonstrating concern for the listener’s safety and thereby conforming to positive politeness. These examples illustrate how politeness techniques structure speech acts to preserve face and maintain social coherence.

Overall, prior studies grounded in Speech Act Theory and Politeness Strategies highlight that linguistic responses are not only about information transfer but also about

performing social actions, negotiating relationships, and preserving harmony. Understanding this interplay is especially important in academic contexts, where stressful interactions often require strategic use of language to manage conflict and maintain effective communication.

2.2. Gender Based Linguistic Variation

One of the essential aspects of language is gender, which plays a crucial role in shaping communication styles across societies. The term “gender-based linguistic variation” refers to differences in how men and women use language, influenced by social, cultural, and psychological factors. These differences manifest in domains such as conversational style, politeness strategies, and the choice of speech acts. Tannen (1994) suggests that these distinctions stem partly from socialization, as men and women are raised with different communicative expectations.

Within the framework of Speech Act Theory, several studies have investigated how gender affects the performance of requests, apologies, complaints, and other speech acts. Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper’s (1989) *Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project* found that women across cultures often rely on indirect strategies in requests, emphasizing consideration for the hearer’s face needs, while men tend to employ more direct forms. Holmes (1995) similarly demonstrated that women frequently use apologies and supportive speech acts to maintain solidarity, whereas men’s speech acts are more often oriented toward asserting status and authority. Gleason and Ratner (1998) also observed that men and boys tend to use direct commands, while women and girls favor indirect forms, reflecting gendered preferences in speech act realization.

Gender variation has also been widely examined in relation to Politeness Strategies. Brown and Levinson’s (1987) model has been applied to show that women are more likely to use negative politeness (e.g., hedging, softening requests) and positive politeness (e.g., expressing solidarity) to preserve interpersonal harmony. For instance, Holmes and Stubbe (2003) demonstrated that women in workplace interactions consistently use more mitigating politeness markers than men, highlighting their preference for maintaining rapport. Conversely, Mills (2003) argues that women’s reliance on politeness strategies can also reinforce social hierarchies, as indirectness is sometimes interpreted by men as evasive or manipulative, echoing Tannen’s (1990) observation that women’s indirect requests often “backfire” in cross-gender communication. In terms of interruptions and turn-taking, research

by Zimmerman and West (1975) revealed that men dominate conversational control, often through bald-on-record strategies that disregard face needs.

These empirical studies collectively indicate that gender differences in linguistic variation are not simply stylistic but deeply tied to the use of speech acts and politeness strategies. Women's communication often emphasizes cooperation, solidarity, and face preservation, while men's communication tends toward directness, efficiency, and control of interactional space. Such tendencies become particularly salient in cross-gender academic interactions, where misunderstandings or conflict may arise due to mismatched strategies.

Understanding how gender variation operates within the frameworks of Speech Act Theory and Politeness Strategies is therefore essential for analyzing communication in academic contexts. This critical review highlights both established findings and persisting gaps, particularly the under-explored area of gendered linguistic responses in stressful academic situations which the present study seeks to address.

Austin (1962) distinguishes between two types of utterances in relation to speech acts that are given below:

2.2.1. Constatives

Constatives are statements that characterise an occurrence or a fact. They are either accurately describing anything about the world or they are not, therefore one can determine if they are true or incorrect. For example, "She is reading a book."

2.2.2. Performatives

Performatives differ in that they do not classify something as true or untrue. Instead, they merely say something and do something. A performative speech is one in which the words are truly used to accomplish a certain task. For example, "I promise to help you."

Austin (1962) came to the realisation that all utterances, direct or indirect, involve some sort of action, making the performative/ constative divided inadequately. Consequently, he further improved his theory and presented the three actions that take place throughout the performance of any speech act. These are mentioned hereunder:

2.2.2.1. Locutionary act

According to Austin (1962), a locutionary act is an utterance's grammatical meaning as determined by its linguistic qualities. To put it in another way, it is the meaning of the sentence as it actually exists. For instance, if someone says: "The cat is on the mat." Here, the mere assertion that a cat is on a mat constitutes the locutionary act. Its literal meaning, "there is a cat sitting or lying on top of a mat," is comprehensible and its grammatical structure is evident.

The intent behind this statement and its impact are not yet relevant as these are acts of illocutionary and perlocutionary speech.

2.2.2.2. Illocutionary act

Conversely, illocutionary act refers to the speaker's intended communicative meaning that is constrained by specific rules. It is about the message or goal the speaker wants to convey through their words. Every speech has a specific illocutionary force, which is the intention behind the speech, such as making a request, giving an order, making a promise, offering an apology, or issuing a warning. Depending on the situation, these behaviours are controlled by specific linguistic and social norms that specify how the speaker's words should be understood by the audience.

For example: "Can you pass the salt?" The true purpose here is to ask someone to pass the salt rather than to cast doubt on their competence. This statement's illocutionary force is a kind request rather than a direct inquiry.

Following Austin's suggestion, Searle (1969) addressed the illocutionary acts by grouping the intended meaning into several performative activities, including directives, declaration commissives, expressives and assertives. These are discussed below:

2.2.2.2.1. Directives

Directives are instructions intended to persuade the listener to act, such as commanding, requesting, or prohibiting. For example, in the utterance "Close the door," the listener is being given an order by the speaker to shut the door. Let us consider another example, "Could you please lend me this book?" So, the speaker is requesting a book from the listener.

2.2.2.2.2. Declaration

Declarations are the announcements (such as resignations and appointments) intended to bring about change. In the statement, “You are now appointed as a team leader, the speaker, likely a manager or other authority figure, is formally appointing the listener as the team leader by announcing a change.

2.2.2.2.3. Commisives

Commisives are used by the speakers to express a desire to do something such as promising. For instance, “I promise to pay you back,” so here the speaker is promising to pay the listener back.

2.2.2.2.4. Expressive

Expressive conveys the speaker's attitude towards a circumstance such as celebrating and apologising. For instance, when someone says, “Congratulations on your new job,” the speaker is happy for the listener and is praising them on their accomplishment.

2.2.2.2.5. Assertives

Assertives refer to the authenticity of what is said such as claiming and swearing. As an example, “It is raining outside.” Here, the speaker is affirming with conviction that it is raining.

2.2.2.3. *Perlocutionary act*

Perlocutionary act finally describes how an expression influences the listeners' emotions, ideas, or behaviour. It also involves the listener's response or reaction to the speaker's words. For example, "If you don't finish your assignment, you will fail the course". Here the listener may experience anxiety, panic, or be motivated to complete the job in order to avoid failing if the speaker intends to warn or threaten them.

2.3. Review of the Existing Researches

Several studies of gender role in politeness in various social contexts have been studied by different researchers. The research by Che Ismail (2018), “Politeness Strategies and Gender Differences in the Speech Act of Rejection among the Malays in Malaysia”. This

study is directed at classifying the positive and the negative politeness strategies used by both genders in making rejection and comparing the differences that both genders exhibited while making rejection. This study employed the framework of Brown and Levinson's model of politeness, 1987.

The researcher collected all the data through the questionnaire involving nine different situations based on oral "Discourse Complexion Task." The respondents were fifty male and fifty female students at International Islamic University Malaysia. Its results showed that males are more direct and, hence, used more positive and negative politeness strategies than females when making rejection. Females choose to be more explanative and apologetic when making rejection. This study is comparable to the current work in the way that the sample of both studies include university students that consists of equal number of males and females. In methodical ways too, both researches aim at finding out the comparative details as to how both genders use language differently in each given situation.

However, the points where the two works differ are, firstly, that in the existing study the respondents were aware of the research being conducted while in the present work, respondents were put in dramatised situations without being told about what exactly was at hand. The reason that they were kept uniformed was to get genuine responses that people would display in such real situations. Secondly, in the previous study, questionnaires were used to collect data while in the current study audio recording of the responses were made using mobile. However, the findings of both studies are relatable to each other.

Sadia, Asgher & Asgher (2020), in their study "A Pragmatic Analysis of Politeness Strategies used by Pakistani and American Politicians in Interviews", examined and contrasted the politeness strategies used in interviews by US and Pakistani politicians. It illustrated the distinctions and similarities between the ways in which politicians in these two nations handle potentially embarrassing situations and preserve a positive public image. It also highlighted how cultural and contextual factors impact the selection and implementation of these techniques. While the specifics of these strategies differ depending on cultural norms and expectations, politicians in Pakistan and the United States use a variety of politeness techniques to address touchy subjects, answer tough questions and create a positive impression.

There are significant parallels between the earlier study and the investigation on "Navigating Politeness Strategies in Stressful Situations in Academic Contexts." The significance of politeness strategies in controlling interpersonal dynamics and averting possible confrontations is emphasized in both studies. They also look at the speakers' modification in their communication approaches to deal with stressful situations well. However, both studies also differ in several key areas. The earlier study concentrated on how these nations' officials manage public opinion and protect their reputations in the face of media scrutiny by employing politeness strategies during interviews. It also underlined how cultural norms impact political conversation.

On the other hand, the current study, "Navigating Politeness Strategies in Stressful Situations in Academic Contexts," looks at how students manage politeness in academic environments that are under tremendous pressure. It seeks to comprehend the ways in which polite behaviour promotes harmonious interactions and stress management in educational settings. Moreover, both studies also differ in contexts (political versus academic) and the type of interactions. The current study focuses on controlled educational settings, whereas the previous study focused on public, media-driven scenarios. Their methodological approaches differ as well; the older study looked at political interviews, whereas the present study would likely use scenario-based observations in academic settings.

Al Ghamdi (2023) looked at how Saudi EFL teachers expressed disagreements on Twitter in her study, "Investigating the Use of Politeness Strategies in Expressing Disagreements Among Saudi EFL Teachers on Twitter," with the goal of identifying politeness strategies, variables influencing their use, and variations between Saudi and American participants. She discovered that while both groups employed comparable tactics, Saudis used more mitigating strategies. Americans conversed more openly about political subjects, but Saudis tended to talk about social matters. Contextual elements, language ability and cultural background all had an impact on strategy selection.

Frameworks like Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, used in both studies, "Navigating Politeness Strategies in Stressful Situations in Academic Contexts" and Rowida Ali Al Ghamdi's research on politeness strategies among Saudi EFL teachers on Twitter, focus on politeness in communication. Both researches take cultural impacts on politeness into account but there are also some areas where the two studies diverge. Current study looks at high-stress academic environments, while the existing one concentrated on Twitter

exchanges, particularly when disputes arise. Teachers from Saudi Arabia and the United States were involved in Al Ghamdi's study, while participants in the present one are a mix of post and undergraduate students.

Eshghinejad and Moini (2016), in their research article "Politeness Strategies Used in Text Messaging: Pragmatic Competence in an Asymmetrical Power Relation of Teacher–Student", examined the usage of two politeness strategies in short message service (SMS) communication between English as a foreign language (EFL) learners and their professors with a focus on gender differences. With an emphasis on gender disparities among Iranian EFL learners, the study examined and discussed the application of both positive and negative politeness methods in text messages. Three hundred text messages in English and Persian, written by male and female EFL learners, were gathered by the authors, who then analysed the content in terms of discourse aspects, speech acts, and politeness techniques, with a focus on requests.

Researchers noted that participants in the study typically used both positive and negative politeness techniques when texting their instructors. Increasing interest, hedging against illocutionary force, and expressing hesitancy are examples of positive tactics that women employed more frequently than men. Conversely, only men favoured gossip and small talk as a constructive tactic. Iranian EFL learners preferred negative methods over positive ones, according to a corpus study of three hundred text messages. Positive tactics were employed to show intimacy in relationships with professors, while negative tactics were used to communicate reverence, respect and keep a safe distance. The study finds that both male and female participants employed negative techniques more frequently than positive ones when analyzing the association between gender and politeness strategies.

Due to the focus on the exploration of politeness strategies, both in previous and current investigation, there are similarities between these two studies. Both studies focus on understanding how people make and adjust language decisions in order to be successful and socially acceptable. In addition, the focus that both current and previous research place on examining gender-based features of politeness techniques is a commonality between them. The shared emphasis highlights a common desire to understand how gender dynamics influence language decisions and communication adaptation techniques.

Despite the parallels between two studies, current study takes a different approach and places different emphasis on its findings. The two studies are distinguished by the specific

situations that are being examined. “Asymmetrical power relations between professors and students” was the subject of previous research on the dynamics of text messaging. On the other hand, current study explores the nuances of behaviour tactics related to politeness under stressful circumstances, offering insights into how students modify their language usage in different demanding situations. By widening its scope, the research can now encompass a greater variety of communicative actions that are impacted by politeness tactics.

Al-Abbas, L. S. (2023) in his research article "Politeness strategies used by children in requests in relation to age and gender: a case study of Jordanian elementary school students", looked at how Jordanian children use politeness strategies while making requests, taking gender and age influences into account. Eighty individuals, evenly distributed by gender, were divided into two age groups (six and ten years) for this study. The research shows that, at six years of age, children exhibit politeness awareness, while their ability to apply polite phrases to speaking acts is still evolving. According to Blum-Kulka's politeness model, at this age, there are no discernible gender differences. By the time they are 10 years old, youngsters can show politeness more effectively; ladies tend to use indirect methods, while boys prefer direct methods. By examining age-related subtleties and gender-based variances in their usage, this research offers important insights into how Jordanian children acquire their politeness techniques.

The current study and the existing one are similar in several important ways such as they both concentrate on the complex area of politeness tactics in language exchanges. Moreover, a similar methodology is also apparent, since both studies use a scenario-based data collection approach. While the two studies have many obvious similarities, they also differ significantly, making each study unique. The current study intends to expose participants to a variety of stressful conditions to elicit responses, whereas the prior research involved youngsters engaging with a puppet in request scenarios. This collaborative approach emphasises dedication to investigating politeness in different contexts. Previous study focused on Jordanian children's politeness practices during requests, examining the role of age and gender in a cultural setting. The current study, on the other hand, widens the focus by examining language reactions in stressful circumstances across a variety of social contexts from the perspective of gender-based sociolinguistics. There is a clear contextual variation at work here as well. While earlier research focused on a particular cultural context and speech act (requests), this study examines a range of social circumstances and provides a more thorough knowledge of politeness techniques in a variety of settings.

Ismail, et al. (2023) explored the use of politeness strategies by students in WhatsApp conversations in their study, "Politeness Strategies Used by Students in Communicating through WhatsApp." Drawing from the idea of politeness developed by Brown and Levinson, it attempts to uncover the good and negative politeness tactics that students use when chit-chatting on social media apps. In order to identify the kinds and frequency of these tactics, the study uses a qualitative research methodology, examining 50 WhatsApp exchanges. According to the study, students communicate more politely and positively with close friends, but they communicate more negatively with strangers. The study finds that in order to preserve social peace and save face, students use both kinds of politeness tactics.

In comparison of present and earlier study, notable parallels and divergences can be seen. Both studies use qualitative research designs and the same theoretical frameworks, with a focus on communication tactics for politeness among students. Beyond these parallels, the former study focused on politeness techniques in WhatsApp discussions, whereas the latter investigates language responses in demanding academic contexts from a gender-based sociolinguistic perspective.

The two studies also use different techniques for data collection as the existing study collected students' WhatsApp talks whereas the current research uses role-play scenarios in various settings at universities. Lastly, even though students participate in both studies, the gender disparities are only explicitly addressed in the current study. Despite their common interest in communicating etiquette tactics, these differences highlight the distinct contexts, methodologies, and emphases of each study.

Shen, Zhao, and Lai (2023) examined the dynamics of politeness in naturally happening and real interactions, examining various politeness tactics used across diverse situations in their work, "Analysis of Politeness Based on Naturally Occurring and Authentic Conversations." In order to comprehend both positive and negative politeness techniques, their study begins by highlighting the importance of civility in everyday interactions and applying politeness theory as a fundamental framework. The authors explain how linguistic tactics are used to build rapport, exchange information, negotiate and reach agreements using an analysis of social media data and business talks between a Chinese and a Nigerian corporation. These results emphasise the need of civility in promoting successful communication, especially when linguistic and cultural barriers are present. They also point to the need for culturally aware politeness techniques to improve cross-cultural relationships.

There are several parallels and differences between the two studies when compared to one another. Both studies use qualitative research techniques and theoretical frameworks to formulate their study, with a common goal of examining politeness strategies in communication. In contrast to earlier research that looked at politeness in cross-cultural business discussions, the current study focuses primarily on linguistic responses in academic stress scenarios. In addition, different approaches are used to obtain the information, such as the current study uses role-play scenarios, while the earlier study examined spontaneously occurring talks. Furthermore, the present study's participant demographics are different from the previous one, which involved negotiators from Chinese and Nigerian enterprises, since it involves university students. These differences and similarities highlight the two studies' varied methodologies and contextual frameworks for examining communication politeness strategies.

Although previous studies have provided insightful information about some aspects of politeness tactics, they have not directly addressed language responses in high stress academic settings, nor have they precisely examined how politeness techniques are employed in such circumstances. In order to add a unique viewpoint to the body of knowledge already available regarding communication etiquette, the current study is being done. This instance is special because it expands the concept of politeness to include stressful situations in addition to daily interactions. To put it another way, the study explores how politeness tactics function in more difficult or stressful communication circumstances, going beyond the examination of politeness in everyday or informal scenario.

2.4. Politeness Strategies

Brown and Levinson (1987) proposed their politeness strategies to protect interlocutor's face when expressing their speech acts in any social interaction. They asserted that these techniques, which assist speakers in considering the social aspects of upholding others' dignity through speech acts, may be used in all situations. Three social elements were the subject of Brown and Levinson's (1987) study, which speakers should take into account when communicating with one another. These three factors are power, social distance and degree of imposition.

Power is the social standing of the speaker and the listener. It refers to the relative social status or authority of the speaker and the listener. When one person holds more power than the other (due to their position, age, or social status), the communication style tends to be

more formal and respectful. The speaker might use politeness strategies to show deference to someone of higher status or authority. For example, when a student talks to a teacher, the student might choose more formal language or show extra politeness due to the teacher's higher power in the educational context.

The element that reflects how familiar interlocutors are with one another is known as the social distance. Social distance reflects the degree of familiarity or emotional closeness between the speaker and the listener. When people are more socially distant (e.g., strangers or acquaintances), they are likely to use more formal and polite language to avoid overstepping boundaries. Conversely, when people are close friends or family members, the level of formality decreases, and their communication may be more direct. Social distance influences the level of politeness needed to maintain the relationship or prevent misunderstandings. For instance, speaking to a colleague at work might involve more formal language compared to chatting with a close friend.

The degree of imposition, on the other hand, reveals the status and authority of the addresser as well as his capacity to force his beliefs and preferences on others. The degree of imposition refers to the level of burden or inconvenience that a request or action places on the listener in a conversation. It is one of the key factors that influences how speakers choose their language, particularly when considering politeness. The higher the imposition of a request, the politer or indirect the speaker is likely to be to mitigate the impact on the listener.

For example, asking someone to borrow a pen is a request with a low degree of imposition because it requires minimal effort or inconvenience. In contrast, asking someone to help you move to a new house would be considered a high degree of imposition because it requires significant time, effort, and commitment from the listener. (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Brown and Levinson (1987) offer the following strategies to lessen the face-threatening act:

1. (a) Bald-on-record without redressive action; (b) On-record with redressive action.
2. Positive politeness.
3. Negative politeness.
4. Off-record strategies.
5. Don't do the FTA

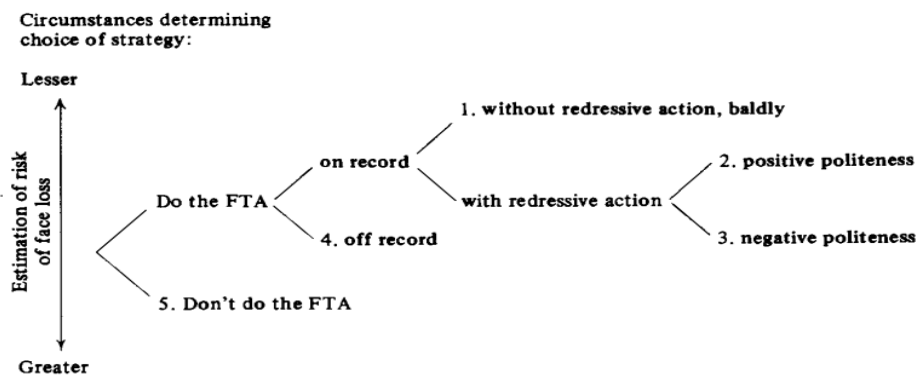


Figure 1: Adapted from Brown and Levinson, 1987

As per their analysis, a rational agent with a face will probably employ approaches that reduce the possibility of losing the faces of the participants by weighing the circumstances rationally.

2.4.1. Bald-on-Record without Redressive Action

According to Brown and Levinson (1978), bald-on-record technique is a straightforward approach for communicating ideas in a plain, brief, unambiguous and direct manner without minimisation of the imposition. There are various uses for bald-on-record utterances depending on the situation. It is because the speaker may wish to complete the FTA as efficiently as possible for a variety of reasons. The motivations can be divided into two categories. The one in which the speaker minimises face threats by doing the FTA bald-on-record, and those in which the face threat is not lessened and is consequently disregarded or unimportant. The uses of this strategy can be divided into different categories that are explained below:

2.4.1.1. *Emergency Situations*

In urgent or emergency situations, the speaker may need to communicate as clearly and directly as possible to ensure immediate action. For example, if someone shouts, "Watch out!" or "Call an ambulance!", they are using a bald-on-record strategy. In these cases, the primary concern is conveying the message quickly and effectively, rather than worrying about politeness or face-saving.

2.4.1.2. High Levels of Familiarity

When there is a high degree of familiarity between the speaker and listener, such as close friends or family members, the need to soften the message may be less important. In these cases, direct communication can be a sign of closeness or trust. For instance, a person might say, "Give me that book," to a close friend without worrying about sounding impolite. The lack of softening or politeness strategies reflects the comfortable relationship between the two people.

2.4.1.3. Power Dynamics

In situations where the speaker holds a higher power or authority position over the listener, bald-on-record communication can be used to issue direct orders or instructions. For example, a boss might say to an employee, "Finish the report by tomorrow," without adding polite phrases or softening the command. Power dynamics allows the speaker to communicate directly, with the assumption that the listener will comply due to the difference in their roles.

2.4.1.4. Task-Oriented Communication

In environments where efficiency and clarity are prioritized over social niceties, such as in military, medical or other high-pressure contexts, bald-on-record strategies are common. In these settings, getting the job done is more important than maintaining politeness. For example, a doctor might say, "Hand me the scalpel," during surgery, focusing on the task at hand rather than on using polite language.

2.4.1.5. Socially Acceptable Conventions

In some situations, bald-on-record strategies are socially acceptable and do not necessarily come across as impolite. For example, in a busy restaurant, a waiter might say, "Order, please," or "Next!" when addressing customers. In these cases, directness is understood as a part of the professional context, and customers do not expect a high degree of politeness.

2.4.1.6. Impatience or Annoyance

When someone is impatient or annoyed, they might use the bald-on-record strategy to communicate their feelings without concern for politeness. For instance, if someone says,

"Stop talking, I'm trying to concentrate," the directness of the message reflects their frustration. In this case, the speaker prioritizes expressing their annoyance over softening the impact of their words.

The strategy of being bald-on-record without any redressive occurs when the speaker clearly and directly expresses their intention, such as saying 'Watch out!' or 'Leave!' without ambiguity or mitigation (Maros & Rosli, 2017). Brown and Levinson refer to this strategy when there is no attempt from a speaker to mitigate the threat to the addressee's face. This approach involves the speaker expressing their desires straightforwardly, which could involve issuing a direct command or commitment, such as saying, 'I pledge to be there tomorrow,' (Brown & Levinson, 1987.) This strategy may occur if a speaker has power over a hearer or between close friends or family members. Brown and Levinson claim that the on-record strategy is the least appropriate politeness strategy, as mentioned by Patrawut, 2014. There are two kinds of bald-on-record usage: one where the face is neglected or disregarded and another where face threats are implicitly softened, for example, 'Help!' compared to the less urgent 'Please help me, if you would be so kind' or 'watch out!'

These uses of the bald-on-record strategy show that while it may seem impolite in some contexts, it can be the most appropriate or effective way to communicate in specific situations. The speaker's choice to use this strategy depends on factors such as urgency, familiarity, power dynamics, task orientation, social conventions, and emotional state.

2.4.2. On-Record Strategy with Redressive Action

On-record strategy with redressive action means that the speaker gives a face to the addressee. The speaker recognises his or her, and the hearer's negative face wants to be unviolated, or their positive face wants to be supported (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Also, by conducting this strategy, no direct threat is intended. Hence, the positive and negative strategies are associated with this strategy. On one hand, when the speaker tries to lessen the threat to the addressee's negative face wants, he/she employs the negative strategy. For example, apologise before the request, such as 'I am sorry to bother you, but would you mind closing the door?' On the other hand, when the speaker tries to enhance listener's positive face, he/she applies a positive strategy. For example, using a tag question or discourse marker "please" or even using jokes to establish a common ground. In the following sections, the positive and negative politeness are explained.

2.4.3. Positive Politeness

The positive politeness strategy is directed toward the hearer's positive face, "the positive self-image he claims to himself", (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In this strategy, the speaker recognises that they and the hearer have the same rights and importance. An excellent example of a positive strategy that shows solidarity between interlocutors is "we are all in this together." The language used to express positive politeness is often like how close friends communicate, involving shared desires and knowledge and regularly exchanging implicit requests for mutual obligations or common wants (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Being constructive in nature, this politeness strategy is typically employed in social settings such as friend groups or situations where individuals from similar social backgrounds are reasonably acquainted with one another by exhibiting warmth and a strong desire to follow the speech to minimise face threatening acts. It usually seeks to minimise the gap between them. In other words, this strategy aims to minimise the audience's risk by addressing their desire for social approval, acceptance, and connection. Here is how it works:

2.4.3.1. Building Rapport and Solidarity

Constructive politeness involves using language that fosters a sense of camaraderie, belonging and shared identity. When the speaker uses inclusive language like "we" or expresses interest in the listener's well-being, it helps to strengthen social bonds. This reduces the risk of the listener feeling isolated or threatened during the interaction. For example, instead of saying, "You should come to the party," the speaker might say, "We're all going to the party; it'll be so much fun if you join us!" This phrasing reduces the listener's risk of feeling pressured or excluded by making them feel included and valued.

2.4.3.2. Minimising Imposition

By softening requests or commands, constructive politeness reduces the sense that the speaker is imposing on the listener. For example, phrases like "If you don't mind" or "Only if you have time" show that the speaker respects the listener's autonomy. This reduces the risk of the listener feeling that their personal space or time is being violated. For instance: Instead of saying, "Lend me your notes," a constructive polite approach would be, "Could I borrow your notes if you're done with them? No rush!" This makes the listener feel less pressured and more in control of the situation.

2.4.3.3. Showing Appreciation and Recognition

By acknowledging the listener's efforts or contributions, the speaker can make the listener feel valued, which reduces the risk of the listener perceiving the interaction as threatening. Compliments, expressions of gratitude and positive reinforcement are common tactics in constructive politeness. As for an example, after asking a favour, the speaker might say, "Thanks so much, you're always so helpful!" This expression of appreciation reduces the listener's risk of feeling taken advantage of.

2.4.3.4. Offering Choices or Alternatives

Constructive politeness often involves giving the listener options, which reduces the pressure of compliance. By allowing the listener to choose how they respond, the speaker minimises the risk of the listener feeling trapped or coerced. Let us consider an example: Instead of saying, "Come over tonight," a constructive politeness approach might be, "Feel free to stop by tonight if you're free, no worries if you can't make it." This gives the listener the freedom to decline without feeling guilty.

2.4.4. Negative politeness

Brown and Levinson describe negative politeness as "redressive action addressed to the addressee's negative face: his want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded". Using the negative politeness approach, the speaker aims to redress and relieve any potential harm on the hearer's negative face, such as the word 'please'. This strategy involves using apologies, hedging the impact of the saying, and impersonalising mechanisms to minimise the threat that could harm the hearer's face (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Moreover, Brown and Levinson clarify that the speaker aims to lessen the threat on the addressee's negative face by openly uttering uncertainty about whether the circumstances are appropriate for the speaker's speech act. An example is using the subjunctive form in English, such as, "Could you do this project?" Another example of the strategy involves using the word "please" when asking for something, such as in the request, "Can you please pass the glass of water?" This statement is conventionally perceived as a polite order rather than an inquiry about the individual's ability to pass the glass.

"It is a remedial action directed at the negative face of the addressee, who needs unhindered freedom of action and consideration from the addresser and differentiates between the positive and negative politeness" (Brown and Levinson, 1978).

This quotation explains the concept of "negative face" in politeness theory, which refers to a person's need for autonomy and freedom from imposition. When we say that a remedial action is directed at the negative face, it means that the speaker is trying to show respect for the listener's desire to make their own choices and not be pressured into action.

In this context, "remedial action" refers to the speaker taking steps to avoid imposing on the listener or making them feel obligated. For example, when someone makes a request like, "Would you mind closing the door?" instead of directly saying, "Close the door", they are showing consideration for the listener's autonomy.

Furthermore, according to Brown and Levinson (1978), "social distancing" is generally accomplished through the negative outcomes of politeness in all of its manifestations. As a result, they will probably be employed anytime as one of the sender's or speaker's wishes to halt social connection.

2.4.5. Off-Record Strategy

The "off-record" politeness strategy is an indirect speech act such as providing hints and clues. For instance, the utterance 'it is cold here' implies that the addressee should close the window. Off-record strategies involve using metaphors, rhetorical questions, irony, tautologies, and understatements, which hint at what the speaker has implied through his/her message without stating it directly, making the interpretation open to discussion (Brown & Levinson, 1987). According to Kreuz and Roberts (2017), "off-record statements have a literal meaning, as well, but they also have some other meaning buried inside them".

According to Brown and Levinson (1978), "the actor leaves it up to the addressee to decide how to interpret the act" while using an off-record technique. The off-record technique is a communication tactic that is used in a way that makes it impossible to identify a specific communication goal. The actor, in this case, leaves himself open to some reasonable interpretations. This allows the speaker to avoid direct responsibility for a specific request or action, thus minimising potential face-threatening acts by giving the listener the freedom to interpret the meaning. Like, instead of directly asking someone for a favour, a speaker might

say, "I'm so tired, I have so much work to do." This statement does not explicitly request help, but the listener could interpret it as a subtle request for assistance. The speaker, however, can deny that they were asking for help if the listener does not respond in that way.

2.4.6. Don't do the FTA

Brown and Levinson's fifth politeness strategy is "Don't do the FTA." In this strategy, nothing is uttered because the risk of face loss is extremely great (Fukushima, 2003). It refers to situations where a speaker chooses to avoid saying anything because the potential for causing embarrassment, discomfort or harm to the listener's face is too high. In other words, the speaker refrains from making a request, criticism or any act that might damage the listener's self-esteem or autonomy.

For example, if a subordinate knows that pointing out a mistake made by their boss could lead to tension or embarrassment, they may decide not to say anything at all to avoid damaging the relationship. Similarly, in a social situation, someone might choose not to criticise a friend's behaviour to maintain harmony and avoid confrontation. This strategy aims to protect both the speaker's and the listener's face by avoiding risky or uncomfortable situations altogether.

2.5. Summary of Chapter

The literature in this field supports the importance of politeness strategies in aiding people in interactions in high-stakes contexts. Studies show that Brown and Levinson's positive and negative politeness frameworks provide a useful way to examine interactional choices, and that gendered linguistic variation research consistently demonstrates that men and women are different in how they use language to create meaning and maintain relationships. Prior studies have explored politeness in contexts, such as political interviews, social media interactions, classroom requests, and digital communications, thus demonstrating its presence across diverse contexts. However, the extent to which politeness strategies and speech acts are enacted in stressful university situations, especially with respect to gendered responses, has been explored less frequently. Therefore, the current research aims to investigate how male and female university students use speech acts and politeness strategies to navigate high-stakes academic communication.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter provides in-depth description of research techniques and theoretical approach utilised to investigate politeness tactics in high-stress academic settings. It is broken into sections, the first of which provides an overview of the hybrid sampling approach and study design. The procedure of gathering data is covered in the second section, where linguistic responses are recorded through role-play scenarios. The procedure for analysing the data, including the coding scheme for locating important themes associated with politeness tactics, is explained in the third section of this chapter. In addition to this, the conduction of the research will be based on two models of politeness. These models will be used as two frameworks, theoretical and analytical. This will help provide the basic structure for developing the study and critically analyse the linguistic responses. The speech act theory, which was presented by Austin in 1962 and further developed by Searle in 1969, is introduced in the theoretical framework of this chapter. This theory looks at how language performs actions, like requests or apologies, in addition to delivering information. This theory aids in the analysis of how research participants utilize language to navigate through offensive behaviours in stressful situations in academic settings. Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model (1987), which focuses on how speakers respond to behaviours that pose a threat to their faces, is used as an analytical framework. It makes a distinction between politeness that strives to minimize imposition and politeness that promotes solidarity.

3.1. Research Design

In order to investigate how male and female speakers manage linguistic reactions and politeness techniques in high-stress academic settings, this study uses a mixed method research approach. A blend of qualitative and quantitative approach is especially well-suited for this research as it offers detailed insights into the nuances of speech actions and politeness, which are greatly influenced by social and environmental circumstances.

3.2. Research Sampling Technique

The research makes use of a hybrid strategy that blends random and purposive sampling methods. By doing this, a fair and unbiased sample of fifty participants is

guaranteed with equal number of male and female students twenty-five of each. The purposive sample criterion is centered on the selection of International Islamic University, Islamabad students, which is consistent with the study's goals of examining linguistic choices made in academic settings. The random sampling technique used in this study allows for diverse responses and avoids the limitations of concentrating solely on one department, providing a more thorough understanding of language use in a variety of academic settings.

3.3. Research Population

The students of International Islamic University, Islamabad who are currently enrolled in different academic programmes make up the research population for this study. The nature of the study, which aims to explore the students manage politeness methods in the demanding academic contexts that led to the decision to concentrate on university students. Stressful situations can occur in academic settings like classrooms, bus stations of university campus, hostels, bank and cafeterias where university students are regularly exposed to a range of social interactions. This study aims to maintain a gender balance by including fifty participants, comprised of twenty-five males and twenty-five females. The study attempts to investigate possible variations in the ways that male and female speakers modify their politeness practices in high-stress situations by ensuring an equal number of responses from each gender.

3.4. Data collection method/ corpus of the study

Data collection would involve selecting a varied sample of university students, ensuring equal representation from both male and female participants. Observational approaches, specifically created real-life like situations that mimic stressful events in academic institutions, will be used to collect data. These situations include:

1. Noisy gatherings in the university hostel.
2. Accidental spillages in cafeteria.
3. Losing borrowed books/ laptop or any important thing.
4. Seat dispute in university bus.
5. Breaking the line in front of bank/ ATM.

Through carefully crafted role play within the above-mentioned scenarios in different academic contexts, participants will be individually engaged to audio-record their spontaneous responses. The audio- tapping would be preferred instead of video tapping to keep

the identities of students anonymous due to ethical consideration. The audio data will be converted into written text, paying close attention to linguistic nuances, pauses, gestures and tones since they may affect how politeness techniques are understood. Non-verbal responses would be observed by the researcher and written with the verbal responses.

Ten people in each challenging situation will reply for a total of fifty recorded exchanges, twenty-five from male and twenty-five from female participants to ensure an equal distribution of responses from both genders in order to draw unbiased and neutral conclusions. In each situation, a total of ten responses would be collected from which five responses would be of female and five would be of male students. Every scenario would be repeated for five times with different students at both male and female campus. The study attempts to capture possible gender-specific linguistic variations by balancing interactions between same-gender participants. This approach is designed to investigate and capture a comprehensive understanding of the sociolinguistic dynamics that influence linguistic decisions in stress-inducing scenarios within diverse academic contexts while acknowledging and exploring potential in the gender-specific lens.

3.5. Process of Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research is the methodical process of looking through and analyzing qualitative data such as observations, interviews, or documents to find themes, patterns, and interpretations. As stated by Creswell (2014) "qualitative data analysis includes organizing the data, conducting a preliminary read-through of the database, coding the data, generating descriptions or themes, and interpreting the findings." The analysis will focus on identifying the performed speech acts and politeness techniques used by individuals to ensure good interactions in some challenging scenarios in institutional settings.

After categorization, a thematic analysis will be carried out by the researcher. Finding recurrent themes that address the study questions is part of this process. Researcher will look at topics including how men and women approach politeness differently; how speakers react in difficult situations and modify their speech acts. Thematic analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of the ways in which participants use and adapt politeness techniques in various academic situations.

To find out if there are any gender-based variations in the application of politeness techniques, the replies from male and female participants will be compared. The research

aims, which centre on how male and female speakers negotiate linguistic responses in high-stress scenarios and modify politeness tactics, will be addressed by this comparison.

3.6. Theoretical Framework

J.L. Austin's speech act theory (1962) would be used as a theoretical framework for the present study. The philosopher J.L. Austin first formulated the Speech Act Theory in his 1955 lecture series, which was subsequently published as "How to Do Things with Words" (1962). It is further developed by his student John Searle (1969) with the publication of his seminal work, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Austin's speech act theory provides the framework for comprehending how speakers use words to perform actions. According to Austin (1962) language serves as a tool for speakers to do diverse communication tasks that include making requests, making promises, expressing regret, or giving instructions; it is not just a means of transferring information. Austin (1962) focuses on the relationship between language and action. Therefore, when humans use language, they do not just create discrete sentences, but they also carry out an action. Stated differently, they either act or force others to act through their use of language (Marquez Reiter, 2000).

3.7. Analytical Framework

Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model serves as the foundation for the analytical framework of this investigation. This model was created in 1987 and offers a thorough foundation for comprehending how people use politeness in communication. The politeness strategies model developed by Brown and Levinson (1987) includes a framework for handling Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) in communication. Face is a term used to describe a person's positive social value; face threatening or challenging behaviours are considered FTAs. The politeness tactics described in the model are methods by which people use language to lessen the possibility of threat to in-person communication.

This framework presented as a logical strategy for handling actions that could be perceived as intimidating. They contend that selecting the proper politeness tactic depends critically on assessing the seriousness of a face-threatening act (FTA). According to Brown and Levinson, some behaviors in verbal and nonverbal communication threaten favourable or negative faces due to their believe that faces are universal and reasonable across cultural boundaries.

3.8. Rationale for combining analytical framework with speech act theory

The present study combines Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model (1987) with Austin's and Searle's Speech Act Theory (1969) to provide a comprehensive understanding of linguistic behavior in stressful academic situations. The rationale for this combination lies in the complementary nature of the two frameworks. Speech Act Theory focuses on the functions of utterances —what speakers do with words (such as requesting, apologizing, refusing, or complaining) where as Brown and Levinson's Politeness Model explains how these functions are performed with respect to maintaining or threatening social face.

By integrating these frameworks, the study was able to analyze not only the function of utterance used in each interaction but also the degree of politeness and the strategic choices made by male and female respondents under stress. This dual approach allowed for a richer interpretation of the data, linking the intentions behind utterances with the strategic expressions of politeness that mitigate or intensify conflict in academic communication. Speech Act Theory provided the structural base for identifying communicative functions, while the Politeness Strategies Model offered the interpretive dimension, explaining how gender influenced the use of politeness in managing face-threatening acts under stress.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Discussion

Introduction

This chapter entails the analysis of the responses received in different scenarios from male and female students. The analysis primarily focuses on the respondents' reactions to different stressful situations that are created by the actor. With every response the context of the situation and a brief overview of the actor's behaviour has been given. In this chapter, Firstly deals with the analysis of the responses received from female students then it discusses the analysis of responses received from the male students and lastly there is a comparison between the responses received from both male and female students.

4.1. Analysis of the Responses Received from the Female Students

4.1.1. Situation 1: "Noisy gatherings in University hostel"

4.1.1.1. Response 1

In this scenario, two girls (actors) were talking loudly outside the respondent's room, causing a disturbance that made the respondent convey their disapproval of the situation directly to the actors. The actors' loud conversation outside the room represented an unintentional face-threatening act (FTA) toward the respondent, disrupting the quiet environment essential for studying, thus breaching the academic norms of respect for others' space, particularly in a shared environment like a hostel. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) model, this type of behaviour threatened the negative face of those affected, as it interfered with their desire to study without external imposition. So, by framing the actors' behaviour as a face-threatening act, we can understand how the respondent navigated the situation to restore the balance between personal needs and social interaction.

Table 1 Speech Acts

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Respondent: Excuse me! Aap logon ki cheekhnay ki awazain bohat zyada aa rahi hain. Study kar rahe hotay hain hum log to disturb hotay hain. Yahan par window main baith k aisay shor na kiya karein.</p> <p>Actor: Ignored the respondent.</p>	<p>Respondent: Excuse me! You guys are making a lot of noise. We are studying and getting disturbed. Don't make such noise while sitting by the window here.</p> <p>Actor: Ignored the respondent.</p>

4.1.1.1.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

The respondent's reaction is a prime example of how politeness strategies are employed in real-life communication to navigate stressful situations.

4.1.1.1.1.1. Opening with Negative Politeness

The respondent begins with, "Excuse me!", which is a classic example of negative politeness and is used to mitigate the imposition of the request. This aligns with Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, which says that negative politeness strategies are used when a speaker wants to respect the listener's autonomy by being aware of the potential inconvenience that might be caused to the listener but still making a request or pointing out a problem. By starting with a polite and indirect statement, the respondent attempts to reduce the risk of confrontation and maintain the actors' autonomy while trying to get the actors to change their behaviour without directly offending them or making them feel uncomfortable.

4.1.1.1.1.2. Bald-on-record

Following the polite opening, the respondent states, "You people are making a lot of noise. We are studying and getting disturbed." This is a shift toward a bald-on-record strategy, where the respondent directly addresses the problem without minimising the imposition. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), bald-on-record statements are used in situations where the speaker wants to emphasise the urgency and seriousness of the request, as happened in this situation. So, here the speaker makes it clear that the noise is disrupting academic activities, adding weight to the complaint.

4.1.1.2. Response 2

In this scenario, a group of 6 - 7 girls was celebrating a birthday late at night in the hostel, creating noise by shouting and playing loud music that clearly disrupted the quiet academic atmosphere required by other students. Their behaviour created a socially and academically stressful situation, especially for those students who were preparing for exams, hence, led the respondent to complain against them to the authority. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies model, their actions could be viewed as unintentional face-threatening acts, where their celebration threatened the negative face of their peers, specifically, the desire for autonomy and peace.

Table 2 Speech Act

Original Response (registering complaint)	English Translation (registering complaint)
<p>Respondent: Madam kisi ka agar birthday hai is ka matlab ye nahi ke aap puray corridor mein shor karein, clapping karein, shouting karein. Hamara kal paper hai. Thora raham karo. 101 ke bahir awaz aa rahi hai first floor per. Ye request hai apna shughal meila bahir garden mein karein...or hamein hostel mein sukoon karne dein.</p>	<p>Respondent: Ma'am, if someone has a birthday, does that mean you should make noise, clap, and shout in the entire corridor? We have a paper tomorrow. Have some mercy. There's noise coming from outside room 101 on the first floor. It's a request to please have fun in the garden outside and let us have some peace in the hostel.</p>

4.1.1.2.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

4.1.1.2.1.1. Negative politeness

Additionally, in terms of politeness strategies' model by Brown and Levinson (1978), the respondent employs a negative politeness approach, mitigating the risk of face loss by appealing to the ARHT rather than facing the noisy group herself. This strategy protects her own face (avoidance of confrontation) and seeks to minimize the imposition on the noisy group through an indirect complaint. Moreover, the use of formal language like "it is a request to please..." and the indirect format (text to ARHT) emphasize minimizing imposition and respecting the autonomy of the noisy group.

4.1.1.2.1.2. Face threatening act

By suggesting that the group move their celebration, the respondent imposes on the group's negative face that is their desire for freedom of action. Even though this directive is softened by polite phrasing ("please" and "request"), but it still challenges the group's autonomy by telling them what to do.

However, by making the request indirectly and through a third party (the ARHT), the respondent mitigates the full impact of the FTA. The noisy group's negative face is less threatened because the criticism is not delivered in a face-to-face confrontation.

4.1.1.3. Response 3

In this situation, there were three girls from the basement rooms of the university hostel who were standing in the corridor and talking loudly, causing a disturbance. Girls' behaviour of socialising in a public space outside of the rooms can be seen as inconsiderate, especially in the academic setting where others were trying to study or to take a rest. Their actions indirectly lead to the face-threatening situation for the respondent, who perceived the noise as disruptive, and made her reach the authority.

Table 3 Speech Acts

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Respondent: Assalam o Alaikum ma'am! Kindly group mein message share kar dein k basement k kuch rooms ki larkiyan corridor mein khari ho kar batein karti hein, jis se bohat disturbance hoti hai. Hum parh rahay hotay hein aur bohat zada disturb hotay hein.</p>	<p>Respondent: Assalam o Alaikum Ma'am, please share this message in the group that some girls from the basement rooms are standing in the corridor and talking, which causes a lot of disturbance. We are trying to study and get very disturbed.</p>

4.1.1.3.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

The positive politeness strategy is used in this response that is discussed in detail in subsequent lines:

5.1.1.1.1. Positive Politeness Strategy

The respondent starts the message with a formal greeting, which is culturally appropriate and respectful. Hence, it sets a tone of politeness and recognition of the ARHT's authority. By addressing her as "Ma'am" and using the greeting "Assalam o Alaikum," the respondent employs positive politeness to create rapport, showing deference and respect to the ARHT as a senior figure. This helps minimise the imposition that follows in the complaint. The greeting aligns with Brown and Levinson's (1987) positive politeness strategies, as it acknowledges the ARHT's role, showing concern for her social face and establishing a cordial relationship before moving to the main issue. It also reflects the cultural norms of polite conversation in this context. In addition to this, in the utterance, "we are trying to study and get very disturbed," the respondent appeals to a shared experience by using positive

politeness. She emphasises the collective impact of the disturbance by using the plural pronoun “we.” It frames the complaint as a concern shared by a group rather than a personal grievance. This approach fosters harmony and implies that the complaint is reasonable and justified, as it affects multiple students.

5.1.1.2. Response 4

In this context, several girls were playing music in their room late at night at 1 a.m., dancing and making loud noises during exam days. The actors’ behaviour can be seen as inconsiderate and disruptive to other hostel residents as it directly threatened the peaceful and quiet environment that was necessary for students preparing their exams. Such actions can be perceived as a violation of the hostel’s social norms, where mutual respect and consideration for others are expected.

Table 4 Speech Act

Original Response
Respondent: Last warning guys! I will name the boarder in group and complain against her to the provost office.

5.1.1.2.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.1.2.1.1. Negative Politeness and social distance

From the perspective of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Theory (1987), the ARHT’s message exhibits a marked lack of positive politeness, which would aim to save the actors’ face by softening the directive. Instead, the ARHT employs negative politeness in the sense that it limits personal confrontation by issuing the message to the group rather than directly naming or confronting the offenders at first. The explicit threat to escalate the situation by involving the provost’s office aligns with a more hierarchical power dynamic, where the personal relationship with the boarders. The use of power here, as Brown and Levinson (1987) discuss, is a method of imposing social order in the face of deviant behaviour.

5.1.1.3. Response 5

In this scenario, 4 girls were sitting on the stairs outside their room and were engaged in loud conversation and laughing late at night. Their behaviour demonstrated inconsideration for other residents, particularly those seeking rest or studying, and created a disruptive environment as well as affected the comfort of other residents. Now this thing violated the shared norms of the hostel setting, especially during late hours. So, this kind of behaviour is considered as face threatening act as it destroyed the peace of students who were studying and sleeping. The inconsiderate behaviour of the actors resulted in putting forth the complaint against them.

Table 5 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Respondent: Mam itna unchi unchi larkian boll rahi hein.... 10 bajay se sonay kay liye laytay hein or ye time ho gya hai... □♀□☹</p>	<p>Respondent: Ma'am! Girls are talking so loudly. We have been trying to sleep since 10 o' clock and now it's this late.</p>

5.1.1.3.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.1.3.1.1. Negative Politeness Strategy

In the utterance, "Ma'am, girls are talking so loudly. We have been trying to sleep since 10 o' clock and now, it's this late", the respondent initiates the complaint with the honorific "Ma'am", which, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), is a sign of negative politeness as it acknowledges the authority and higher social status of the person being addressed, shows respect for the addressee's personal space or autonomy and softens the potential imposition of the complaint. The use of a formal title signals that the respondent is aware of the ARHT's role and authority, thus avoids being overly direct or demanding, which could be seen as threatening to the ARHT's autonomy or face. Furthermore, the speaker also avoids direct confrontation with the noisy girls. So, this thing aligns with Brown and Levinson's (1987) negative politeness strategy, where the speaker tries to be indirect and polite while minimising the imposition on the ARHT.

5.1.1.3.1.2. Face-threatening Act (FTA)

The complaint involves an implicit Face-Threatening Act, as it criticises the behaviour of the girls who are making noise, which can be seen as a threat to their positive and negative face. As the complaint suggests, the girls' behaviour is socially unacceptable or inappropriate, which can damage their self-image and the desire to be seen positively by others. However, by complaining indirectly to the ARHT, the respondent avoids a direct confrontation and instead passes the responsibility to the ARHT to handle the situation. This reduces the social friction that might have arisen if the complaint was made directly to the noisy girls, thus mitigating the impact of the FTA.

5.1.2. Situation 2: “Accidental spillages in Cafeteria”

5.1.2.1. Response 1

A girl accidentally spilled water on another girl while distracted on her phone. The actor, after spilling water on the respondent, immediately recognised her mistake and offered an apology, saying, “Sorry.” In this situation, the actor demonstrated a remedial speech act by apologising, which is a form of positive politeness. According to Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Model (1987), an apology is an attempt to restore harmony and mitigate the negative impact of the accidental offense. By apologising, the actor was acknowledging the mistake and trying to maintain social rapport, especially because the spill might have threatened the respondent’s positive face, which shows a willingness to preserve the social equilibrium and take responsibility for the accident, reducing the severity of the face-threatening act (FTA) that occurred by spilling water. Moreover, the actor’s apology is a classic example of an illocutionary act, as it functions to perform an action (i.e., apologising) rather than merely stating information. According to Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), the apology is a commissive speech act, where the actor acknowledges guilt and implicitly commits to exhibit better behaviour in the future.

Table 6 Speech Act

Original Response
The respondent just turned back and had a rude look at the actor. The actor said sorry to her but the respondent was still just silent and ignored her.

5.1.2.1.1. Analysis of the respondent’s silence

Despite the actor apologising, the respondent remains silent, does not acknowledge the apology, and walks away without responding. The respondent's choice to remain silent, not acknowledging the actor's apology, is an important reaction that is analysed below through the lens of Politeness Strategies Model.

5.1.2.1.2. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.2.1.2.1. Off-record politenessz

The respondent's reaction of silence and walking away could be classified as off-record politeness according to Brown and Levinson (1987). This strategy is indirect and can serve multiple purposes. The respondent's silence could mean that she has accepted the apology but is choosing not to escalate the situation or she is choosing to disengage entirely, signalling her desire not to prolong the interaction or make a scene. Additionally, by choosing not to focus on the situation, the respondent may be signalling that she considers the event insignificant, implying that it does not guarantee further discussion or concern. This could be a face-saving move for both parties.

Apart from this, the respondent's silence, on the other hand, represents a non-response, but this itself carries meaning. In Speech Act Theory, silence can function as a response, especially when it carries intent. In this case, silence could indicate either passive acceptance of the apology or an intentional avoidance of further interaction.

5.1.2.1.2.2. Don't do Face-threatening Act

By not acknowledging the apology, the respondent avoids the face-threatening act of openly criticising the actor but still demonstrates a refusal to engage in positive politeness strategies, such as accepting the apology and alleviating the awkward situation. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), it refers to the situations in which speakers choose not to say anything when there is a risk of face loss.

5.1.2.2. Response 2

The actor accidentally spilled water on her friend while drinking and standing in the queue in the university cafeteria, which can be seen as an unintentional action causing discomfort to the respondent. While no explicit verbal apology is given in this scenario, the accidental nature of the act suggests that the actor did not intend to cause harm, yet it

highlighted an inadvertent violation of personal space, which, in the context of politeness strategies, could be seen as a face-threatening act (FTA).

Table 7 Speech Act

Original Response
Respondent: Don't do... (While shouting). I am feeling cold.

5.1.2.2.1. Analysis *in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model*

5.1.2.2.1.1. *Absence of Politeness Strategies*

The respondent does not soften the utterance by adding mitigating elements such as "please" or any indirect phrasing that could have reduced the imposition on the actor's face. This lack of politeness shows that the focus is on correcting behaviour without concern for social harmony since it caused discomfort.

5.1.2.2.1.2. *Face-threatening Act (FTA)*

The utterance "Don't do that!" is an explicit directive that can be interpreted as a demand rather than a request and, hence, represents an FTA toward the actor's **negative face**, as it imposes on the actor's freedom to act without interference.

5.1.2.3. Response 3

A girl accidentally spilled water on her senior while spilling it on her friend as a joke. The senior, who is the respondent in this case, reacted immediately to the situation. The actor's action can be considered careless and playful. While her intent was to joke with her friend, the accident involving the senior elevated the incident from a lighthearted prank to an inappropriate situation. The actor's behaviour reflected a lack of attention to the surroundings and disregarded the senior's personal space and comfort, leading to unintended consequences and is considered as Face-threatening act (FTA).

Table 8 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation

<p>Respondent: Nahin nahin, buri bat. Yay badtameezi mairay sath ni karni. Mein sach main asay mazaq nahin bardasht karti. Main na khud karti hun or na hi dusroon ko karnay dun.</p>	<p>Respondent: No no, it's a bad thing. Don't misbehave with me. I really can't tolerate such kinds of jokes. I don't do it myself and won't let others do it either.</p>
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5.1.2.3.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.2.3.1.1. Absence of politeness strategies

Respondent uses negative Politeness strategies, only to preserve her own face but there is no use of politeness strategies to save the actor's face or to mitigate the imposition and Face-threatening act.

5.1.2.3.1.2. Face-Threatening Act

The respondent's reaction contains several Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) that target the actor's behaviour. By stating, "Don't misbehave with me," the respondent directly criticises the actor's action, which poses a threat to the actor's positive face by challenging their social identity and reputation. Additionally, the assertion, "I really can't tolerate such kind of jokes," reinforces personal boundaries, implying that the actor's behaviour is unacceptable and encroaches on the respondent's autonomy, thus threatening the actor's negative face. Furthermore, by labelling the act as "a bad thing," the respondent underscores a violation of social norms, implicitly critiquing the actor's action. The declarative statement, "I myself don't do it and won't let others do it either," positions the respondent as a moral authority, potentially escalating the situation and further impacting the actor's positive face. Overall, the respondent's remarks create a confrontational atmosphere that may lead to conflict, highlighting the complexities of social interactions in the cafeteria setting.

5.1.2.4. Response 4

In this scenario, a girl accidentally spilled water on another girl while standing in a queue in the cafeteria and said, "I am sorry." This happened when her friend playfully pushed her while she was holding a water bottle with an open lid. The actor's immediate apology serves as a positive politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987), aimed at acknowledging the mistake and restoring social harmony, as well as seeking to mitigate the potential threat to the respondent's face caused by the accidental spill.

Table 9 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Actor: Sorry. Respondent: Koi baat nahi.	Actor: Sorry. Respondent: No problem

5.1.2.4.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

The respondent answers the actor with “no problem” that is minimal but effective. This brief statement functions as an acceptance of the apology, conveying that the issue has been resolved without causing any further social discomfort. The exchange of phrases between the actor and respondent demonstrates the effectiveness of Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies (1987) in everyday interactions.

5.1.2.4.1.1. Positive politeness

The actor's apology serves as a positive politeness strategy that seeks to repair any damage to social relationships, while the respondent's acceptance functions as negative politeness, showing consideration for the actor's effort to make amends.

5.1.2.4.1.2. Negative politeness

The phrase "No problem" serves as a negative politeness strategy according to the Politeness Strategies Model (1987), as it minimises the impact of the face-threatening act (FTA) caused by the spill. The respondent employs a negative politeness strategy by downplaying the seriousness of the event, thus protecting both parties' negative face that is the desire to be free from imposition. Additionally, the respondent reassures the actor that no offense was taken, reducing the weight of the situation and allowing for a smooth social recovery. This indirect form of politeness helps avoid further social tension, signalling that the actor's apology is sufficient and that no further action is needed.

5.1.2.5. Response 5

In this situation, a girl accidentally spilled water on another girl while standing in a queue in a rushy cafeteria, as her friend pushed her while she was drinking water. The respondent's immediate reaction was to say "**Bismillah**" when the water spilled. Spilling water on someone was an unintentional act but the actor quickly and politely apologised, first saying "sorry" and then emphasising with "I am so sorry," to acknowledge the inconvenience and show concern for the respondent's face. In response, the respondent reassured the actor

by saying, "**It's okay.**" The doubling down on the apology showed the actor's genuine attempt to repair the social disruption caused by the spillage. Her use of a politeness strategy, specifically negative politeness, was aimed at minimising the imposition or offense caused by the accident, which according to Brown and Levinson, (1987) was an attempt to mitigate the Face-Threatening Act.

Table 10 Speech Act

Original Response
Respondent: Bismillah!
Actor: Sorry, I am so sorry.
Respondent: It's okay.

5.1.2.5.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.2.5.1.1. Positive Politeness Strategy

By saying "**It's okay,**" the respondent uses positive politeness in this interaction. Though the two are strangers, the respondent's casual tone implies that the relationship is being managed in a way that avoids any potential conflict, while also making the actor feel reassured that the mistake was not a grave issue. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), positive politeness is aimed at minimising the social distance and creating a sense of solidarity. Here, the respondent is reinforcing social harmony and showing leniency toward the actor.

5.1.3. Situation 3: "Losing borrowed book/ laptop or any important thing"

5.1.3.1. Response 1

In this situation, an actor borrowed a library book from her friend but later lost it. The actor's behaviour reflected avoidance and shifting of responsibility. She attempted to explain the situation by stating that she had looked for the book in various places but could not find it. The actor's questioning, "What will happen now?" and shifting the blame by suggesting the respondent to check her own books demonstrated an unwillingness to take immediate

responsibility for the loss. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory, the actor's behaviour could be seen as trying to protect her own positive face that is the desire to be seen as responsible or competent by downplaying her role in losing the book. By focusing on her unsuccessful search efforts and offering vague solutions (like checking the photocopy shop), the actor deflected blame while indirectly seeking the respondent's understanding. However, her continued uncertainty created tension and a potential Face-Threatening Act (FTA) toward the respondent, who must have to deal with the consequences of the actor's mistake now.

Table 11 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Actor: Sana... yaar wo sociolinguistics ki book mein ne har jaga dhund li hai kahin say bhi nahi mil rahi. Cupboard main bhi dekhi hai, even mein sari books apne table pay hi rakhti hun udhar bhi ni hai, kahin pay bhi nahi hai.</p>	<p>Actor: Sana... man that sociolinguistics' book, I have searched it everywhere, it couldn't be found anywhere. I also looked in the cupboard, I keep my books on the table only, it is not even there.</p>
<p>Respondent: Yaar yeh kya kiya tu nay, wo to library ki book thi.</p>	<p>Respondent: Friend, what have you done? That was a library book, now what will I do?</p>
<p>Actor: Yaar mujhay lagta hai k may be mein nay tumhay de di ho, tum apnay pas dekho na sahi kar k.</p>	<p>Actor: Dude, I think, maybe I have given it to you. Search for it with you properly.</p>
<p>Respondent: Yaar aisay kaisay di hai, mujhay pata hai mere table pay books main kahin pay bhi nahi mili mujhay.</p>	<p>Respondent: Dude, how could it be? I know it is not anywhere on my table, in my books.</p>
<p>Actor: Yaar ab kya hoga, I am so sorry lekin mujhay lagta hai may be k mujhay photocopier pay reh gayi hai. Us din meray haath main thi jub hum udhar gaye thay.</p>	<p>Actor: Man, what would be done now? I am so sorry, but I think I left it on the photocopier. It was in my hands the other day when we went there.</p>
<p>Respondent: Yaar mein to kuch naheen kar sakti, I am sorry lekin it's not fair. Ab tum hi karo tumhein jo karna hai, fine pay karna</p>	<p>Respondent: I am sorry but it's not fair. I can't do anything. Now you must do whatever you need to. Pay fine or whatever is needed.</p>

hai ya jo bhi karna hai kyun k that was not my book.	
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5.1.3.1.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

Negative politeness strategy is initially used by the respondent but later she switches to bald-on record. These strategies from the response are discussed in succeeding lines:

5.1.3.1.1.1. Negative Politeness Strategy

According to the politeness strategies model (1987), the use of "I am sorry but it's not fair" reflects negative politeness, softening the potential Face-Threatening Act that is the criticism of the actor's behaviour. However, by explicitly stating that the actor must handle the situation herself, the respondent preserves her own negative face by refusing to take further responsibility.

5.1.3.1.1.2. Bald-on record (face-threatening acts)

The respondent's statement, "It's not fair. I can't do anything," implicitly criticises the actor's behaviour, creating a Face-Threatening Act. This criticism threatens the actor's positive face, as it implies the actor was irresponsible. However, the respondent mitigates the Face-threatening act through an apology ("I am sorry") before proceeding with the directive to handle the situation, softening the critique, and maintaining social harmony.

5.1.3.2. Response 2

In this situation, the actor, a girl living in a hostel, borrowed a mouse from her neighbour and left it on a window outside, but later discovered that it was lost. The actor's behaviour can be characterised by shifting responsibility and expressing panic. Initially, the actor tried to place the blame subtly on the respondent, asking whether they took the mouse from the window. When the respondent denied it, the actor escalated her panic, exclaiming, "Don't tell me...! It is not there! it is lost!" Her exclamatory tone showed her distress and reluctance to take full responsibility for losing the mouse. The actor's behaviour demonstrated an attempt to protect her positive face by finding an excuse for her own mistake like suggesting that someone else took the mouse or asking if the respondent had it. This reflects Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory, where the actor seeks to mitigate

the blame for her carelessness. Her disbelief and panic can be interpreted as efforts to show that the situation was beyond her control.

Table 12 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Actor: Riffat, tumney apna mouse window se uthaya hai kya?	Actor: Riffat, did you take your mouse from the window?
Respondent: Nahin mein ne nahin liya.	Respondent: No, I didn't.
Actor: Naa karo, wo wahan par nahin hai gum ho gya hai.	Actor: Don't tell me, it is not there, it is lost.
Respondent: Nahin mein to wahan gayi bhi nahin hun.	Respondent: I didn't even go there.
Actor: Such main?	Actor: Really?
Respondent: Nahin nahin, Allah ki kasam.	Respondent: No no, by God.
Actor: Ab mein kya karun? Shayad kisi nay utha liya ho.	Actor: What should I do now? Someone might have taken it.
Respondent: Wahan dhundo, udhar hi kaheen agay peechnay para hoga.	Respondent: Search there, it must be somewhere around.
Actor: Nahin wahan nahin hai mein nay dhund liya hai. Ab kya karun?	Actor: No, it is not there, I have already searched. What do I do now?
Respondent: Chalo koi nahin. Ab jo ho gya ho gya ab kya ho salta hai?	Respondent: It's okay. What is done is done. Now what can be done?

5.1.3.2.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.3.2.1.1. Negative Politeness Strategies

The clarity in response, "no, I didn't" helps maintain the respondent's own negative face by distancing herself from the situation and avoiding blame. Her simple and clear denial demonstrates a desire to keep her involvement limited, which ties into negative politeness strategies, where the respondent minimizes her obligation or imposition in the situation. Apart from this, by using the phrases, "search there, it must be somewhere around," the respondent demonstrates a form of negative politeness by indirectly suggesting a course of action that the actor can follow. This helps the respondent avoid being overly involved in the resolution while still maintaining a cooperative tone.

5.1.3.2.1.2. Positive Politeness Strategies

When actor asks the respondent, “don’t tell me...! Really?” then the respondent’s answer that is followed by “no, no, I didn’t even go there, by God,” serves as an emphasis and a way to protect her own positive face that is her desire to be believed and not viewed as untrustworthy. This can be seen as a positive politeness strategy, where the respondent seeks to affirm her truthfulness and maintain harmony in the interaction by strongly confirming her lack of involvement. Additionally, the use of the phrase “**it’s okay**” by the owner serves as a positive politeness strategy, as the respondent reassures the actor and minimises the potential damage to their relationship. By accepting the situation, the respondent avoids further Face-Threatening Acts toward the actor; instead, she chooses to maintain social harmony by dismissing the seriousness of the loss and moving forward.

5.1.3.3. Response 3

The actor, who had borrowed a laptop from her junior (both were host-elites), lost the laptop. She had been using it on the stairs outside her friend’s room but went inside to drink water for a few minutes. Upon returning, the laptop was missing. The actor informed the respondent (owner of the laptop) about the situation, and the respondent reacted by expressing shock and concern. The conversation continued with both parties discussing possibilities and potential actions, eventually deciding to inform the ARHT (Assistant Resident Hall Tutor) to share the issue in the hostel group. The actor’s behaviour showed responsibility in communicating the situation immediately to the laptop owner, indicating an understanding of the severity of the loss. However, her statements suggested an avoidance of accountability. By framing the loss as accidental (“I lost your laptop. I had kept it there on stairs...”), the actor mitigated the blame and invoked a sympathetic response from the respondent. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) negative politeness strategies, the actor’s explanations serve to minimise the imposition and excuse her actions, seeking to avoid confrontation and criticism by showing that it wasn’t intentional.

Table 13 Speech Act

Original Response	English translation
<p>Actor: Maheen, I lost your laptop dude. Mein ne wahan pay rakha tha, 2 minute k liye pani peeny k liye gayi hun or ab wahan pay nahin hai.</p> <p>Respondent: Laptop hi wahan pay nahin hai! (shockingly said)</p> <p>Actor: No.</p> <p>Respondent: Aisa kaise ho sakta hai? Koi friend joke to naheen kar rahi?</p> <p>Actor: I don't know but...</p> <p>Respondent: Koi friend idher hai abhi apki?</p> <p>Actor: Aik hi friend hai meri, wo to apnay room mein thi, uske paas se to mein ayi hun or wo bohat serious hai is tarha ka prank nahin kar sakti.</p> <p>Respondent: Kis jaga pay bathi thin ap?</p> <p>Actor: Wahan uss window pay.</p> <p>Respondent: Oh, dekhein kahin neechy to nai gira hua? (while searching it).</p> <p>Actor: Nahin yaar, neechy kaise gir sakta hai?</p> <p>Respondent: Larkian bhi to aaj kal bohat kum hein hostel mein...?</p> <p>Actor: Ab kya karein?</p> <p>Respondent: Apki friend ka room ye hai? Uss se pucha?</p> <p>Actor: Haan haan! But mein usi k paas thi wapis ayi hun nahin hai.</p> <p>Respondent: Ma'am ko bataen, group mein message kar dein.</p>	<p>Actor: Maheen, I lost your laptop dude. I had kept it there, went for 2 minutes to drink water and now it is not there.</p> <p>Respondent: Laptop is not there! (shockingly said).</p> <p>Actor: No.</p> <p>Respondent: How can this be? Is any friend of your joking?</p> <p>Actor: I don't know but...</p> <p>Respondent: Is your any friend here in the hostel?</p> <p>Actor: One is here but she was in her room, I was just with her, and she is so serious, she cannot do this kind of prank.</p> <p>Respondent: Where were you sitting?</p> <p>Actor: There, by that window.</p> <p>Respondent: Oh! Check if it fell, (while searching for it).</p> <p>Actor: No dude! How can it fall?</p> <p>Respondent: Number of girls is also less in the hostel nowadays so...?</p> <p>Actor: What to do now?</p> <p>Respondent: Is this your friend's room? Did you ask her?</p> <p>Actor: Yeah yeah! But I was with her at that time, laptop is not with her.</p> <p>Respondent: So, we should tell Ma'am (ARHT) to share the message in group (about the lost laptop).</p>

5.1.3.3.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.3.3.1.1. Negative Politeness Strategy

By questioning like, “how can this be, is any of your friend joking?”, the respondent avoids directly blaming the actor for negligence. Instead, she suggests an external cause (a potential prank by the actor’s friends), softening the face-threatening nature of the accusation. This reflects negative politeness, as she tries to avoid imposing guilt directly on the actor while seeking clarification on the event (Brown & Levinson, 1987). She implies that the situation might have been caused by someone else, which eases the burden of responsibility on the actor. Additionally, the use of problem-solving questions and the final commitment to involve the ARHT reflects negative politeness strategies, as the respondent avoids further imposition on the actor, softening the impact of the loss.

5.1.3.3.1.2. Positive Politeness Strategy

The positive face of the actor is preserved as the respondent refrains from direct accusation or harsh criticism. Like, as the owner of the laptop she said, “check if it fell down”, (while searching). In this utterance, the respondent shows a cooperative spirit, trying to figure out whether there was an accidental cause or a situational explanation. This approach lessens confrontation and continues to show understanding rather than blame, demonstrating positive politeness by maintaining a collaborative tone as the actor’s desire to be respected is fulfilled.

5.1.3.3.1.3. Face-Threatening Act

While there is an underlying **Face-Threatening Act (FTA)** in this situation due to the potential blame for the lost laptop, the respondent mitigates the severity of the Face-Threatening Act by using politeness strategies. Furthermore, the respondent’s use of Politeness Strategies maintains social harmony and prevents further escalation of the situation.

5.1.3.4. Response 4

The actor, a girl, lost her friend’s room keys, which included an additional key for the respondent’s cupboard. When the respondent asked about the keys, the actor claimed that they were in their friend Ammara’s room. The respondent, however, discovered that the keys

were not there. The actor's behaviour reflected carelessness and an avoidance of immediate responsibility for the loss. She shifted the blame by suggesting that the keys were left in Ammara's room, offering little reassurance to the respondent. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Strategies Model, her attempt to explain and deflect the responsibility showed an off-record politeness strategy, where the actor didn't directly take accountability but instead redirected the focus to an external factor, namely, the location where the keys were supposedly placed.

Table 14 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Actor: Yaar mein ne Ammara k room mein rakhi thin.</p> <p>Respondent: Yaar Ammara k room mein nahin hai na Aleeza dhund k do. Meray paas is mein or lock ki extra keys bhi pari hui hein. Meray paas or key pata nai hai bhi k nahin. Meri cupboard ki key bhi usi mein pari hai. Khuda ki bandi, tumhein mein ne kitni dafa kaha tha k sub say pehly key ka khayal rakhna. Tum ab apnay wallet main check karo, nahin hai?</p> <p>Actor: To ab kya hoga? Aur lock lay lein gay.</p> <p>Respondent: Yaar lene ka masla nahin hai na or key, uss mein cupboard ki key bhi pari hai. Eik key nahin hai wo, eik key ka to issue hi nahi hai. Dekha main tumhain aiwayin to 100 dafa nahin bol rai thi!</p>	<p>Actor: Dude, I placed it in Ammara's room.</p> <p>Respondent: It is not in Ammara's room, right Aleeza. Find it and give it to me. I also had extra keys to the lock along with it. I don't even know if I have any other keys. The key for my cupboard is also in it (key chain). O Man! How many times have I told you to take care of the keys first? Now check your wallet, is it not there?</p> <p>Actor: So, what is to be done now? Will buy new lock.</p> <p>Respondent: There is no problem in buying a new one; there was the cupboard's key as well with it. It's not one key; it is not an issue of one key. See, I haven't been telling you 100 times without reason!</p>

5.1.3.4.1. Absence of Politeness Strategies

The respondent did not use any politeness strategy to save actor's face:

5.1.3.4.1.1. *Face-Threatening Act*

The respondent's complaint and repeated emphasis on "how many times she had reminded the actor about the keys" constitute the Face-Threatening Act. This reaction threatens the actor's positive face, as it directly challenges her self-image by highlighting her failure to be careful with the keys. Although the respondent refrains from direct hostility, her continuous reminders of the actor's negligence show dissatisfaction with the actor's behaviour.

5.1.3.5. **Response 5**

The actor borrowed an umbrella from her friend because it was raining outside, and the respondent repeatedly asked her to take care of it, emphasizing her attachment to the umbrella. Despite the warning, the actor lost the umbrella after leaving it outside while she was taking photos. Upon returning to the hostel, the actor texted the respondent, admitting that the umbrella was lost. The actor's behaviour reflected a disregard for the responsibility attached to borrowing something valuable. Despite being reminded of the umbrella's importance to the respondent, she failed to take care of it, and her explanation about leaving it outside while taking photos further displayed carelessness. Her text message to the respondent constituted an off-record politeness strategy, (Brown and Levinson, 1987) where she indirectly seeks forgiveness by stating the facts of the situation and leaving it up to the respondent to react. This also shows an admission of guilt, as the actor acknowledged her role in losing the umbrella but without offering any resolution.

Table 15 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Actor: Ammara! I have lost your umberalla.	Actor: Ammara! I have lost your umberalla.
Respondent: (Ignored)	Respondent: (Ignored)
Actor: Such bata rahi hun, itni tension mein thi mein.	Actor: I am telling you the truth, I was so tense.
Respondent: Kya ho sakta hai yaar gum ho gayi hai to!	Respondent: What could be done dude if it is lost.
	Actor: You had even asked me to take good care of it as you like it so much.

<p>Actor: Tum ne kaha bhi tha yaar k mujhe bohat pasand hai iska khyal rakhna, I am so sorry.</p>	<p>Respondent: Okay dude! Just forget it, it was just an umberalla, it was already broken anyway.</p>
<p>Respondent: Acha yaar dafa karo umberalla hi thi, wo waisy hi tuti hui thi.</p>	

5.1.3.5.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.3.5.1.1. Positive Politeness Strategy

The respondent downplays the significance of the lost umbrella by saying, "Just forget it, it was just an umbrella." This strategy serves to soften the blow of the actor's mistake, showing that the respondent is not upset or seeking compensation. By minimizing the importance of the lost item, the respondent preserves the actor's positive face, reassuring her that the relationship is unaffected by the loss. Additionally, the statement, "It was already broken anyway" further acts as a face-saving move. It implies that the umbrella was not in perfect condition, reducing the sense of guilt the actor might feel. This approach is a classic example of positive politeness where the speaker tries to avoid causing embarrassment or guilt.

5.1.3.5.1.2. Managing Face-Threatening Act

By responding with leniency and minimizing the importance of the umbrella, the respondent helps to mitigate the potential negative impact of Face-Threatening Act, signaling that she values the relationship more than the object itself. This approach aligns with Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory, where a speaker addresses the hearer's positive face by showing understanding and not holding them accountable in a harsh manner.

5.1.4. Situation 4: "Seat dispute in University bus"

5.1.4.1. Response 1

In this scenario, two female students came inside university bus and asked another girl (respondent) to give them way to go to the back as they wanted to stand with their friends. At that time, there were so many students on the bus that they were hardly able to even stand as there was no empty seat to sit. The actors' initial action of requesting passage through the crowded bus to stand with their friends can be seen as an unintentional imposition, particularly in the context of the respondent's stressful environment. The respondent was

already in a challenging situation, standing in a crowded and uncomfortable bus with no available seating. Such circumstances naturally elevate stress levels, heightening sensitivity to perceived impositions.

The actors' request, though simple, inadvertently added to the respondent's stress by introducing a demand for cooperation in an already strained environment. After encountering the respondent's sarcastic and dismissive reaction, the actors had chosen to remain silent, refraining from engaging further. This decision aligns with **off-record politeness strategies** (Brown & Levinson, 1987), where the actors avoid further confrontation to de-escalate the tension. Through the lens of **Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962 & Searle, 1969)**, the actors' initial request can be categorised as a directive speech act, aimed at prompting the respondent to make space. However, their subsequent silence reflects the absence of a follow-up illocutionary act, signaling a withdrawal from the interaction to avoid exacerbating the conflict.

Table 16 Speech Acts

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Respondent: Rasta...yahan say phir hamary uper say hi guzar k jaein; aur kya ho sakta hai. Ajeeb mazakq hai! 5 minutes saath nahin kharay hon gay to kya ho jaye ga? (in a very rude tone)</p> <p>Actors: (didn't answer the respondent and accepted the situation.)</p>	<p>Respondent: Way...then you can go over us from here. What else could be done? What a strange joke! What would happen if you do not stand together for five minutes?</p> <p>Actors: (didn't answer the respondent and accepted the situation.)</p>

5.1.4.1.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

The respondent's behaviour can be evaluated using **Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies model (1987)**, which emphasises the use of strategies to mitigate face-threatening acts (FTAs).

5.1.4.1.1.1. Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs)

- **To the actors' positive face**

The respondent's sarcastic and dismissive tone attacks the actors' positive face (their desire to be respected and understood). By dismissing their request as trivial, she undermines their social standing and diminishes their perceived reasonableness.

- **To the respondent's own positive face**

The respondent's aggressive tone risks self-damage, as her lack of concern for social harmony may invite negative judgements from others in the bus.

5.1.4.1.1.2. Bald-on-record strategy

The respondent employs a **bald-on-record strategy** by issuing direct, unmitigated remarks that reject the actors' request. For example, "What else could be done?" leaves no room for negotiation or redress, amplifying the confrontation. This aligns with Brown and Levinson's assertion that such strategies are common in high-pressure situations but risk offending the interlocutor.

5.1.4.1.1.3. Absence of positive and negative politeness strategies

The respondent fails to acknowledge the actors' needs or maintain harmony. For instance, instead of empathizing or offering a polite refusal, she mocks their request with sarcastic directives. Positive politeness, which could involve an acknowledgment of their discomfort ("I understand, but there's no room to move"), is entirely absent. In addition to this, the refusal is delivered in a confrontational tone without attempting to soften the rejection. The lack of indirectness or mitigating phrases like "I'm sorry, but..." intensifies the FTA, as the respondent prioritises her own negative face (freedom from imposition) over maintaining social harmony.

5.1.4.2. Response 2

In this scenario, two girls came inside the bus and sat on the seats that were empty at that time. As they sat, the actor (female) who was sitting on the next seat asked them to leave the seats. The actor began with a polite request, "*Could you please get up from here?*" This reflected **positive politeness** strategies from **Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory (1987)**, as the actor sought to mitigate the imposition by being courteous. She justified the request with the explanation, "*Somebody was sitting here and asked me to reserve,*" aiming to make the demand less face-threatening. Upon facing resistance, the actor accepted the

refusal with “*Okay, it’s okay,*” demonstrating a conflict-avoidant attitude and preserving the social harmony of the interaction.

Table 17 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Actor: Could you please get up from here? Somebody was sitting here, and she had asked me to keep her seat reserved.</p> <p>Respondent: Yahan par koi cheez nahin wo rakh k gayi. Hum thakay huey aye hein. Agar wo aa jati hein to hum dekh letay hain, 2 log baithay hein 3 baith jaein gay.</p> <p>Actor: Okay, it’s okay.</p>	<p>Actor: Could you please get up from here? Somebody was sitting here, and she had asked me to keep her seat reserved.</p> <p>Respondent: There’s nothing here that she left behind. We have come tired. If she comes, we will see. 2 people are sitting, 3 will sit.</p> <p>Actor: Okay, it’s okay.</p>

5.1.4.2.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Strategies Model

The respondent used negative politeness strategy to soften her speech instead of aggressively defending her position or the seat that has been discussed in detail in the preceding lines.

5.1.4.2.1.1. Use of negative politeness strategy

The respondent employs strategies that align with Brown and Levinson’s negative politeness framework, which focuses on minimizing imposition and maintaining the interlocutor’s face during potentially confrontational interactions. Instead of rejecting the actor’s request outright with a blunt “no,” the respondent uses explanations and conditional compromises to soften the face-threatening act (FTA). For example, the statement, “There’s nothing here,” functions as an explanation that indirectly challenges the actor’s claim without explicitly accusing her of dishonesty. Moreover, the statement “We have come tired” can be seen as a way for the respondent to provide a reason for why they may not immediately comply with the actor’s request. In **negative politeness**, speakers often use excuses, explanations, or hedging in an indirect way to justify their current stance and to avoid direct confrontation or imposition. This helps soften the potential threat to the actor’s face. Furthermore, the conditional compromise, “If she comes, we will see,” demonstrates the respondent’s willingness to consider the original occupant’s claim in the future, signalling cooperation while maintaining her immediate stance.

By avoiding direct confrontation and offering logical reasoning, the respondent adheres to negative politeness strategies such as **hedging** (providing a conditional response) and **offering explanation** to mitigate the imposition. These strategies reduce the potential for escalation, allowing the respondent to maintain her autonomy while still showing a degree of deference to the actor's concern. This balance reflects a nuanced application of negative politeness, as the respondent prioritises her current need while leaving room for future resolution if circumstances change.

5.1.4.3. Response 3

In this scenario, actors (two female students) went inside the university bus and claimed the seats where other two girls were already sitting. The actors began the interaction by attempting to establish their claim over the seats using an **assertive speech act**, “These were our seats. We went for a while after occupying these.” This statement implied prior ownership and an expectation of compliance from the respondent. Their strategy reflected an effort to assert authority in the situation, leveraging the narrative of reservation to strengthen their position. However, their inability to provide tangible evidence or reinforce their claim undermined their authority. The respondent’s assertive and confident rebuttals such as “We have been sitting here since the bus arrived” and “You guys aren’t even from our bus” further weaken the actors' position, shifting the power dynamics of the conversation. Despite their initial persistence, the actors failed to counter the respondent’s challenges effectively. Additionally, their final question, “Not from the bus?” delivered in a tone of surprise, reflected a moment of doubt and confusion. This response suggested that they were caught off guard by the respondent’s accusation and lacked the necessary information or confidence to refute it. Consequently, this moment signalled a loss of authority and a reluctant acceptance of the respondent’s dominance in the interaction.

In terms of **Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Model**, the actors’ use of polite phrasing in their initial request shows an attempt to minimise the threat to the respondent’s negative face. However, their failure to adapt or escalate their strategies in response to the respondent’s assertiveness highlights their inability to maintain control in this stressful social encounter. Their retreat signals a shift from an authoritative stance to a more passive acceptance of the respondent’s claims, effectively conceding defeat in the dispute.

Table 18 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
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<p>Actor: Baat sunain, aap log yeh humari seat pay baithy huey hein; yahan par hum ne baithna tha.</p> <p>Respondent: Kaisay aap nay baithna tha?</p> <p>Actor: Humari seats thin, hum jaga rakh k gaye thay.</p> <p>Respondent: Nahin nahin, bus ayi hai to hum yahan pay aa k baithy hein.</p> <p>Actor: Aap yahan par thay?</p> <p>Respondent: Haan.</p> <p>Actor: Shuru se lay k?</p> <p>Respondent: Haan.</p> <p>Actor: Pakka?</p> <p>Respondent: Hum rozana yahan baithtey hein.</p> <p>Actor: Rozana baithtay hein lakin ab...ab ye seat...apka naam to nahi likaa na, aaj to hum nay jaga rakhi v thi pehly say.</p> <p>Respondent: Kahan se rakhi thi, aap log aye kahan se hein? Ye uncle bahir baithay hein in se puch lain ap. Aap log aye kahan se hein? Aap log to humari bus k hein hi nahi (said rudely and in a full confidence).</p> <p>Actor: Nahin hein bus k? (surprisingly asked)</p> <p>Respondent: Nahin. Peachay jaein agar kahin pay milti hai seat to baith jaein.</p>	<p>Actor: Listen, you people are sitting on our seat. We had to sit here.</p> <p>Respondent: How were you supposed to sit here?</p> <p>Actor: These were our seats. We went out after occupying these.</p> <p>Respondent: No, no. We have been sitting here since the bus arrived.</p> <p>Actor: You were here?</p> <p>Respondent: Yes</p> <p>Actor: From the start?</p> <p>Respondent: Yes.</p> <p>Actor: Are you sure?</p> <p>Respondent: We sit here daily.</p> <p>Actor: Although you sit daily but your name is not written on this seat. We had reserved this today.</p> <p>Respondent: How was this reserved? Where did you people come from? Uncle (bus driver) is sitting outside, you can ask him. Where have you people come from? You guys aren't even from our bus (said rudely and in a full confidence).</p> <p>Actor: Not from the bus? (surprisingly asked)</p> <p>Respondent: No. Go back, if you find a seat then sit there.</p>
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5.1.4.3.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

In the initial utterances bald-on-record strategy has been used and later negative politeness strategy has also been employed to mitigate the face-threatening act.

5.1.4.3.1.1. Opening with negative politeness strategy

The respondent incorporates elements of **negative politeness** to soften the interaction, such as providing alternatives like, “**Uncle is sitting outside, you can ask him**” and “**If you find a seat, then sit there.**” These strategies minimize the imposition on the actors by offering solutions while maintaining her stance. Negative politeness aligns with a desire to respect the hearer's negative face (their freedom from imposition), even in a confrontational exchange.

5.1.4.3.1.2. *Face-threatening acts (FTAs)*

The respondent's statements, such as "You guys aren't even from our bus," directly threaten the actors' positive face by challenging their legitimacy and implying that they are outsiders. This escalates the interaction and reinforces the respondent's position of power.

5.1.4.3.1.3. *Use of bald-on-record strategy*

The respondent's direct language reflects the use of a **bald-on-record strategy**, especially in statements like, "Go back, if you find a seat, then sit there." According to **Brown and Levinson's Politeness Model**, bald-on-record strategies are common in situations of urgency or stress. In the crowded bus setting, the respondent prioritises clarity and expediency over mitigating face threats.

5.1.4.4. **Response 4**

In this scenario, a female student (actor) went inside the bus and claimed the seat where another student (female) was already sitting. The actor asserted her claim to the seat aggressively by using a loud voice and interruptions, particularly with the statement, "This seat is mine." Her repeated insistence without evidence of prior reservation (e.g. leaving a bag) weakened her argument. The use of a loud and rude tone escalated the tension, highlighting her attempt to assert dominance in the interaction. Despite her efforts, the actor's inability to provide validation for her claim led to her argument losing credibility, especially when a third party corroborated the respondent's stance.

Table 19 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Actor: Baat sunain, yeh meri seat hai.	Actor: Listen, this is my seat.
Respondent: Aapki seat to nahin hai. Mein to yahan khali thi to...	Respondent: This is not your seat. It was empty so I...
Actor: (interrupted the respondent) yeh seat meri hai, (said in a loud voice and rude tone).	Actor: (interrupted the respondent) this seat is mine, (said in a loud voice and rude tone).
Respondent: Aapki seat kasey hai? Yahan par bag bhi nahi tha kuch bhi nahin tha, khali thi to mein baith gayi aa k.	Respondent: How come it is your seat? There was no bag, nothing, it was empty, so I came and sat.

<p>Actor: Bag nahi tha par seat to meri hai na, mein jagah rakh k neechay gayi thi.</p> <p>Respondent: Mujhay nahin pata, mein yahan khali thi to baith gayi hun, ab aapka masla hai, aap kharhi ho kar jaein ya jesey marzi jayein.</p> <p>(Then the respondent reconfirmed from the third girl sitting there while asking,) “Baat sunain, yeh seat khali thi na? Mein pehley yahan aa k baithi hun na?” (She also agreed with the respondent. So, she again answered the actor rudely while saying,) “See, stop it now.”</p>	<p>Actor: There was no bag but still seat is mine. I got off the bus after occupying the seat.</p> <p>Respondent: I don’t know. It was empty so I sat. Now it’s your problem whether you stand or do as you wish.</p> <p>(Then the respondent reconfirmed from the third girl sitting there while asking,) “Listen, this seat was empty, right? I sat here earlier, right?” (She also agreed with the respondent. So, she again answered the actor rudely while saying,) “See, stop it now.”</p>
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5.1.4.4.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.4.4.1.1. Lack of positive politeness

The respondent's tone and approach lack positive politeness markers, as there are no efforts to address the actor’s face wants or build rapport. For instance, instead of empathizing or softening her disagreement, the respondent opts for direct confrontation, stating that “How come it is your seat?” This absence of positive politeness reflects a disregard for maintaining social harmony.

5.1.4.4.1.2. Opening with negative politeness

At the start of the interaction, the respondent’s tone reflects an attempt to address the situation without overt confrontation. Like, “How come it is your seat? There was no bag, nothing, it was empty, so I came and sat.” This utterance explains her actions while indirectly challenging the actor’s claim. By providing a rationale, the respondent reduces the immediate imposition of directly saying, "This isn’t your seat." Offering explanations is a hallmark of negative politeness as it justifies the speaker’s actions, allowing the listener to understand without outright face-threatening acts. Additionally, negative politeness also involves indirectness and hedging, which can be seen in the respondent’s initial efforts to defend her position without explicitly accusing the actor of dishonesty or invalidating her claim.

5.1.4.4.1.3. Transition from Negative Politeness to Bald-on-Record Strategy

As the interaction progressed, the respondent escalated her language, abandoning the subtlety of negative politeness. The shift is evident in the utterances, “Now it’s your problem whether you stand or do as you wish” and “Stop it now.” These statements are examples of **bald-on-record strategies**, where the speakers directly communicate their intent without softeners or attempts to reduce the impact on the listener’s face.

5.1.4.5. Response 5

In this scenario, a female student (actor) went inside the bus and claimed the seat where another student (female) was already sitting. The actors asserted their claim by referencing prior occupancy, “We had told the girls here before going out of the bus that these are our seats.” Their approach includes attempts to substantiate their claim through explanations, such as emphasizing that they had left temporarily and informed others of their intent to return. However, their lack of evidence, like no bag or marker left behind, undermined their position. This results in a gradual weakening of their stance, leading them to accept the respondent's decision. Their final response, “No, it’s fine. No problem,” indicated their reluctant withdrawal, suggesting their recognition of the futility of further contestation.

Table 20 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Actor: Excuse me! Yahan hamari seat thi.	Actor: Excuse me! This was our seat.
Respondent: Yahan par to kuch parha hi nahi tha.	Respondent: There was nothing here at all.
Actor: Hum larhkion ko bol k gaye thay k ye wali seats hamari hein.	Actor: We went after telling the girls that these are our seats.
Respondent: Hum log to yahan pay pichlay 10 minute se aye baithay hein.	Respondent: We have been sitting here for the last 10 minutes.
Actor: Hum logon ki koi cheez chut gayi thi is liye hum wapis gaye thay. Hum log yahan baithay thay pehlay se. Hum unhain bol k gaye thay.	Actor: We had left something behind that’s why we went back. We were sitting here earlier. We went after telling them.
Respondent: Humein to kisi nay kuch bhi nahi bataya? Kisko bola tha aap nay?	Respondent: Nobody told us. Whom did you tell?
	Actor: I think those girls have also disappeared now.

<p>Actor: Wo log to mujhay lagta hai ab khud bhi ghayab ho gaye.</p> <p>Respondent: Yahan pay na koi bag parha hua tha. Kya pata aap nay dusri bus mein bola ho?</p> <p>Actor: Nahin yahi bus thi. Ap uth jaein please.</p> <p>Respondent: Yaar aap logon nay koi nishani bhi to nahi na chori. Seats bilkul khali thin, agar koi cheez parhi ho uper to phir koi nahi baithta.</p> <p>Actor: Wo jannay wali nahi thi na larhki to hum is tarha samaan nahin na chor saktay thay.</p> <p>Respondent: (One of the girls stood up from the seat while saying) Theek hai aap logon mein sa koi baith jaye”.</p> <p>Actor: Nahi it’s okay, aap baithi rahein.</p> <p>Respondent: Nai aap baith jaein.</p> <p>Actor: Nahi theek hai, koi baat nahin.</p> <p>Respondent: (While insisting the actor to sit she said), Theek hai na.</p> <p>Actor: Nahi nahi bus sahi hai, thank you.</p>	<p>Respondent: There was no bag here either. May be you mentioned it in another bus.</p> <p>Actor: No, this was the bus. Please get up.</p> <p>Respondent: Dude, you people had not left any sign. Seats were completely empty. If something was kept on the seat, then nobody would sit there.</p> <p>Actor: The girl was not our acquaintance, so we couldn’t leave our things like that.</p> <p>Respondent: (One of the girls stood up from the seat while saying) Okay, one of you may sit here”.</p> <p>Actor: No, it’s okay, you keep sitting.</p> <p>Respondent: No, you sit.</p> <p>Actor: No it’s fine, no problem.</p> <p>Respondent: (While insisting the actor to sit she said), It’s alright.</p> <p>Actor: No no it’s okay, thank you.</p>
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5.1.4.5.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.4.5.1.1. Negative politeness

The respondent employs negative politeness strategies in the form of explanations and rationalisations such as, “Seats were completely empty” and “If something was kept on the seat, then nobody would sit there.” These statements mitigate the face-threatening act (FTA) of denying the actors’ claim by justifying her own actions. According to **Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Theory (1987)**, negative politeness minimises impositions and seeks to avoid direct confrontation. By framing her defense as an explanation rather than a blunt

rejection, the respondent seeks to preserve the actors' face to some degree, even as she asserts her stance.

5.1.4.5.1.2. Bald-on-record strategy (*Face-threatening act, less used*)

In some moments, the respondent's language becomes more direct and assertive, such as, "Dude, you people had not left any sign." This bald-on-record statement lacks any softening or mitigating elements, directly challenging the actors' claim. While this strategy is typically face-threatening, the respondent uses it sparingly, likely to emphasise her frustration and assert her dominance in the argument.

5.1.4.5.1.3. Positive politeness

The respondent's offer, "Okay, one of you can sit here," demonstrates positive politeness. This strategy acknowledges the actors' needs and attempts to maintain social harmony by suggesting a compromise. By accommodating the actors in this manner, the respondent shifts from a defensive position to that of cooperation, reflecting her intent to de-escalate the situation.

5.1.5. Situation 5: "Breaking the line in front of bank or ATM"

5.1.5.1. Response 1

In this scenario, there was a queue of students at the ABL ATM IIUI branch where two girls were standing at the front waiting for their turns to use ATM but one of them was sitting down, close to her spot. Actor broke the line and tried to use the ATM before the girls who came earlier by standing at their place. The actor's behaviour demonstrated an attempt to bypass the queue by leveraging the perceived ambiguity in the situation. She justified her action by pointing out the seated girl's absence and argues, "She was sitting there, and now I have come forward." This indicated a dismissive attitude toward established norms of queuing, leading to a conflict. However, the actor eventually yielded, saying, "It's okay! You can go," signaling resignation and acknowledgment of the respondent's arguments.

Table 21 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Respondent: Is k baad yeh jaein gi phir mein bhi jaun gi, phir aap jana.	Respondent: After that she will go then I will go and then you can go (said softly to the actor).

<p>Actor: Koi baat nahin aap to baith gayi thin na, ab to mein aagey aa gayi hun.</p> <p>Respondent: Nahi nahi, aisey to nahi hota, humein bhi late ho raha hai.</p> <p>Actor: To aap ko wait karna chahiye tha na but yeh to baith gayi thi, ab to mein aagey aa gayi hun.</p> <p>Respondent: Per mein to kharhi hun na, phir aap aisy peachey se aagey to nahi aa sakti (said in a bit rude tone).</p> <p>Actor: Per yeh to nahin thin na or yahan pay to distance tha.</p> <p>Respondent: Nahiin, but yeh bathi hain na apni jagah pay hi or aap yahan...aisey to nahin hota. Aap ghalat kar rahi hein.</p> <p>Actor: Koi baat nahin agar mein ne pehly use kar liya to, 2 minute lagein gay.</p> <p>Respondent: Nahin, humain bhi to late ho raha hai na jaisey aap ko late ho raha hai.</p> <p>Actor: It's okay! Aap chali jaein.</p> <p>Respondent: Waise bhi yahan per do hi to hein, phir aap ka hi number aa jaye ga.</p>	<p>Actor: No problem, she was sitting there and now I have come forward.</p> <p>Respondent: No no, it doesn't work like this. We are also getting late.</p> <p>Actor: So you should have waited, right. She was sitting there, now I have come forward.</p> <p>Respondent: But I am standing here, so you can't come forward like this (said in a little rude tone).</p> <p>Actor: But she wasn't here and there was distance.</p> <p>Respondent: Noooo, but she is sitting at her place and you are here...it shouldn't be like this. You are doing wrong.</p> <p>Actor: It's okay if I use it first. It will take two minutes.</p> <p>Respondent: No, we are also getting late as you are getting late.</p> <p>Actor: It's okay! You can go.</p> <p>Respondent: By the way there are only two more people here, then it would be your turn.</p>
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5.1.5.1.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.5.1.1.1. Opening with the negative politeness

The respondent employed negative politeness strategies in the utterance, "After that she will go, then I will go and then you can go", by initially addressing the actor in a soft tone. This initial utterance respects the actor's face by explaining the sequence rather than outright rejecting her action. It aligns with Brown and Levinson's (1987) concept of **negative politeness**, as it mitigates potential conflict while asserting her position.

5.1.5.1.1.2. Bald-on-record strategy

As the actor persists, the respondent's politeness decreases, transitioning to a more confrontational tone. Like, "You can't come forward like this". This statement lacks mitigation, functioning as a face-threatening act (FTA). In this statement, the respondent directly confronts the actor's behaviour without employing strategies like hedging, apologies, or indirect phrasing. The directness here suggests that the respondent prioritises asserting her stance over preserving the actor's negative face. Bald-on-record utterances are characterised by their directness, lacking any effort to soften or mitigate the potential face-threatening act (Brown & Levinson, 1987). These strategies are often used in situations where clarity and immediacy are required, such as disputes or moments of heightened tension. In this case, the respondent's blunt expression reflects the escalating nature of the disagreement.

5.1.5.1.1.3. Positive politeness strategy

The respondent demonstrated positive politeness by acknowledging the shared inconvenience as shown in the utterance, "we are also getting late as you are getting late". This statement seeks common ground, suggesting empathy for the actor's situation while justifying her own urgency.

5.1.5.2. Response 2

There was a long queue inside Allied bank IIUI branch where students were submitting fees. The actor came later, broke the line and stood at front to submit the fee first. The actor demonstrated a disregard for the queue's established norms by breaking the line and moving to the front. This action challenged the social order, imposing on the negative face (freedom from imposition) of the other students who have been waiting for their turn. The actor didn't attempt to justify her behaviour or engage in a dialogue with the respondent, displaying an overt neglect of face-saving strategies. Her behaviour represented a clear face-threatening act (FTA) to the collective.

Table 22 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Respondent: (Respondent didn't say anything directly to the actor who broke the line but she said angrily to another girl standing there) 6 ghanon se kharhi hun;	Respondent: (Respondent didn't say anything directly to the actor who broke the line but she said angrily to another girl standing there) I have been standing here for

peechay wali aa k agay kharhi ho jati hein to hamari bari hi nahi ati.	6 hours; girls from the back come and stand at the front so we never get our turn.
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5.1.5.2.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.5.2.1.1. Negative politeness through indirectness

Instead of addressing the actor directly, the respondent has chosen an indirect approach, complaining to another person in the queue. This strategy minimises direct imposition on the actor's negative face by avoiding direct confrontation. For instance: The respondent didn't say, "*You should not have come to the front,*" but instead used sarcasm to make her point that is shown in the utterance, "*Girls come from the back and stand at the front so we never get our turn.*" This phrasing shifts the criticism to a general commentary rather than directly targeting the actor, which might be an attempt to avoid escalating the conflict.

5.1.5.2.1.2. Face-Threatening Act (sarcasm and mockery)

The sarcastic tone of the statement functions as a veiled attack on the actor's behaviour, signaling disapproval without direct aggression. The sarcasm here mocks the situation and implicitly criticizes the actor's disregard for fairness. Sarcasm and mockery are forms of communication where the speaker says something that has a literal meaning but intends an opposite or exaggerated interpretation. These strategies often carry implicit criticism or disapproval. In this case, the respondent uses sarcasm to highlight the actor's unfair behaviour of breaking the queue without addressing her directly.

5.1.5.2.1.3. Avoidance of positive politeness

The respondent does not attempt to build rapport or acknowledge the actor's perspective. Instead, her focus remains on highlighting the unfairness of the situation and asserting her own frustration.

5.1.5.3. Response 3

There was a queue of students at Allied bank IIUI branch where students were standing to submit fees. The actor (female student) broke the line and stood at the front while trying to be first to submit the fee. The actor demonstrated a blatant disregard for social norms by breaking the queue and attempting to justify her behaviour with a fabricated excuse, "I was standing here first so I will submit fee before you. I went there for a little while because I had to do some cheque work." This lie, coupled with her rough tone, reflected a dismissive attitude toward the respondent's face needs. Her behaviour aligns with

bald-on-record (face-threatening acts) according to Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987), as she directly challenged the respondent's position without offering any mitigating strategies. The actor's aggressive stance forced the respondent into a defensive position, ultimately leading to the respondent's withdrawal. This interaction highlighted the actor's dominance in the exchange, achieved through disregard for both queuing etiquette and interpersonal politeness.

Table 23 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Respondent: Excuse me! Aap say pehly line main mein thi.</p> <p>Actor: Mein pehlay se yahan kharhi thi so mein pehlay submit krwaon gi. Main thori dair k liye gayi thi kyun k mjhey wo wahan se cheque ka kam karna tha. (She just told a lie to the respondent and talked to her in a very rough tone.)</p> <p>Respondent: (Just ignored the actor, let her submit fee first and didn't argue anymore.)</p>	<p>Respondent: Excuse me! I was already in the line before you came.</p> <p>Actor: I was standing here first so I will submit fees before you. I went there for a little while because I had to do some cheque work. (She just told a lie to the respondent and talked to her in a very rough tone.)</p> <p>Respondent: (Just ignored the actor, let her submit fee first and didn't argue anymore.)</p>

5.1.5.3.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.5.3.1.1. Negative politeness

The respondent's opening statement, "**Excuse me! I was already in the line before you came,**" reflects negative politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1987). This strategy acknowledges the actor's autonomy while asserting the respondent's own rights. The inclusion of "**Excuse me!**" serves as a softener to mitigate the potential face threat, signalling respect even in disagreement.

5.1.5.3.1.2. Off-record politeness

Respondent's withdrawal can be seen as off-record politeness strategy when the actor continued to argue. By avoiding further arguments, the respondent indirectly communicates her frustration and disapproval while preserving her own face through silence. This strategy reflects a conscious decision to de-escalate the conflict, adhering to the principle of avoiding unnecessary face-threatening acts (FTAs).

5.1.5.4. Response 4

There was a queue in Allied bank IIUI branch where students were submitting fees turn by turn. A girl came, broke the line and went to the front of the line to get her cheque cashed. The actor (student) exhibited open neglect for queuing norms by bypassing the line

and approaching the counter directly. Her justification, “Why should I stand in such a long line to get a cheque cashed?”, and her cheeky tone reflected non-compliance with established procedures. The actor’s confrontational statements and rude behaviour serve as bald-on-record (face-threatening acts) (Brown and Levinson, 1987), prioritising her personal convenience over maintaining social harmony. However, her eventual silence and compliance suggested that the respondent’s firm stance effectively diminished further defiance.

Table 24 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Respondent (bank employee female): Ma’am mein line k baghair nahin karun gi.</p> <p>Student (female): Baqi jaga par bhi phir yahi rule apply kiya karein. Eik cheque cash karaney k liye mein itni lambi line main khari rahun? Mera koi fee ka process to nahin hai. Kindly yeh kar dain, (said in a very rude tone, showing cheeky behaviour).</p> <p>Respondent (bank employee): Cheque walon k liye koi different line nahin hai. Aap line main aein gi to mein aap ka kaam kar lun gi (said angrily).</p> <p>Student (female): Yeh to phir zyadti wali baat hai na. Ya to aap cheque walon ki alag line banaein.</p> <p>Respondent (bank employee): Counter alag ho na to line bhi alag ho jati hai.</p>	<p>Respondent (bank employee female): Ma’am I will not do it without a line.</p> <p>Student (female): Then apply the same rule at other places too. Why should I stand in such a long line to get a cheque encashed? I don’t have any fee process, kindly do it, (said in a very rude tone, showing cheeky behaviour).</p> <p>Respondent (bank employee): There is no separate line for cheque encashment. If you come in line, I will get your work done (said angrily).</p> <p>Student (female): It’s unfair then, or you should create a separate line for cheque encashment.</p> <p>Respondent (bank employee): If the counter is separate then the line will also be separate.</p> <p>Student (female): (Had stopped the argument and stood silently.)</p>

5.1.5.4.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson’s politeness strategies model

5.1.5.4.1.1. Initial use of negative politeness

The respondent begins with a negative politeness strategy by using respectful language like “Ma’am” and stating her refusal in a formal and measured tone like, “I will not do it without a line.” According to Brown and Levinson (1987), negative politeness minimises imposition and acknowledges the actor’s autonomy, even while enforcing the rules.

5.1.5.4.1.2. Shift to bald-on-record strategy

As the actor’s rudeness escalates, the respondent’s transition to a more direct approach can be seen in the utterance, “There is no separate line for cheque encashment.” This **bald-on-record strategy** focuses on clarity and efficiency, reflecting the institutional necessity to enforce rules without exceptions.

5.1.5.4.1.3. Positive politeness

The respondent attempted to mitigate potential conflict by offering a conditional solution, “If you come in line, I will get your work done.” This strategy aligns with positive politeness, as it reassures the actor of a favourable outcome if she complies, reducing the face threat posed by the initial refusal.

5.1.5.5. Response 5

There was a long queue outside the Allied bank IIUI branch where the actor broke the line and went to stand at the front to submit fee. The actor's behaviour in this interaction reflected a combination of **assertive and commissive speech acts** while employing **positive and negative politeness strategies** to manage the face-threatening act. Initially, the actor had used an **assertive speech act** by justifying her position that could be seen in the utterance, *“I was here, just had gone away for a little while”*, attempting to defend her action without directly confronting the respondent. This response aligns with **positive politeness**, as it seeks to establish common ground and reduce potential hostility. Later, the actor employed a **commissive speech act** by committing to leave once their companions return, (*“Okay, alright! As they come, I will go”*), which serves as an attempt to de-escalate the situation.

This aligns with **negative politeness**, acknowledging the respondent's concern while providing a resolution that avoids further conflict. The actor's responses indicate an effort to maintain social harmony through justification and compromise, rather than direct opposition.

Table 25 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Respondent: Excuse me! Yeh line hai aap agay kasey ghusi hain? (said after a little while).</p> <p>Actor: Mein yaheen pay thi, mein thori der k liye gayi thi.</p> <p>Respondent: Phir aap kay saath wali to andar chali gayi hein.</p> <p>Actor: Acha chalain wo aa jaein gi to mein chali jaun gei</p> <p>The respondent ignored and didn't argue more.</p>	<p>Respondent: Excuse me! This is a line; how did you push in to the front?</p> <p>Actor: I was here, just had gone away for a little while.</p> <p>Respondent: But the girls who were with you have gone inside.</p> <p>Actor: Okay alright! I will go when they come.</p> <p>The respondent ignored and didn't argue more.</p>

5.1.5.5.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.1.5.5.1.1. Negative politeness

The initial utterance delivered by the respondent, "Excuse me! This is a line, how did you push in to the front?" represents **negative politeness** (Brown & Levinson, 1987) as it acknowledges the actor's autonomy by framing the challenge as a question rather than an outright accusation. This approach minimises the imposition while emphasising the respondent's expectation of adherence to norms.

5.1.5.5.1.2. Bald-on-record (face-threatening act)

The respondent's second statement, "But the girls who were with you have gone inside" is more direct and serves as a **bald-on-record strategy** to highlight the inconsistency in the actor's excuse. This shift reflects a prioritisation of clarity and efficiency over mitigating the face threat to the actor.

5.1.5.5.1.3. Off record politeness through silence

By ignoring the actor's final justification and standing silent, the respondent employs **off-record politeness**, avoiding further direct engagement while tacitly disapproving of the actor's actions. This strategy reduces the potential for intensifying the dispute and allows the actor to infer the respondent's dissatisfaction.

5.2. Analysis of the responses received from male students

5.2.1. Situation 1: "Noisy gatherings in the University Hostel"

5.2.1.1. Response 1

The actor (a boy) loudly knocked at the door of his classmates. One of the boys from the room opened the door and then the actor started teasing them, talking in a loud voice and playing loud music. The actor was engaged in behaviour that deliberately disrupted the respondent's study environment as he was employing teasing and loud music to provoke a reaction. The actor's primary speech acts included inquiries ("What are you studying?"), indirect complaints ("Yesterday you people kicked out Saad too"), and self-justifications ("My purpose is not to tease you, I was just getting bored"). These acts reflected a mix of **expressive** and **commissive** illocutionary acts aimed at creating interaction rather than resolving tension. However, the actor's behaviour constituted a **face-threatening act (FTA)** to the respondent's **negative face**, as it imposed on the respondent's freedom to study in peace. The actor's later attempts at justification failed to mitigate the FTA, and his continued provocations exacerbated the conflict.

Table 26 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Actor: Kya parhai ho rahi hai?	Actor: What are you studying?
Respondent: Yaar tang mat karo mujhay. Meherbani kro.	Respondent: Man, don't tease me. Please!
Actor: Mein to abhi aya hun; kal tum logon nay Saady ko bhi nikaal diya or ab meray saath aisay kar rahay ho.	Actor: I've just come; yesterday you people kicked out Saady too and now behaving like this to me.
Respondent: Chalay jao yaar chalay jao. Parhnay do.	Respondent: Just go man, just go. Let me study.
Actor: Kis cheez ka paper hai?	Actor: Which exam is it?
Respondent: Parhnay do yaar.	Respondent: Let me study man.

<p>Actor: Mufti ka hai, ya kya naam hai, us ka hai?</p> <p>Respondent: Yaar mufti ka hai, kya dimagh kharab kar rahay ho. Chalay jao, yeh na ho k koi cheez utha k maar dun. Dafa ho jao.</p> <p>Actor (to 3rd person, speaking against respondent): Pehlay hi kal Hafiz is kay room mein aa gya tha. Wo bichara kyun aya kyun k wo mujh say tang ho raha tha room mein to Yasir k paas aa gya. Yeh uss se shuru ho gya k jao maro, dafa ho jao. Pehlay hi usay mess se khana nahi mila or wo barh barha raha tha.</p> <p>Respondent: Na karo yaar, na tang karo. Insaan kay bachay bano.</p> <p>Actor: Yaar mera maqsad tumhein tang karna nahin. Mein bore ho raha tha to abhi to yaar 10 bajay hein. Raat bhi 12:15 bajaay tak parhtay rahe hein mein or Yasir. (Then he played a song while saying) thora enjoy bhi karna chahiye.</p> <p>Respondent: (Gaali or dhakka detay huey actor ko kehta hai) Jao yaar jao.</p>	<p>Actor: Is it Mufti's? Or what is the name of another one?</p> <p>Respondent: It's Mufti's man. Why are you messing with my mind? Just go, otherwise I might pick something up and hit you. Get lost!</p> <p>Actor (started gossiping with another boy present in that room against respondent while saying): Just yesterday, Hafiz also came to his room. Why did he come? Because he was bothered by my presence in the room, he went to Yasir. He (respondent) started telling him to go and get lost. He didn't even get food from the mess and was already getting annoyed.</p> <p>Respondent: (very angrily) Don't do it man, don't tease. Be a nice man.</p> <p>Actor: Dude, my purpose is not to tease you. I was just getting bored. It's just 10 o'clock. Last night, Yasir and I kept studying till 12:15. (The he played a song while saying) should also enjoy a little.</p> <p>Respondent: (Abusing and pushing the actor out of the room) Go man, go.</p>
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5.2.1.1.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.1.1.1.1. Negative politeness (initially used)

The respondent's initial appeal, "Man, don't tease me. Please!", employs negative politeness by indirectly requesting the actor to stop without directly imposing. This reflects an attempt to minimise the face-threatening act while maintaining some level of decorum but as the actor ignores these initial strategies, the respondent abandons negative politeness in favour of more direct approaches.

5.2.1.1.1.2. Shift to bald-on-record strategy

The respondent shifts to bald-on-record directives, such as “Just go, man. Let me study” and “Get lost”. These unmitigated commands prioritize clarity and immediacy over maintaining the actor’s face. This strategy is typical in high-stakes or urgent situations, where the speaker’s need to achieve a goal outweighs concerns for politeness. The respondent’s ultimate outburst, involving both verbal abuse and physical action, is a further intensification of the bald-on-record approach, reflecting his complete abandonment of politeness strategies.

5.2.1.2. Response 2

The actor (a boy) played loud music and started singing along with the music when his other room mates were studying during exams. The actor’s behaviour constituted a repeated **face-threatening act (FTA)** by disregarding the respondent’s requests for silence. While the actor initially acknowledged the respondent’s concerns and agreed to adjust the music volume, his subsequent actions, playing loud music and singing contradicted his earlier assurances. This inconsistency revealed a lack of commitment in maintaining social harmony and respect for the respondent’s negative face (**their desire for freedom from disturbance**). However, the actor’s apologies (“oh okay, sorry bro”) and justifications (“it’s not so loud, it’s a little bit”) reflected a combination of **negative politeness strategies** and **defensive speech acts**, intended to mitigate the perceived imposition. However, these attempts failed due to the actor’s repetitive disruptive behaviour, ultimately forcing the respondent to escalate their responses.

Table 27 Speech Act

Original response (English language)
Respondent: Bro, please keep silent because we’re studying now. Okay!
Actor: A little bit, I am just playing for a while.
Respondent: You can play songs but just keep it a little bit silent. We are studying.
Actor: Oh, okay okay! I will just slow it, no worries.
Actor: (Again played loud music and started singing with it too.)
Respondent: Bro bro bro!
Actor: Yeah, yeah, yeah!
Respondent: I told you before, right. Just keep a little bit silent. We are studying, right!
Actor: Bro, I am just playing for a while not for the whole night.
Respondent: I know, I know I know, I know. You are playing and singing songs, but we are studying.
Actor: (Interrupted the respondent and said) You people can study.
Respondent: But how, we’re studying but your sound is noisy.
Actor: I am just playing.

Respondent: Your sound is noisy, and we are studying. Just give a little bit of respect to us. Okay?

Actor: Okay dude, I'll not do, okay? You people can just study.

Actor: (Then played a song for the third time, still in a loud voice while singing with it.)

Respondent: (In anger) Now it's the third time! (Then repeatedly said), it's the third time I told you. (Then again said with emphasis), now it's the thirddd timeee.

Actor: Yes, I understand but I am just enjoying.

Respondent: (Interrupted the actor) Do you understand?

Actor: Yes, I understand but I am just enjoying myself here.

Respondent: I know you wanna enjoy but enjoy by yourself. We don't want to enjoy ourselves; we are studying now.

Actor: (Actor argued with the respondent) It's not so loud sound, it's a little bit.

Respondent: It's about you. We are so far still listening to your song.

Actor: So? You people are getting disturbed by the song?

Respondent: Yeah, why not? And again, I will not tell you.

Actor: Oh! Okay.

Respondent: If you will repeat it again, I will really depart you to provost. This is the last warning.

Actor: Oh! Okay okay. Sorry bro, I will not play again.

5.2.1.2.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

The respondent's use of different politeness strategies evolves throughout the interaction, reflecting a dynamic approach to manage the situation; these are explained in the following lines:

5.2.1.2.1.1. Positive politeness

The respondent initially employs positive politeness strategies by addressing the actor as “bro” and framing their requests in a collaborative tone. For example, “You can play song but just keep it a little bit silent” balances the actor's desire to play music with the respondent's need for quiet.

5.2.1.2.1.2. Negative politeness

As the situation escalates, the respondent adopts negative politeness strategies to assert boundaries while minimizing imposition. For example, “**Just give a little bit respect to us. Okay?**” This appeal invokes a moral obligation, framing the directive as a request for mutual respect rather than an outright demand.

5.2.1.2.1.3. Bald-on-record strategies

When the actor repeatedly disregards the respondent's requests, the respondent shifts to bald-on-record strategies that can be seen in the statement, "If you will repeat it again, I will really depart you to provost. This is the last warning." The directness and lack of mitigation emphasise the seriousness of the threat, prioritising clarity and enforcement over social harmony.

5.2.1.3. Response 3

A boy (actor) went to his friend's room when he and his other room mates were busy studying during exams and started knocking at their door. At first, the actor had started gossiping (casual conversation) with his friend but suddenly, he started teasing his friend while speaking in a very loud voice and shouting. The actor's speech consisted of loud and disruptive actions that intentionally provoked the respondents. His utterances, such as "Tell me, what else? What are you doing rascal?" and repeated loud interjections were representative of expressive illocutionary acts, meant to grab attention. Social norms were deliberately disregarded by the actor as he was deflecting requests for silence with justifications like "Man, there is nothing like that in this." These attempts to rationalise his behaviour revealed his refusal to accommodate the respondents' legitimate concerns.

Table 28 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Actor: Aur sunao, kya kar rahe ho kameenay? (said in a very loud voice).</p> <p>Respondent1 (actor's friend): Yaar shor na karo na, tang ho rahe hein saray k saray.</p> <p>Actor: In ko kya karna hai?</p> <p>Respondent 2 (actor's friend's roommate): Yaar bhai, yeh aap log kya kar rahe ho. Hum idhar study kar rahe hein or aap log shor macha rahe ho? Aisa to nahi karna chahiye.</p> <p>Actor: Yaar aisa to na kaho, mein to aaj aya hun, 2 din se is liye is k paas aya bhi nahin k</p>	<p>Actor: Tell me, what else? What are you doing rascal? (said in a very loud voice).</p> <p>Respondent1 (actor's friend): Hey, don't make noise, everyone is getting annoyed.</p> <p>Actor: What do they have to do?</p> <p>Respondent 2 (actor's friend's roommate): Hey brother, what are you people doing? We are studying here, and you people are making noise. You shouldn't do that.</p> <p>Actor: Hey, don't say that; I just came today. I haven't been even here for two days because he was sick and had exams.</p>

yeh bemaar bhi tha aur uper se papers bhi thay.

Respondent 2 (actor's friend's roommate): Chalo wo to sahi hai, lekin itna shor to koi nahin machata na. Idhar hum study kar rahe hein aur aap log shor macha rahe ho.

Actor: Yaar is mein to aisi wali bat to hai nahi, hum to... aap logon ki seat to udhar aagey hai, yeh to hum logon ki to yeh wali jaga hai.

Respondent 2 (actor's friend's roommate): Nahin, phir bhi banda to disturb ho jata hai na. Banda to disturb hota hai, shor say to disturb hota hai.

Respondent 1 (actor's friend): Aap thora ahista karein na; wo parh rahe hein. Room to eik hi hai na.

Actor: Mein to aap k paas aya hun, in k paas thora hi aya hun. (again said this in a very loud voice)

Respondent 1 (Actor's friend): To aap araam se baithein na, aap shor kyun kar rahe hein?

Respondent 2 (actor's friend's roommate):
Yaar bhai, aap apne dost ko smjhaa lein zara. Yahan hum study kar rahe hein, banda disturb ho jata hai.

Actor: Aur sunaooo, kya kar rahe ho? (again spoke in a very loud voice).

Respondent 1 (actor's friend): Bass karo na yaar, kafi ho gya hai.

Respondent 2 (actor's friend's roommate):

Alright, that is fine, but nobody makes this much noise. We are studying here, and you people are making such noise.

Actor: Man, there is nothing like that in it. You guys have seats ahead over there. This is rather our place.

Respondent 2 (actor's friend's roommate):

No, still a person gets disturbed right. A person gets disturbed with noise.

Respondent 1 (actor's friend): Be a bit quieter; they are studying. The room is same though.

Actor: I came to you, not to them. (said in a louder voice)

Respondent 1 (Actor's friend): Then you sit quietly. Why are you making noise?

Respondent 2 (actor's friend's roommate):

Hey brother, make your friend understand a bit. We are studying and it disturbs a person.

Actor: Tell me, what's going on? (again shouted while saying it).

Respondent 1 (actor's friend): Just stop it man, it's enough now.

5.2.1.3.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

Respondents initially use negative and positive politeness strategies but when politeness fails, they escalate to bald-on-record approach, which are all discussed in detail in the following lines.

5.2.1.3.1.1. Negative politeness

Initially, the respondents employ negative politeness strategies to minimize the imposition of their requests that can be seen in the statement, "We are studying here, and you people are making noise. You shouldn't do that." The acknowledgment of shared space and soft criticism here seeks to maintain harmony while addressing the issue.

5.2.1.3.1.2. Positive politeness

Attempts to align with the actor's perspective also appear, such as when second respondent says, "Alright, that is fine, but nobody makes this much noise". This statement mitigates criticism by acknowledging the actor's perspective before presenting a counterpoint.

5.2.1.3.1.3. Bald-on-record

When politeness fails, the respondents escalate to a bald-on-record approach, prioritizing clarity and urgency over face-saving considerations. For instance, "Just stop it, man, it's enough now", reflects the respondents' heightened frustration and reduced willingness to negotiate.

5.2.1.4. Response 4

Actor (a boy) went to his friend's room, when his friend was studying during exams and knocked loudly at his door. As his friend opened the door, they exchanged greetings and then casual conversation started between them. After that, the actor started shouting and hooting suddenly for no reason. The actor's behaviour included disruptive actions such as yelling, hooting and making sarcastic remarks about the respondent's exam preparation. His utterances such as "Dude, teasing friends is something that friends do" and "I actually want your marks to get decreased" served as **expressive illocutionary acts** that aimed to entertain

himself and provoke reactions from the respondent. The repeated hooting and loud laughter further demonstrated his disregard for the context and the respondent's need to study.

Table 29: Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Actor: (Started shouting and hooting for no reason.)	Actor: (Started shouting suddenly and hooting for no reason.)
Respondent: Yaar aisa na karo yaar, mein paper tayyar kar raha hun.	Respondent: Man, don't do this man. I am preparing for the exam.
Actor: (Stood up to leave that room angrily without saying anything.)	Actor: (Stood up to leave that room angrily without saying anything.)
Respondent: Baitho baitho.	Respondent: Sit, sit.
Actor: Nahin nahin. Tum paper tayyar karo na.	Actor: No no, do your exam preparation, right.
Respondent: Yaar yeh naarey to na lagao yaar.	Respondent: Man, at least don't yell man.
Actor: (Laughed)	Actor: (Laughed)
Respondent: Dara diya hai aap ne kasam say. Kya ho gya hai yaar?	Respondent: You have scared me really. What has happened man?
Actor: Khair hai koi nahin. Tayyari karo. Paper k baad aap k paas time hoga? Chalay jao gay?	Actor: It's okay! No worries. Do your preparation. Will you have time after the exam? Will you leave?
Respondent: Haan paper k baad chala jaunga. Jana bhi to hai na, lekin pehly paper dun.	Respondent: Yes, I will leave after the exam; have to go anyway but first I must take the exam.
Actor: (First laughed and said) Yaar inhone hamari classes morning mein or paper evening mein rakha hai. Kuch samajh nahi ati.	Actor: (First laughed and then said) Man hey have kept our classes in the morning and exam in the evening. I don't understand at all.
Respondent: Yaar classes evening mein achi hein.	Respondent: Man, classes are better in the evening.
	Actor: Yeah, that's right.

Actor: Haan yeh to hai.

Respondent: Ab mujhe thora parhne do, zyada batein nahi karo.

Actor: Tayyari? (Laughed while saying). To aap ne tayyari karni hai na, mein ne to nahin karni. Meri ho gayi.

Respondent: Mein ne karni hai lekin. Aap ki ho gayi, mein ne nahin ki na yaar. (said angrily)

Actor: (Again started hooting and then laughed in a very loud voice.)

Respondent: Yeh kya drama hai yaar?

Actor: Yaar tang karna bhi to doston ko hota hai na yaar.

Respondent: Doston ko tang karne ka koi apna time hota hai na, is tarha to nahi hota. (said very angrily)

Actor: Matlab, tang karna bhi doston ko hota hai na. Aisa to nahi hai k banda har kisi k paas chala jaye.

Respondent: Lekin har time ka ni hota. Mein parhai kar raha hun or aap naaray laga rahe ho. Aise to nahi na hota.

Actor: (Laughed again and then repeatedly started shouting and hooting.)

Respondent: Khamkhaa yaar! Kasam se, mein tayyari kaise karun?

Actor: Mein to chahta hun k aap k number thora aein. Isi liye to mein idhar aya hun.

Respondent: Now let me study a little.

Actor: (Laughed while saying) preparation? So, you have to do the preparation, right! not me. Mine is done.

Respondent: But I have to do. You have done, I haven't dude. (said angrily)

Actor: (Again started hooting and laughed in a very loud voice.)

Respondent: What's this drama man?

Actor: Dude, teasing friends is something that friends do dude.

Respondent: Teasing friends is okay but there is a time and place for it, not like this.

Actor: I mean, teasing is what friends do, you can't just go around annoying everyone.

Respondent: But not all the time. I am studying and you are yelling and hooting. That's not how it works.

Actor: (Laughed and then again, he started shouting and hooting.)

Respondent: For no reason man! By God, how do I do preparation?

Actor: I actually want your marks to get decreased. I just came here for this reason.

Respondent: (Laughed and said) I would have to kick you out now. Alright? I swear. Then don't get angry.

Actor: No no. What's there to get angry but I can be anyhow.

Respondent: No no, then I also can get angry like this.

<p>Respondent: (Laughed and said) Mujhe ab aap ko bhagana parhe ga. Theek hai? Kasam se. Phir khafa na ho jao.</p> <p>Actor: Nahin nahin, khafa honay wali konsi baat hai, lekin ho bhi sakta hun na is tarha se.</p> <p>Respondent: Nahin nahin, mein bhi phir khafa ho sakta hun na is tarha se.</p> <p>Actor: Aap karo tayyari. Mein aap ko disturb to kar nahin raha.</p> <p>Respondent: Ab zara tayyari kar raha hun. Ab shor nahin karna.</p> <p>Actor: (Again shouted and laughed in a very loud voice.)</p> <p>Respondent: Yaar kasam se uth jao, uth jao (in a very rude tone), uth jao!</p> <p>Actor: Mera koi ni khair hai. Tayyari to aap ki waise bhi ho gayi hai.</p>	<p>Actor: You can do preparation. I am not disturbing you so.</p> <p>Respondent: Now I am doing preparation. Don't make noise.</p> <p>Actor: (Again laughed and shouted in a very loud voice.)</p> <p>Respondent: Man! I swear! Get up, get up, get up! (in a very rude tone).</p> <p>Actor: Dude, no worries, your preparation has already been done.</p>
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5.2.1.4.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

Positive and negative politeness strategies are used initially by the respondent but later when politeness fails to bring change and after getting frustrated by the actor's repeated silly behaviour, the respondent gradually shifts to bald-on-record strategy that is described below:

5.2.1.4.1.1. Positive politeness

Initially, the respondent employs positive politeness strategies to mitigate the conflict and maintain social harmony by asking the actor to sit. The utterance ("**sit sit**") attempts to calm the actor and prevent him from leaving in anger. It shows concern for the relationship despite the actor's disruptive behaviour.

5.2.1.4.1.2. Negative politeness strategy

The respondent also employs negative politeness strategies to reduce the imposition of his requests that is clear in the statement, "Man, at least don't yell man." The use of "at least" minimizes the imposition, making the request appear more reasonable and less demanding.

5.2.1.4.1.3. *Bald-on-record strategy*

As frustration builds, the respondent abandons politeness strategies in favour of bald-on-record directives that can be seen in the utterance, "Man! I swear! Get up, get up, get up!" This direct command reflects the respondent's exasperation and reduced patience.

5.2.1.5. **Response 5**

The actor's behavior revolves around persistently engaging with the respondent despite clear signals of annoyance. His actions include loud knocking, shouting, and attempts to start conversations or jokes, which constitute expressive illocutionary acts aimed at establishing fellowship. For example, the use of humor and casual statements, such as "You are looking so cute" and "Tell me, what's new?" reflect a desire to maintain a lighthearted interaction. However, the actor's actions escalate into face-threatening acts (FTAs) by intruding on the respondent's negative face specifically, the respondent's desire for freedom from disturbance. The actor employs minimal politeness strategies, such as offering greetings and engaging in small talk, but these fail to mitigate the intrusiveness of his behavior. The hooting and turning off the lights further intensify the disruption, leading to a complete breakdown in social harmony.

Table 30 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Actor: darwaza kholo na. kiya kar rahy ho?</p> <p>Actor: as respondent opened the door, Actor said, "assalam o alaikum" with excitement.</p> <p>Respondent: directly abused the actor and then said: "main abhi bath hi raha tha k tuu a gaya".</p> <p>Actor: kidar bath rahy thy?</p> <p>Respondent: didn't answer the actor.</p> <p>Actor: koi or sunao nai tazi?</p>	<p>Actor: open the door, what are you doing?</p> <p>Respondent: opened the door.</p> <p>Actor: said salam with excitement.</p> <p>Respondent: ignored the actor's slam. Directly abused him after opening the door and said: "I was just about to sit and you came".</p> <p>Actor: where were you sitting?</p> <p>Respondent: silent (ignored the actor)</p>

<p>Respondent: many abhi namaz bhi nahin pari</p> <p>Actor: kidhar gay thy?</p> <p>Respondent: abused the actor and said, “roti khany gaya thaa”</p> <p>Actor: pankha kam kar do. Kiya masla hai tumhary room main aty hain tum ny itna tez chlaya hota hai uss k room main jaty hain to uss ny itna tez chlaya hota hai. Yaa kiya drama hai yar?</p> <p>Respondent: ignored the actor and didn’t say anything.</p> <p>Actor: pyary lag rahy ho koi cheez hii khila do.</p> <p>Respondent: kiya cheez?</p> <p>Actor: koi b cheez</p> <p>Respondent: kuch b nahin haa.</p> <p>Actor: koi nai tezi. Mid ki tyari hai k nahin?</p> <p>Respondent: aj saa shuru karun ga.</p> <p>Actor: bulb band kro.</p> <p>Respondent: naa kro yaar, jao yaar.</p> <p>Actor: 5 minute k lia band karny do</p> <p>Respondent: mjhy jaany do many namaz parni hai.</p> <p>Actor: in a very loud sound said: baith jao yaar main tmhary paas aya hun or tum jaa rahy ho. Jo sawal sir ny smjhay thy wo smjh a gay thy k nahin.</p> <p>Respondent: jao yaar khud jao warna main tumhy nikal dun ga.</p> <p>Actor: did hooting</p> <p>Respondent: pushed the actor out of the room and said: “jao yaar, jao”.</p>	<p>Actor: tell me, what’s new?</p> <p>Respondent: I didn’t offer prayer yet.</p> <p>Actor: where were you?</p> <p>Respondent: first abused the actor and then replied: “I had gone to eat food”.</p> <p>Actor: turn the fan down. What’s the problem?</p> <p>When we come to your room, you have it running so fast, when we go to his room, he has it running so fast. What drama is this?</p> <p>Respondent: ignored the actor.</p> <p>Actor: you are looking so cute. Just give me something to eat.</p> <p>Respondent: what thing?</p> <p>Actor: anything</p> <p>Respondent: there is nothing</p> <p>Actor: tell me, did you prepare mids or not?</p> <p>Respondent: will start from today.</p> <p>Actor: while turning the respondent’s room’s light off said: “dude, turn the light off”.</p> <p>Respondent: don’t do man, go man.</p> <p>Actor: let me get it off for five minutes.</p> <p>Respondent: let me go, I have to offer prayer.</p> <p>Actor: sit dude, I just came to you and you are going.</p> <p>Respondent: Go man, go by yourself otherwise I will kick you out.</p> <p>Actor: did hooting.</p> <p>Respondent: pushed the actor out of the room while saying, “go man, go”</p>
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Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Strategies Model

Negative politeness

Initially, the respondent employs negative politeness by ignoring the actor's greeting and responding minimally to questions. This approach reflects an effort to avoid direct confrontation while signaling disinterest in the interaction. Negative politeness is also evident in the respondent's attempt to disengage by stating, "**Let me go, I have to offer prayer**". This excuse frames the refusal as circumstantial rather than personal, minimizing the face-threatening act.

Transition to bald-on record strategy

As the interaction escalates, the respondent abandons politeness strategies in favor of bald-on-record directives. Statements like "**Go man, go by yourself**" and "**I will kick you out**" are unmitigated commands that prioritize clarity and immediacy over social harmony. The physical act of pushing the actor out further exemplifies the use of a bald-on-record approach to enforce boundaries.

5.2.2. Situation 2: "Accidental spillages in Cafeteria"

5.2.2.1. Response 1

In this situation, the actor spilled water on an unknown person accidentally. The actor's action of spilling water constituted an **accidental offense**, which should typically elicit a **remedial speech act** such as an apology or acknowledgment of the mistake. However, no verbal apology was made by the actor to respondent, so the actor missed an opportunity to perform the **commissive** illocutionary act of apologising, which could indicate a willingness to take responsibility and repair the social breach caused by the accident. Since the actor remained silent, it could be interpreted as a failure to adhere to social norms of politeness, particularly **negative politeness** strategies, which require acknowledgment of the imposition caused by the offense (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Table 31 Speech Act

Original Response.
The respondent just looked at the actor's face angrily but didn't say anything.

5.2.2.1.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

The respondent's reaction or lack of verbal response can be understood in terms of Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies (1987):

5.2.2.1.1.1. Negative politeness (Respect for autonomy)

The respondent avoids imposing on the actor through verbal confrontation or direct demands. The absence of speech could indicate an adherence to **negative politeness**, where the respondent refrains from further escalating the situation by respecting the actor's potential discomfort or embarrassment. By not vocalizing their displeasure, the respondent allows the actor to reflect on their actions without overt criticism. This strategy could also signal an attempt to preserve the actor's negative face (freedom from imposition). However, the angry expression still communicates displeasure non-verbally, which may subtly pressure the actor to act.

5.2.2.2. Response 2

The Actor (a boy) spilled water on an unknown person accidentally and said sorry immediately after spilling it. The actor had employed a **remedial speech act** by apologising immediately with the utterance "sorry". This was a **commissive speech act** (Searle, 1969) aimed at showing regret and attempting to mitigate the impact of the accidental spillage. The apology functioned as a **negative politeness strategy** (Brown & Levinson, 1987) to acknowledge the offense and restore the respondent's autonomy. By taking immediate responsibility, the actor demonstrated politeness and sincerity, which reduced the potential for confrontation.

Table 32 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Actor: Sorry!</p> <p>Respondent: (Laughed and said) Theek hai, theek hai! Koi baat nahi.</p>	<p>Actor: Sorry!</p> <p>Respondent: (Laughed and said) It's okay it's okay! No problem". (He just laughed and changed the topic although his face expressions had shown that he didn't like it.)</p>

5.2.2.2.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.2.2.1.1. Positive politeness

The verbal response, "It's okay, it's okay! No problem", seeks to establish solidarity and reduces the tension caused by the incident. By normalising the situation and laughing, the respondent minimises the severity of the act and maintains relational harmony. This response aligns with the **positive politeness strategy** of showing rapport and mutual understanding, which reassures the actor and de-escalates the situation.

4.2.2.2.2.2 Negative politeness

The respondent avoids imposing blame or making direct demands, thus respecting the actor's negative face (the desire not to be imposed upon). Their choice to change the topic after the initial acknowledgment reflects a **negative politeness strategy**, as it shifts attention away from the incident and prevents further embarrassment for the actor.

5.2.2.3. Response 3

Actor (a boy) spilled water on an unknown student accidentally when student was asking him about Arabic department and said sorry to him after spilling it. The actor's utterance of "sorry" constituted a **remedial speech act** aimed at addressing the face-threatening act (FTA) caused by the accidental spillage. This apology functioned as a **commissive speech act**, acknowledging the actor's responsibility for the mishap while simultaneously demonstrating a willingness to make amends. By employing a **negative politeness strategy**, the actor sought to minimise the imposition caused by the error, respecting the respondent's autonomy and potential discomfort. The direct and concise nature of the apology conveyed sincerity, although it was not followed by further attempts to gauge the respondent's reaction or provide additional reparative measures. This thing leaves the apology as a standalone act, which, while effective in mitigating the immediate FTA, might limit its effectiveness in fully addressing the respondent's emotional response or discomfort.

Table 33 Speech Act

Original Response
Actor: Sorry!

Respondent: (Student’s face expressions had shown that he didn’t like it, but he completely ignored the actor and kept answering his question.)

5.2.2.3.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.2.3.1.1. Negative politeness strategy

Negative politeness strategies are used by the respondent to avoid imposing further confrontation or discomfort. The respondent does not verbally reprimand the actor or demand additional redress, choosing instead to let the actor receive information about the Arabic department. This minimizes the face threat to the actor by avoiding explicit blame or criticism that aligns with the negative politeness strategy.

5.2.2.4. Response 4

The actor (a boy) accidentally spilled water on his old classmate and immediately said sorry. The actor’s immediate utterance of “**sorry**” represented a **remedial speech act** intended to address the face-threatening act (FTA) caused by the accidental spillage. This apology functioned as a **commissive speech act**, demonstrating the actor's acknowledgment of responsibility and willingness to mitigate the social disruption caused by the incident. By quickly following up with “How are you?” the actor transitioned into a phatic communication act, aimed at re-establishing social harmony and rapport with the respondent. Additionally, the repetition of “sorry dude, water has been spilled” reinforced the sincerity of the apology and reflected **negative politeness** strategies, as the actor minimised imposition and attempted to show respect for the respondent's autonomy. The actor’s overall approach combined an apologetic tone with attempts to lighten the atmosphere and maintain relational harmony, signalling attentiveness to both the act of offense and the shared history between the two individuals.

Table 31 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Actor: Sorry!	Actor: Sorry!
Actor: Kaise ho?	Actor: How are you?
Actor: Sorry yaar, pani gir gya.	Actor: Sorry dude, water has spilled.
Respondent: Koi baat nahi.	Respondent: No problem.

5.2.2.4.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's politeness Strategies Model

5.2.2.4.1.1. Positive politeness

The respondent's phrase "**No problem**" downplays the severity of the incident, showing a willingness to preserve social harmony and acknowledging the actor's positive face. This response reinforces the bond between the actor and respondent, particularly given their shared history as classmates.

5.2.2.5. Response 5

The actor accidentally spilled water on an unknown student and immediately said sorry. The actor's immediate apology, "**sorry**", was a **remedial speech act** aimed at addressing the face-threatening act (FTA) caused by the accidental water spillage. This utterance served as a **commissive illocutionary act**, signalling the actor's acknowledgment of responsibility and intention to restore social harmony. The actor employed a **negative politeness strategy** by directly apologising, which minimised the imposition caused by the accident and showed respect for the respondent's potential discomfort. The brevity of the apology reflected the actor's effort to address the situation succinctly without overburdening the interaction. However, the absence of any further engagement or mitigation strategies suggested reliance on the respondent's reaction to finalise the resolution of the FTA.

Table 35 Speech Act

Original Response
Actor: Sorry!
Respondent: (He just smiled and said) It's okay!

5.2.2.5.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.2.5.1.1. Positive politeness

The respondent's utterance, "It's okay" and accompanying smile demonstrate **positive politeness** by focusing on relational harmony and maintaining the actor's positive face. This strategy reassures the actor that the incident is inconsequential and does not affect their social standing. The non-verbal gesture of smiling further emphasises the respondent's intention to reduce tension and foster a sense of rapport, even in a spontaneous interaction.

5.2.3. Situation 3: “Losing borrowed book/ laptop or any important thing”

5.2.3.1. Response 1

In this scenario, an actor (boy) borrowed a book from his colleague and lost it at the time of return. The actor exhibited a **negative politeness strategy** (Brown & Levinson, 1987) by attempting to mitigate the face-threatening act (FTA) of admitting that he lost the respondent’s book. His use of mitigating language like “**the thing is**” and his offer to take responsibility (“**What should be done now?**”) reflected an effort to minimise imposition and acknowledge the gravity of the situation. The actor employed an **assertive speech act** (Searle, 1975) when explaining the loss of the book as a factual event, while his repeated assurances (“**I will see**”) conveyed an **expressive speech act** to show concern and a willingness to resolve the issue.

Table 36 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Actor: Asad bhai, yaar wo yeh hai k kitaab jo mein ne li hui thi na tum say, wo pata nahin mil nahin rahi aaj kal mujhe. Shayad gum hui hai.</p> <p>Respondent: Kya keh rahe ho yaar, wo to bohat achi kitaab thi jo mein ne aap ko di thi, wo mujhe chahiye. Yaar aap serious ho?</p> <p>Actor: Haan mein serious hun sach main. Wo gum kar baitha hun or jo hai wo mil nahin rahi, ab kya kiya jaye is mein?</p> <p>Respondent: Abbey yaar wo to meri barhi achi kitaab thi or mujhe chahiye or mujhe uski bohat barhi zaroorat hai aaj kal to wo book to is tarha se gum nahin karna chahiye aap ko. Mujhe wo book chahiye, please aap mujhe wo dhund kar dain.</p> <p>Actor: Mein ne na har jaga par dekhi bhi hai, matlab, mein jahan par parhta hun. Shayad wo mujh se koi chura kar le gya ya gir gayi mujh</p>	<p>Actor: Asad bhai! Dude, the thing is, the book that I borrowed from you, I don’t know, I cannot find it these days. It might have been lost.</p> <p>Respondent: What are you saying man? That book was so good that I had given you. I need that. Man, are you serious?</p> <p>Actor: Yeah! I am serious really. I have lost it and can’t find it. What should be done now?</p> <p>Respondent: Hey man! That was a very good book of mine, and I need it, and I really need it these days. So, you shouldn’t lose that book like this. I need that book. Please find it and give it to me.</p> <p>Actor: I have checked everywhere, I mean where I study. May be someone stole it from me, or it fell from me, I cannot remember exactly. What should be done now?</p>

<p>se, yaad nahin aa rahi sahi se. Ab kya kiya jaye?</p> <p>Respondent: Nahin nahin bhai, mujhe wo book bohat pasand hai is liye aap kindly bahar se khareed sakte ho, jo bhi kar sakte ho, mujhe wo book chahiye. Wo dhund k de do. Is tarha sahi baat nahin hai. Bhai mein ne book di thi, mujhe apni book wapis chahiye.</p> <p>Actor: Well, mein daikhta hun agar kahin se mil saki. Lekin lag mushkil raha hai, thi bhi heavy book. Chalo mein daikhun ga phir bhi.</p>	<p>Respondent: No no brother, I like that book so much. So kindly if you can buy the book or whatever you can do, I need that book. It's not right like this. Bro, I gave you the book, I need my book back.</p> <p>Actor: Well, I'll see if it could be found somewhere but it seems difficult, plus it was a heavy book. Still, I will see.</p>
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5.2.3.1.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.3.1.1.1. Negative politeness

The respondent uses softening strategies to mitigate direct imposition, such as "Please find it and give it to me." This indicates respect for the actor's negative face, even while pressuring him to resolve the issue. These politeness strategies soften the force of the request, acknowledging that the action might inconvenience the listener. The phrase ("please find it and give it to me") exemplifies **negative politeness** because the respondent used the term "**please**" to soften the directness of the request. By including "please," the respondent acknowledges the actor's potential inconvenience in searching for the book and thus shows deference to the actor's autonomy. The use of negative politeness in this context minimises the face-threatening act (FTA) of making a demand, even as the respondent conveys urgency and frustration. It demonstrates that, while the respondent feels strongly about recovering the book, they are still mindful of respecting the actor's negative face (the need to act without external pressure).

5.2.3.1.1.2. Positive politeness

Expressions of value and attachment, such as "**I like that book so much**", aim to appeal to the actor's sense of social responsibility and shared understanding, maintaining a level of rapport despite the conflict. It also expresses personal attachment to the book, highlighting its importance to the respondent. By doing so, the respondent frames the request

not merely as a transactional demand but as something rooted in genuine emotional value. The use of positive politeness here appeals to the actor's sense of empathy and social responsibility. By showing how much the book matters, the respondent implicitly encourages the actor to prioritize resolving the issue. This strategy helps maintain rapport and avoids the interaction becoming entirely adversarial. On the other hand, another utterance, "So you shouldn't lose that book like this", could be interpreted as a critique, the tone of "shouldn't lose it like this" appeals to a shared sense of responsibility and emphasizes the trust placed in the actor. This suggests an effort to maintain a cooperative relationship rather than framing the loss as an irreparable mistake.

5.2.3.2. Response 2

The actor (boy) borrowed a book from his colleague and lost it at the time of return. The actor acknowledged losing the book with an **informative illocutionary act**, signalling transparency but deflecting responsibility with the question, "So what should be done now?" an example of an **indirect negative politeness strategy**. By highlighting his efforts to locate the book ("I have searched a lot for it"), the actor attempted to preserve his own face while mitigating the imposition. However, his lack of a decisive solution, such as offering to replace the book, demonstrated hesitancy, which exacerbated the respondent's disappointment. This incomplete resolution reflected an avoidance of accountability, leaving the situation unresolved and potentially escalating tension.

Table 37 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Actor: Khalil bhai! Wo pichle dinon jo kitaab li thi mein ne aap say wo wapis karni thi mujhay is haftay, lekin wo kahin mil nahin rahi aur mein ne barha dhunda hai usko lekin mili nahin hai to phir kya kiya jaye?</p> <p>Respondent: Kon si? Wo wali? (said surprisingly)</p> <p>Actor: Haan wo Al-Chemist wali book jo thi.</p>	<p>Actor: Khalil bhai! The book that I borrowed from you a few days ago, I had to return it this week, but I can't find it anywhere. I have searched a lot for it, but it couldn't be found. So, what should be done now?</p> <p>Respondent: Which one? That one? (said surprisingly)</p> <p>Actor: Yeah, that Al-Chemist one.</p>

<p>Respondent: Wo to aap nay kaha tha k mein de dunga eik hafte k baad, parhnay k baad de dunga.</p> <p>Actor: Haan jee, wo gum kar baitha hun pata nahin mil hi nahin rahi. Mein ne barha dhunda hai.</p> <p>Respondent: Oh my God! Mein ne itni mushkil se dhundi thi. Yaar ap yakeen karein gay na, yeh national book foundation main, phir udhar se class main bohat saare larkon ko bola tha, school ki library main bola tha, teacher se poocha tha. Barhi mushkil se mein ne... yeh bohat zabardast kitaab thi yaar (sighed deeply showing sadness and anger.) Achaaa! Ab is ka kya hal hai? Aap nay agar parhi hai throi si to is kay notes waghaira to kam az kam de do.</p> <p>Actor: Kuch bhi nahin hai na, bass kya karein? Koshish karun ga k mil jaye lekin na mili to phir...?</p> <p>Respondent: Lekin mujhe bohat afsos hai yaar, aap nay bohat khoobsurat kitab zaya ki hai.</p>	<p>Respondent: You said, “I will return it after a week after reading it.”</p> <p>Actor: Yeah yeah! I lost that. I don’t know, it couldn’t be found. I have searched for it a lot.</p> <p>Respondent: Oh my God! I searched so hard for it. You will believe me right, I looked for it at the national book foundation then I asked a lot of boys in class, I asked in the school library then in the university library. I even asked the teacher. It was really difficult for me... It was such an amazing book man! Sighed deeply showing sadness and anger.) Okay, so what’s the solution for this? If you have read it a little, at least give me the notes or something.</p> <p>Actor: There’s nothing at all right, so what should be done? I will try to find it but if it couldn’t be found then...?</p> <p>Respondent: But I really feel bad man. You’ve lost such a beautiful book.</p>
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4.2.3.2.2. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Strategies Model

4.2.3.2.2.1. Negative politeness

The respondent employs **negative politeness strategies** to address the actor's loss while reducing the imposition. By framing his request conditionally, such as in “If you have read it a little, at least give me the notes or something,” the respondent mitigates direct confrontation and allows the actor some flexibility in resolving the issue. This approach reflects sensitivity to the actor’s **negative face** (his desire to act freely without imposition).

Additionally, the use of indirectness softens the demand, demonstrating an understanding that the actor may be unable to fulfill the request completely. The conditional phrasing also serves as a compromise, acknowledging the actor's difficulties while ensuring that some action is taken to address the loss. This balance minimizes overt conflict, reflecting a preference for maintaining social harmony despite the respondent's evident disappointment.

4.2.3.2.2. Positive politeness

The respondent's **positive politeness strategies** focus on emphasizing shared values and fostering solidarity to maintain rapport. By expressing admiration for the book, "It was such an amazing book!", he appeals to the actor's sense of togetherness and mutual understanding. This statement not only underscores the significance of the book to the respondent but also subtly reminds the actor of his responsibility to appreciate and safeguard borrowed items. Furthermore, the respondent repeatedly uses inclusive language, such as "You will believe me, right," to evoke a sense of mutual effort and shared concern. These strategies align with Brown and Levinson's (1987) notion of **positive politeness**, which seeks to affirm the relationship and mitigate potential strain. Even when expressing disappointment ("But I really feel bad, man") the respondent maintains a tone of connection, preventing the conversation from becoming entirely adversarial.

5.2.3.3. Response 3

The actor (a boy) took a mobile phone from his friend and then lost it. The actor began with a **declarative illocutionary act**, directly informing the respondent of the loss of the phone by saying, "Dude, Fahad bhai! I have lost your phone right." This initial statement is a **negative politeness strategy**, acknowledging the imposition and preparing for the respondent's reaction. The actor's disbelief at the respondent's laughter, seen in "**Are you laughing?**" demonstrated his expectation of a serious response. As the interaction progressed, the actor repeatedly sought clarity and assurance, evidenced by his questions: "**Are you sure?**" His tone reflected an attempt to negotiate the respondent's emotional response and gauge the level of potential conflict. Additionally, the actor's explanations, such as "It has been fallen into the gutter," align with a **mitigating face-saving strategy**, aiming to frame the loss as an unfortunate accident beyond his control. Despite this, the actor appeared unsettled by the respondent's nonchalant demeanor, which fueled his repeated efforts to confirm the seriousness of the situation.

Table 38 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Actor: Yaar Fahad bhai, tumhara phone... aa... mujh say gum ho gya hai.</p>	<p>Actor: Dude, Fahad bhai! ...aa... I have lost your phone, right.</p>
<p>Respondent: (First laughed and then said) Kaise? (Then, again while laughing said) Koi baat nahin, khair hai.</p>	<p>Respondent: (First laughed and then said) How? (Then again laughed and said) No problem, it's okay.</p>
<p>Actor: (Surprisingly said) Tum hans rahe ho?</p>	<p>Actor: (Surprisingly said) Are you laughing?</p>
<p>Respondent: Kahan pay gum ho gya hai? (Asked while laughing.)</p>	<p>Respondent: (While laughing asked) Where has it been lost?</p>
<p>Actor: Seriously gum ho gya hai. Matlab gutter main chala gya.</p>	<p>Actor: Seriously, it has been lost. It has fallen into the gutter.</p>
<p>Respondent: Chala gya?</p>	<p>Respondent: It has fallen?</p>
<p>Actor: Waqayi.</p>	<p>Actor: Seriously.</p>
<p>Respondent: Chalo baad main lay lain gay, ab kya ho gya?</p>	<p>Respondent: Will get it later, so what?</p>
<p>Actor: Are you sure?</p>	<p>Actor: Are you sure?</p>
<p>Respondent: Haan haan mein sure hun.</p>	<p>Respondent: Yes, I am sure.</p>
<p>Actor: Waqayi, seriously gum hua hai.</p>	<p>Actor: Really, it's seriously lost.</p>
<p>Respondent: Udhar se neechay gira hai?</p>	<p>Respondent: Did it fall from there?</p>
<p>Actor: Haan udhar se neechay gira hai. Shayad wo naali mein chala gya bass.</p>	<p>Actor: Yes, it fell from there. Maybe it has just gone into the drain.</p>
<p>Respondent: Phir khair hai (and then again started laughing.)</p>	<p>Respondent: Then it's alright (and then again started laughing.)</p>
<p>Actor: Sachi batao, sach batao, pakki baat hai?</p>	<p>Actor: Tell me honestly, are you sure?</p>
<p>Respondent: Pakki baat hai.</p>	<p>Respondent: Yes, sure.</p>
<p>Actor: Yaar na kar, mazaq na kar.</p>	<p>Actor: Dude don't joke.</p>
<p>Respondent: Sach mein, koi issue nahin hai, (he continued laughing), hum Kakkar ko ghussa dain gay naali k andar?.</p>	<p>Respondent: Really, no issue (he continued laughing), we will put Kakkar into the drain.</p>
<p>Actor: Nahin milna, wo zaya ho gya.</p>	<p>Actor: It won't be found; it has been wasted.</p>
<p>Respondent: No no. It won't be wasted.</p>	<p>Respondent: No no. It won't be wasted.</p>
<p>Actor: No, no, it has been wasted.</p>	<p>Actor: No, no, it has been wasted.</p>

<p>Respondent: Nahin, nahin zaya ho ga.</p> <p>Actor: Nahin nahin, wo zaya ho ga.</p> <p>Respondent: Nahin nahin nahin nahin. Nahin hoga zaya, ap daikh lena.</p> <p>Actor: Bhai mein bata raha hun na wo chala gaya hai naali k andar. Wo pani sa bhara ho ga.</p> <p>Respondent: Na na na. Kakkar ko andar dalain ge.</p>	<p>Respondent: No, no, no, no. Won't be wasted, you will see.</p> <p>Actor: I am telling you right, it has fallen into the drain. It would be soaked with water.</p> <p>Respondent: No no no, we will put Kakkar into the drain.</p>
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5.2.3.3.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.3.3.1.1. Positive politeness strategy

The respondent's use of positive politeness centers on creating a sense of camaraderie and mutual understanding. Positive politeness strategies, as described by Brown and Levinson (1987), aim to appeal to the interlocutor's positive face, or the desire to be liked and appreciated. In this situation, the respondent achieves this through humour and casual language that downplays the severity of the issue and reassures the actor. The respondent's remarks, such as "No problem, it's okay," serve as a reassurance to the actor, minimizing the actor's guilt and fostering a sense of shared understanding. By laughing and making light of the situation, the respondent avoids creating an adversarial dynamic, instead emphasizing their bond and signalling that the loss of the phone is not irreparably damaging to their relationship. This approach helps to maintain relational closeness and demonstrates empathy toward the actor's possible discomfort or anxiety. Additionally, the respondent's frequent laughter and humorous remark, "We will put Kakkar into the drain", showcase how humour can act as a positive politeness strategy. This use of humour diffuses the tension and frames the situation as a shared moment of levity rather than conflict. This strategy aligns with Brown and Levinson's (1987) notion that humour can reduce face-threatening acts (FTAs) by creating a sense of solidarity. Humour also reinforces the impression that the relationship between the two remains intact despite the loss of the phone. By emphasising the light-hearted nature of the situation, the respondent implicitly signals an understanding that maintaining their relationship is more important than the phone's loss, thus fostering goodwill and rapport.

5.2.3.4. Response 4

The actor (a boy) borrowed a friend's laptop and lost it at the time of return. The actor initiated the conversation with a **representative illocutionary act** by informing the respondent about the loss of the laptop. He used indirect negative politeness strategies, such as mitigating blame by framing the situation as an accident. Phrases like **“My bag was left open”** and **“I think it has fallen while coming back”** aimed to reduce the actor's responsibility for the loss. The actor attempted to shift focus away from liability and toward the unfortunate nature of the incident. The actor also employed **expressive acts** by apologising indirectly, demonstrated through his repeated assurance that the loss was unintentional, such as **“Believe me... it has fallen somewhere.”** This strategy seeks to elicit sympathy while reducing the severity of the face-threatening act (FTA) posed by the loss of the laptop.

Table 39 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Actor: Zia bhai! Wo laptop yaar mujh mera bag khula reh gya, mein ne bag peechay se utara to laptop pata nahin kaheen gir gya ya kya hua, tumhara laptop tha us mein.</p> <p>Respondent: Seriously? Wo mera laptop ohhh (said surprisingly and unbelievably).</p> <p>Actor: Wo meray bag main tha na to wo pata nahin wapis aatey huey university se mera khyal hai gir gya.</p> <p>Respondent: Nahin nahin yaar wo laptop bohat mehnga laptop hai, kya kar rahe ho yaar wo to teray pas hoga yaar.</p> <p>Actor: Nahin nahin meray paas nahin hai yakeen karo. Bag main se wo peechay se... mera bag khula reh gya to abhi mein ne check kiya to gira hua hai kahin pay. Mujhe lagta hai k usky saath meri or bhi cheezein ghayab hein.</p>	<p>Actor: Zia bhai! That laptop man, my bag was left open, when I took the bag off of my back, the laptop, I don't know, has fallen somewhere or what? Your laptop was inside the bag.</p> <p>Respondent: Seriously? My laptop ohhh (said surprisingly and unbelievably).</p> <p>Actor: That was in my bag right. So don't know. I think it has fallen while coming back from the university.</p> <p>Respondent: No no man, that laptop that is a very expensive laptop. What are you doing man? That must be with you.</p> <p>Actor: No, it is not with me. Believe me. From my bag...my bag was left open, so I just have checked it now, it has fallen somewhere. I think my other things are also lost with it.</p>

<p>Respondent: Nahin yaar wo to bohat mehnga laptop tha, seriously mujhe uski bohat zaroorat hai or mujhe apna kaam bhi nimtana hai. To is liye mein kehne wala tha aaj k bhai mera laptop de do, meray saath mazaq na karo.</p> <p>Actor: Nahin, mein kaise dhundun, mazaq nahin kar raha mein seriously. Wo raastey mein to gira, raasta to road hai, main road hai wo to, highway, express way say aya tha mein.</p> <p>Respondent: Yaar yeh to achi baat nahin hai. Mujhe laptop dhund kar do. Yaar or mujhe nya le kar do market se kyun k mujhe laptop abhi zaroorat bhi hai or mujhe chahiye bhi.</p> <p>Actor: Ab mein kaise yaar daikhun isko lekin mein koshish karta hun chalo lekin lag nahin raha k milay ga. Wo laptop jo hai wo mein waqayi gira ayah hun.</p> <p>Respondent: Koshish karo jis tarha bhi ho bass mujey laptop chahiye.</p> <p>Actor: Yaar Zia dekho kya karein ab, dekhtay hein.</p>	<p>Respondent: No man, that was so expensive laptop, and I really need it, and I have to finish my work too. So that's why I was going to ask you that bro give me my laptop back, don't joke with me.</p> <p>Actor: No, how do I find it? I am not joking seriously. It fell on the way on the main road as I came by express way, highway.</p> <p>Respondent: Man, this is not good. Find the laptop and give it to me or buy me a new one from the market because I really need the laptop.</p> <p>Actor: Now how do I search it man, but I will try but it doesn't seem like it would be found. That laptop, I have really dropped it on the way.</p> <p>Respondent: Just try, no matter how. All I know is I need the laptop.</p> <p>Actor: Dude, Zia see. What can I do? Let's see.</p>
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5.2.3.4.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.3.4.1.1. Bald-on-record (face-threatening act)

One example of the bald-on-record strategy in this conversation is "Find the laptop and give it to me or buy me a new one." This is a clear, unambiguous demand from the respondent, with little to no attempt to soften or mitigate the impact. The directness of this statement signals the urgency of the situation that without the laptop, the respondent's need for the item is not negotiable and hence, the use of this strategy is justified here. In this case,

the respondent prioritizes the immediate resolution of the issue over politeness or saving face. By using a bald-on-record strategy, the respondent effectively conveys that the situation is serious and demands swift action. Apart from this, the bald-on-record approach here is not just about making a direct request but also about underlining the severity of the issue. The respondent is not only asking for the laptop but stressing that if it cannot be found, a replacement must be provided. This urgency intensifies the need for a direct and unambiguous request. The absence of mitigation, such as "please" or other softeners reflects the critical nature of the matter and the respondent's emotional state (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

5.2.3.5. Response 5

On the day of assignment submission and presentation, one of the students' assignments was lost by the CR (class representative). When the assignments were counted, that student found out that his assignment was not included. The actor's behaviour throughout the interaction reflected a mix of defensive and cooperative strategies under pressure. Initially, the actor responded to the respondent's direct questioning with reassurance and explanations, such as, "I had placed it on the desk, you didn't take?" and later, "We check it together right." These responses indicated an attempt to deflect responsibility while offering a solution. The repeated suggestion to recheck and the guarantee to talk to the professor showed the actor's effort to mitigate the respondent's frustration and resolve the issue. However, the actor also exhibited a lack of urgency and accountability, as seen in phrases like, "I will talk to sir, right, It's my guarantee". While these statements reassured the respondent, they also reflected a certain nonchalant tone, potentially downplaying the respondent's stress. The actor avoided engaging directly with the emotional intensity of the respondent's concerns, instead choosing a measured and composed response. This could be interpreted as an effort to de-escalate the situation or a lack of acknowledgment of the gravity of the problem.

Overall, the actor's linguistic choices combine defensive politeness with cooperative problem-solving. While the actor's reassurances demonstrate an intent to collaborate, the lack of immediate accountability and a somewhat detached tone may have contributed to the respondent's disappointment, as reflected in the concluding criticism, "This doing of yours is not right".

Table 40 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Respondent: Kya haal hai, khair khariyat hai?</p>	<p>Respondent: How are you? Is everything okay?</p>
<p>Actor: Haan khair hai, Alhamdulillah.</p>	<p>Actor: Yeah okay, Alhamdulillah.</p>
<p>Respondent: Oye larhke meri assignment kidhar hai?</p>	<p>Respondent: Hey boy, where is my assignment?</p>
<p>Actor: Mein ne desk pay rakhi thi, tu nay nahin li?</p>	<p>Actor: I had placed it on the desk, didn't you take it?</p>
<p>Respondent: Tum kya kar rahe ho? Mein ne puri class dekh li.</p>	<p>Respondent: What are you doing? I have checked the whole class.</p>
<p>Actor: Mein ne udhar hi rakhi hai.</p>	<p>Actor: I kept it over there.</p>
<p>Respondent: Kya matlab yaar tum ne kya kiya hai? Mein sir ko ab new assignment dun ga kya? (said angrily).</p>	<p>Respondent: What do you mean man? What did you do? Would I give a new assignment to sir now? (said angrily).</p>
<p>Actor: Check karo.</p>	<p>Actor: Check it.</p>
<p>Respondent: Yaar yeh meri handwritten hai (said surprisingly and angrily).</p>	<p>Respondent: Man, it is my handwritten (said surprisingly and angrily).</p>
<p>Actor: Check karo.</p>	<p>Actor: Check it.</p>
<p>Respondent: Yaar nahin hai na, mein ne dekh lia hai.</p>	<p>Respondent: Man, it is not there, right! I have checked.</p>
<p>Actor: Ikathay check karte hein na.</p>	<p>Actor: We check it together right.</p>
<p>Respondent: Nahin na ab mein ne check kiya hai. Kamrah band hai or jo banda lock lagata hai wo ghar chala gya or aaj last date hai.</p>	<p>Respondent: No, I have checked now. Room is locked and the men who locks, has gone home and today is the last date.</p>
<p>Actor: Mein sir se bat karun ga na meri gurrantee hai.</p>	<p>Actor: I will talk to sir, right. It's my guarantee.</p>
<p>Respondent: Yaar dekho sir bhi nahi maanta. Sir nay kaha hai k meri pichli bhi nahi jama. Phir mein ne kaha hai k mein ne pichli bar bhi Ghalib ko diya tha or ab bhi mein ne usi ko diya hai.</p>	<p>Respondent: Man see; sir also doesn't agree. Sir said that my last assignment was also not submitted. Then I said that last time also I gave it to Ghalib and now again I have given it to him.</p>

<p>Actor: Acha theek hai mein aap ko guarantee deta hun, sir se baat karta hun.</p> <p>Respondent: Theek hai apna time lay lo lekin yeh kaam tumhara theek nahin hai. (said in a very disappointing tone).</p>	<p>Actor: Okay fine. I guarantee you; I'll talk to sir.</p> <p>Respondent: Okay, take your time but this doing of yours is not right. (said in a very disappointing tone).</p>
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5.2.3.5.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

Positive politeness strategy is used by the respondent at the start of the conversation after which he uses direct bald-on-record statements and at the end he softens his utterance by using negative politeness strategy. These strategies used in the whole interaction are described in detail in the subsequent lines.

5.2.3.5.1.1. Positive Politeness

The initial inquiry about the actor's well-being serves as a positive politeness strategy. It creates a socially agreeable opening despite the respondent's dissatisfaction. This matches Brown and Levinson's (1987) model, where positive politeness focuses on maintaining rapport.

5.2.3.5.1.2. Bald-on-record

The direct questions and statements like "Where is my assignment?" and "What do you mean man?" are bald-on-record utterances. These reflect the high-pressure nature of the situation where urgency overrides the need for indirectness. This strategy is often observed in highly stressful or urgent contexts where clarity and immediacy are paramount.

5.2.3.5.1.3. Negative Politeness

The respondent's statement, "Okay, take your time", acknowledges the actor's agency while still expecting a resolution. It mitigates the imposition of demanding immediate action, softening the intensity of the criticism.

5.2.4. Situation 4: Seat dispute in university bus”

5.2.4.1. Response 1

A male student went to the bus and sat on the empty seat that was reserved by another boy for his friend. The actor exhibited a dismissive and confrontational approach, disregarding the respondent’s explanation about seat reservation. His initial defensive tone, “Where is he sitting? This seat is empty. I came to sit,” suggested a **representative speech act** (Searle, 1975), asserting the observable reality of the seat's vacancy to justify his actions. As the respondent requested cooperation, the actor escalated by dismissing the request outright with comments like, “Even if this has been his place 100 times, I would still have to sit down,” demonstrating resistance to polite mitigation strategies. The actor interrupted and dominated the conversation, ultimately refusing to accommodate the respondent’s request. His behaviour prioritises his convenience while undermining the principle of cooperation (Grice, 1975), showcasing a lack of face-saving strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Table 41 Speech Act

<p>Respondent: Bhai yahan par mera dost baitha hua hai.</p> <p>Actor: Kidhar baitha hua hai? Yeh seat to khali hai? Mein baithnay k liye aya hun.</p> <p>Respondent: Kahin or baithein. Wo aa raha hai. Uski jaga hai wo bass aa k baithay ga.</p> <p>Actor: Uski jaga 100 dafa ho na lekin mujhe bhi baith k jana parhe ga. Yeh kya baat hui?</p> <p>Respondent: Mein aap say request karta hun k please aap thora sa cooperate kar lein bass wo aa gya hai, agar naa hota to mein...</p> <p>Actor: (Interrupted the respondent and said) cooperate ki baat nahin hai na yaar, mein bhi to aa raha hun, dekhain na mein bhi to isi tarha mushkil se aya hun.</p>	<p>Respondent: Bro, my friend is sitting here.</p> <p>Actor: Where is he sitting? This seat is empty. I’ve come to sit.</p> <p>Respondent: Sit somewhere else, it’s his place. He would just come and sit.</p> <p>Actor: Even if this has been his place 100 times but I would still have to sit down. What is this behaviour?</p> <p>Respondent: I request you to please cooperate a little bit. He has just come, if he hadn’t then I...</p> <p>Actor: (Interrupted the respondent and said) It’s nothing to cooperate dude, I am also coming. Look, I also came with difficulty just like him.</p> <p>Respondent: Your point is valid, if he hadn’t shown up at your time, I would have</p>
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<p>Respondent: Wo aap ki baat hai, agar aap k waqt wo na khara hota to mein aap ko jaga aap ki de deta magar ab wo aa gya hai.</p> <p>Actor: Nahi, aa gya hai lekin uss se pehle to mein aya hun na.</p> <p>Respondent: Dekhain main aap say request kar raha hun, please cooperate karein hamaray saath.</p> <p>Actor: Nahin, mein to baitha hua hun abhi.</p> <p>Respondent: Dekhain aap jaeiz nahin kar rahe, dekhein na haatha payi tak to baat na lay k jaein naa (threatened the actor).</p> <p>Actor: Nahi bass ab to mein baith gya hun, jo karna hai kar lo.</p> <p>Respondent: Chalain bhai aap nahin maan rahe to mein bhi uth k chala jata hu, koi or aa k baith jaye gaa. (the respondent left his seat in anger and went away).</p> <p>Actor: Theek hai, ALLAH HAFIZ.</p>	<p>given you your place but now he has arrived.</p> <p>Actor: No, he has arrived, but I came before him.</p> <p>Respondent: Look! I am requesting you. Please cooperate with us.</p> <p>Actor: No, I am sitting right now.</p> <p>Respondent: Look, you are not being fair. Look don't go up to fights and quarrels. (threatened the actor).</p> <p>Actor: No, I have sat down now. Do whatever you want to do.</p> <p>Respondent: Alright brother. If you do not agree, then I would also get up and leave. Someone else will come and sit here. (left his seat in anger and went away).</p> <p>Actor: Alright, ALLAH HAFIZ.</p>
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5.2.4.1.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.4.1.1.1. Positive politeness

The respondent initially attempts to engage the actor in a cooperative dialogue, using inclusive language such as, "I request you to please cooperate a little bit." This reflects an effort to minimize the imposition and appeal to the actor's understanding.

5.2.4.1.1.2. Negative politeness

As the situation escalates, the respondent shifts to indirect strategies, attempting to mitigate conflict with polite expressions like, "Look, I am requesting you, please cooperate with us." This shows an acknowledgment of the actor's autonomy while trying to avoid direct confrontation.

5.2.4.1.1.3. Face-threatening acts

When the actor didn't cooperate then the respondent transitioned to a **face-threatening act**. The respondent's statement, "You are not being fair", serves as a mild face-threatening act, indirectly criticising the actor's behaviour. Additionally, the final threat, "Look, don't go up to fights and quarrels", reflects a breakdown of politeness strategies, resorting to a more direct and confrontational approach.

5.2.4.2. Response 2

Actor (male student) reserved 2 seats on the university bus for himself and his friend. He kept his notebook on one of the seats and went out of the bus for a while. When he came back, another boy was sitting in his reserved seat. The actor began the interaction with a polite but assertive statement, "Assalam o alaikum bro! This notebook was mine and this is my place." This initial greeting reflects adherence to social norms of politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987), employing positive politeness by using a respectful tone. His claim of the seats as "**mine**" represents an **assertive speech act** (Searle, 1975), where he asserted a fact to justify his ownership. By adding, "Don't be annoyed", he attempted to mitigate any potential frustration from the respondent, reflecting elements of negative politeness to minimize the imposition.

Table 42 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Actor: Assalam o alaikum bhai! Yeh notebook meri thi or yeh jagah meri hai.	Actor: Assalam o alaikum bro! This notebook was mine and this is my place.
Respondent: Acha! Eik ya dono?	Respondent: Well! One or both?
Actor: Yeh dono seats meri hein, hum do banday hein.	Actor: These both seats are mine; we are two persons.
Respondent: Acha! (Gave sad expressions) chalein, mein phir chalta hun (said while getting up from the seat).	Respondent: Well! (gave sad expressions). Alright, I leave then (while getting up from the seat).
Actor: Chalain shukriya! Naraz nahin hona.	Actor: Alright, thank you! Don't be annoyed.
Respondent: Koi baat nahin.	Respondent: No worries.

5.2.4.2.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.4.2.1.1. *Positive politeness strategy*

By stating, “**No worries**”, the respondent preserved the actor’s positive face, avoiding any suggestion of annoyance or conflict.

5.2.4.2.1.2. *Negative politeness strategy*

The respondent’s polite query, “Well! One or both?”, employs a hedging strategy to seek clarification without directly challenging the actor’s claim, minimising imposition and maintaining the actor’s negative face (freedom from interference). Apart from that, the respondent opts to leave the seat without resistance, reflecting deference to the actor’s claim. This shows a preference for minimizing the threat to the actor’s negative face by not challenging his position.

5.2.4.2.1.3. *Off-record-strategy (face saving)*

The respondent’s sad expressions, paired with his verbal compliance, serve as an indirect way of expressing his reluctance, avoiding direct confrontation while still conveying his emotional state.

5.2.4.3. **Response 3**

Actor (male student) went inside the bus and sat on the seat that was reserved by the person sitting on the next seat for his friend. The actor began with sitting on the reserved seat and then made the statement, “So what, I am sitting here right,” which demonstrated a direct and assertive approach. This utterance is a **representative illocutionary act** (Searle, 1975), asserting the actor’s presence in the seat as a fact, while simultaneously serving as a **face-threatening act (FTA)** (Brown & Levinson, 1987). By prioritising his immediate needs, the actor disregarded the social norm of respecting reserved spaces, challenging the respondent's claim. However, when the respondent proposed a conditional compromise, the actor agreed, stating, “**Alright, thanks!**” This agreement reflects a shift toward cooperation, employing a **positive politeness strategy** (Brown & Levinson, 1987) of acceptance to maintain a degree of harmony.

Table 43 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
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<p>Respondent: Koi baitha hua hai yaar (while giving hand gesture to stop the actor from sitting).</p> <p>Actor: To mein baith raha hun na yahan.</p> <p>Respondent: To wo aye ga phir usko kahan bithana hai?</p> <p>Actor: To yaar mein khara hua to acha nahin lagta na.</p> <p>Respondent: Chalo baith jao, agar wo aa gya to kharay ho jana, theek hai na.</p> <p>Actor: Chalo sahi hai. Shukriya!</p>	<p>Respondent: Someone is sitting here man (while giving hand gesture to stop the actor from sitting).</p> <p>Actor: So what! I am sitting here, right.</p> <p>Respondent: So, when he comes, where will he be seated?</p> <p>Actor: So, dude, it doesn't look good if I am standing.</p> <p>Respondent: Alright! Sit down, if he comes then you have to stand. Is that okay?</p> <p>Actor: Alright, thanks!</p>
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5.2.4.3.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.4.3.1.1. Negative politeness strategy

The respondent employed negative politeness by framing the solution as a conditional offer, “**Alright! Sit down, if he comes then you have to stand.**” This strategy reduces imposition by presenting the actor with an acceptable alternative rather than issuing a direct order. As the respondent avoids escalating the conflict by conceding temporarily, “**Alright! Sit down**”, reflects **negative politeness**, minimising confrontation and reducing the face-threatening nature of the situation.

5.2.4.3.1.2. Positive politeness strategy

By saying, “Alright! Sit down”, the respondent shows an acknowledgment of the actor's situation, maintaining harmony and addressing the actor's **positive face** (the desire to be liked or approved).

5.2.4.4. Response 4

The actor went inside the bus and moved toward a boy who was sitting at one seat and had reserved another seat for his friend. The actor began the interaction with a request, “Dude, would you get aside?” This reflects a **directive illocutionary act** (Searle, 1975), as the actor indirectly requested access to the reserved seat. His follow-up statement, “Am I not a boy?” (delivered with a smile), employed humour as a **positive politeness strategy** (Brown & Levinson, 1987), aiming to reduce the imposition of his request and establish a lighthearted rapport with the respondent. As the interaction progressed and the respondent maintained his

refusal, the actor responded with, “Man, it doesn’t happen. It’s wrong, right.” This illustrates a shift toward an **expressive illocutionary act**, conveying his disapproval. The interaction concluded with the actor’s displaying frustration through non-verbal cues (angry gesture) and choosing to disengage, a face-saving move to protect his **positive face** that is his desire to be approved or accepted within the interaction (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Table 44 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Actor: Yaar saath ho jaein gay?</p> <p>Respondent: Yaar larhka aa raha hai.</p> <p>Actor: To mein larhka nahin hun? (said while smiling).</p> <p>Respondent: Na na, mujhe to nahin pata k aap larhka ho k nahin ho. (answered while smiling).</p> <p>Actor: Yaar yeh to nahin! Ghalat baat hai na!</p> <p>Respondent: Yaar aise hota hai, kyun nahi hota? (refused to give him seat).</p> <p>Actor: Yaar yeh to kasam se...chalain! (gave angry gesture but stopped arguing and went away).</p>	<p>Actor: Dude, would you get aside?</p> <p>Respondent: Dude, boy is coming.</p> <p>Actor: Am I not a boy? (said while smiling).</p> <p>Respondent: No no, I don’t know if you are a boy or not. (answered while smiling).</p> <p>Actor: Man, not this! It’s wrong, right!</p> <p>Respondent: Dude, it happens, doesn’t it? (refused to give him seat).</p> <p>Actor: Man, this is...really... (Gave angry gesture but stopped arguing and went away).</p>

5.2.4.4.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.4.4.1.1. Negative politeness

The respondent’s polite and measured refusal, “Dude, boy is coming,” seeks to avoid imposing harshly on the actor, mitigating the FTA involved in rejecting the actor’s claim.

5.2.4.4.1.2. Positive politeness (humour)

By replying humorously, the respondent aligns with Brown and Levinson’s (1987) **positive politeness strategies**, aiming to maintain a friendly tone and minimise conflict. For example, “I don’t know if you are a boy or not” lightens the mood while refusing the actor’s request. Additionally, while maintaining his stance by refusing to give up the seat, the respondent does so in a way that avoids escalation. The use of smiling and a lighthearted tone

reinforces the emphasis on maintaining a friendly interaction, which is characteristic of Positive Politeness.

5.2.4.5. Response 5

A boy was sitting on one seat and was reserving another seat for his friend meanwhile the actor went to him and requested him to get aside. The interaction was begun by the actor with a direct and polite request, “Bro, get aside please”. This statement constitutes a **Directive Illocutionary Act** (Searle, 1975), as it was attempted to influence the respondent's action by asking him to vacate the seat. The actor employed **Brown and Levinson's Positive Politeness Strategy** (1987) by using the inclusive term “**bro**” to establish camaraderie and reduce social distance. Despite the polite tone, the respondent’s lack of engagement challenged the actor’s efforts to navigate the situation constructively.

Table 45 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Actor: Bhai saath ho jaein na.</p> <p>Respondent: (Silent treatment. Completely ignored the actor and didn’t respond till his partner arrived.)</p>	<p>Actor: Bro, get aside please.</p> <p>Respondent: (Silent treatment. Completely ignored the actor and didn’t respond till his partner arrived.)</p>

5.2.4.5.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.4.5.1.1. Negative politeness strategy

The respondent's **silent treatment** aligns with **Negative Politeness through Evasion** (Brown & Levinson, 1987). By not engaging verbally, the respondent avoids making a direct refusal or confrontation, which helps sidestep the possibility of escalating the conflict. This strategy protects the respondent's **negative face** that is the desire to act freely without external pressure or interference by refusing to acknowledge the actor's request. However, this avoidance strategy can be perceived as impolite or dismissive because it fails to address the actor's **positive face** that is the need for acknowledgment and validation. While it minimises overt confrontation, the lack of verbal engagement could provoke frustration in the actor, potentially increasing tension if interpreted as a deliberate affront. So, by employing **negative politeness through silence**, the respondent prioritises maintaining his autonomy

over preserving social harmony, subtly asserting control over the interaction while avoiding outright verbal conflict.

5.2.5. Situation 5: “Breaking the line in front of bank or ATM”

5.2.5.1. Response 1

Boys were standing in a queue in front of HBL ATM IIUI branch and one of the boys (actor) broke the line and went directly to the front trying to be the first to use ATM. The actor’s behaviour demonstrated a deliberate violation of the queue’s established order, justified by an urgent personal need, “Bro, I have a bit emergency.” This appeal to necessity is a **face-threatening act (FTA)** under Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory (1987), as it disregarded the respondent’s negative face by imposing on his time and patience. Despite his initial insistence on proceeding first, the actor eventually conceded with, “Alright, first you can use then I will, okay!”, signalling an attempt to restore harmony. The actor used a mix of positive politeness (for instance, informal terms like **"bro"** to build rapport) and negotiation to manage the conflict.

Table 46 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Respondent: Bhai mein pehle khara tha. Actor: Bhai meri thora si emergency hai. Respondent: Yaar meri peachay se bus ja rahi hai. Actor: Abhi 20 minute hein bus k liye yaar. Respondent: Yaar! 20...chalo dekh lo, (angrily said). Actor: Theek hai pehle aap kaam karo phir mein karun ga. Theek hai.</p>	<p>Respondent: Bro, I was already standing. Actor: Bro, I have a bit of an emergency. Respondent: Man, my bus is leaving. Actor: There are still 20 minutes for the bus dude. Respondent: Man! 20...alright, then see, (angrily said). Actor: Alright, first you can use then I will, okay!</p>

5.2.5.1.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.5.1.1.1. Opening with negative politeness

Initially, the respondent employs negative politeness by indirectly addressing the issue with, “Bro, I was already standing.” This statement acknowledges the actor’s autonomy while presenting the respondent’s own claim.

5.2.5.1.1.2. Bald-on-record (face-threatening act)

The directive “Man, my bus is leaving” signals a shift to a direct and less polite tone, reflecting frustration. Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Theory (1987) categorises this as a face-threatening act (FTA), as it prioritises the respondent’s negative face over mitigating that of the actor.

Additionally, the transition to a more direct tone, particularly the frustrated “**Man, 20...alright, then see,**” reflects a breakdown in politeness as the respondent prioritises expressing his dissatisfaction over maintaining harmony and carries an element of resignation but is delivered in an angry manner. This directness reflects an FTA, where the respondent’s primary aim is to assert his frustration rather than maintain politeness.

5.2.5.2. Response 2

Boys were standing in a queue, waiting for their turns to use ATM. Meanwhile the actor (a boy) broke the line and went to the front trying to be the first to use ATM. The actor demonstrated a casual and somewhat defensive approach, attempting to justify breaking the queue with an excuse, “My ATM is not working, right.” By presenting this justification, the actor was engaged in what Searle (1969) terms as an **assertive speech act**, as he tried to convince the respondent of the validity of his actions. However, his reasoning lacked credibility, which became apparent when the respondent challenged him. The actor’s initial confidence and casual tone suggested a disregard for the established queuing norms, aligning with Brown and Levinson’s (1987) notion of **face-threatening acts** (FTAs), as his actions disregarded the respondent’s negative face (his right to personal space and autonomy in the queue). When the respondent intensified his objections, the actor’s tone shifted to one of contrition, culminating in repeated apologies, “Sorry dude, sorry dude, sorry.” This transition reflected a move from assertiveness to submissiveness, as the actor attempted to repair the social breach he created. According to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory, this shift can be interpreted as an attempt to mitigate the face-threatening act by appealing to the respondent’s positive face through an acknowledgment of fault. The actor’s repeated

apologies exemplify a face-saving act, aimed at restoring harmony and reducing the interpersonal tension caused by his earlier behaviour.

This dynamic highlights how the actor's linguistic strategies evolve under social pressure, moving from a casual dismissal of norms to an explicit acknowledgment of his misstep. The interaction reflects the interplay between assertive and reparative strategies in maintaining or restoring social equilibrium, illustrating the practical application of speech act theory and politeness strategies in real-world scenarios.

Table 47 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Respondent: Hello bhai! Kya haal hai?	Respondent: Hello bro! How are you
Actor: Alhamdulillah, theek hein.	doing?
Respondent: Bhai mera number tha.	Actor: Alhamdulillah, I am fine.
Actor: Aap ka number hai to mera ATM kaam nahi kar raha na.	Respondent: Bro, it's my turn.
Respondent: Kaam kar raha hai yaa nahin kar raha, mera number hai filhaal. Aap line mein kharay hon na. (Angrily answered in a very rude tone.)	Actor: It's your turn, but my ATM is not working, right. (said in a confused tone).
Actor: Aap ka number hai to chor do yaar, mera ATM kaam nahin kar raha na.	Respondent: Either ATM is working or not, it's my turn currently. You stand in line, right. (answered in a rude tone.)
Respondent: Yaar aap line main hi kharay hon. Mein subho se khara hun. (Said in an angry tone.)	Actor: If it's your turn, then leave it dude. My ATM is not working right.
Actor: Theek hai. Sorry yaar, sorry yaar, sorry.	Respondent: Man, you stand in line. I have been standing here since morning. (Said in an angry tone.)
Respondent: Ok! (irritatingly replied).	Actor: Alright! Sorry dude, sorry dude, sorry.
	Respondent: Ok! (irritatingly replied).

5.2.5.2.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.5.2.1.1. Bald-on-record strategy

The respondent predominantly employs a bald-on-record approach, delivering direct and unmitigated statements to assert his claim. For instance, the comments, “Man, you stand in line” and “I have been standing here since morning” exemplifies Brown and Levinson’s bald-on-record strategy (1987), aimed at efficiency and clarity, with no effort to minimize the face-threatening act (FTA).

5.2.5.3. Response 3

Boys were standing in a queue, waiting for their turns to use ATM. Meanwhile the actor (a boy) broke the line and went to the front trying to be the first to use ATM. The actor’s behaviour demonstrated an initial awareness of social norms but attempted to bypass the queue by justifying his behaviour with a claimed emergency. His statement, “Man, sorry, I have a bit emergency”, reflected a polite yet insistent justification, appealing to the respondent’s sense of understanding. When the respondent resisted, the actor deflected the conflict by engaging in a casual conversation, asking, “Which is your semester?” This change in topic just had diffused the tension, ultimately leading to the respondent’s consent to let him use the ATM first. The actor’s behaviour exemplifies strategic redirection to achieve his goal while mitigating potential conflict (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Table 48 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Respondent: Bhai mera number pehle hai yaar. Aap...mein aap say pehle aya hun.</p> <p>Actor: Yaar sorry. Meri thori si emergency hai.</p> <p>Respondent: Aap ko emergency hai to mera number pehle hai na. Mera bhi kaam hai.</p> <p>Actor: Aapka kaam hai to sorry sabr karo. Mera thora sa emergency kaam hai. (Actor then changed the topic and asked the respondent) Aap ka konsa semester hai?</p> <p>Respondent: Mera 6th semester hai.</p> <p>Actor: Acha acha, theek hai.</p>	<p>Respondent: Bro my turn is first man. I came earlier than you.</p> <p>Actor: Man, sorry. I have a bit of an emergency.</p> <p>Respondent: Even if you have an emergency but my turn is first right. I also have work.</p> <p>Actor: If you have work then sorry; have a little patience. I have emergency work. (Then the actor changed the topic and asked the respondent) Which is your semester?</p> <p>Respondent: Mine is 6th semester.</p> <p>Actor: Ok ok. Alright.</p>

<p>Respondent: Aap bhi isi university se hein? Student hain?</p> <p>Actor: Haan isi university se hun.</p> <p>Respondent: Chalain theek hai. (He permitted the actor to use ATM first).</p>	<p>Respondent: Are you also from this university? Are you a student?</p> <p>Actor: Yeah! I am from this university.</p> <p>Respondent: Ok, alright. (Gave permission to the actor to use ATM first).</p>
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5.2.5.3.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.5.3.1.1. Positive politeness

The respondent employs positive politeness strategies to maintain a cooperative atmosphere despite the initial conflict. For instance, engaging in casual questions such as **“Which is your semester?”** demonstrates attention to the actor's identity and interests, aligning with Brown and Levinson's (1987) concept of positive politeness to foster social rapport.

5.2.5.3.1.2. Negative politeness

The respondent's initial statement, **“Even if you have emergency but my turn is first right,”** exhibits **negative politeness**, as it indirectly challenges the actor while acknowledging his needs. The phrasing reflects a degree of deference, avoiding outright aggression while asserting his position.

5.2.5.4. Response 4

Boys were standing in a queue to use ATM meanwhile a boy (actor) came and asked about ATM if it was working or not? As the boys answered yes, he went inside to use it first. The actor initially bypassed the queue after confirming that the ATM was operational, using the excuse of an empty ATM space. This action reflected a violation of the social norm of fairness, which requires individuals to wait for their turn in shared spaces. Upon being confronted, the actor attempted to justify his behaviour with a defensive response, **“It was empty inside. I had also asked from you.”** This justification can be analysed as a representative speech act (Searle, 1975), as it conveys the actor's perception of the situation to mitigate the negative judgement of his actions.

When faced with firm but polite resistance from the respondent, the actor de-escalated the situation by offering to cancel his usage of the ATM and apologising, **“Alright dude! I have cancelled it. Dude, no problem at all. You may come.”** This apology and concession

reflect a **commissive speech act** (Searle, 1975), as the actor committed to relinquishing his turn. Additionally, the actor employed a **negative politeness strategy** (Brown & Levinson, 1987) by acknowledging the imposition he created and attempting to restore the respondent's negative face through his repeated apologies. This behaviour demonstrates the actor's acknowledgment of the violated norm and a strategic attempt to save his own face while repairing the interaction.

Table 49 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
Respondent: Bhai hum kharay thay yahan par. Bari k liye hi kharay thay.	Respondent: Bro, we were standing here. We were standing for the turn.
Actor: Andar khali tha. Aap say pucha bhi thaa.	Actor: It was empty inside. I have also asked you.
Respondent: Aap nay pucha tha lekin hum bari k liye hi kharay thay na.	Respondent: Yeah, you had asked but we were standing for turn, right.
Actor: Chalo yaar mein cancel kar deta hun yaar, koi masla nahin. Aap aa jaein. (He cancelled his transaction, as he had just started.)	Actor: Alright dude! I have cancelled it. Dude, no problem at all. You may come.
Respondent: Shukriya yaar!	Respondent: Thanks dude!

5.2.5.4.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.5.4.1.1. Positive politeness

The respondent addressed the actor using casual, friendly language by using the words “**Bro**” and “**dude**.” This creates a sense of fellowship and reduces the tension of the situation, making the correction more acceptable to the actor. Furthermore, the use of “**Thanks dude**” at the end further reflects positive politeness, maintaining the actor's positive face by expressing gratitude for their cooperation.

5.2.5.4.1.2. Negative politeness

While the respondent is assertive, he mitigates the directness of his correction by phrasing it in a way that avoids overt confrontation. For example, “Yeah, you had asked, but we were

standing for turn, right,” appeals to reason rather than accusing the actor outright of wrongdoing. This minimises the face-threatening nature of the interaction.

5.2.5.5. Response 5

Boys were standing in a queue to use ATM meanwhile actor (boy) came in a rush, broke the line and went inside the ATM to use it first. The actor approached the situation with urgency, breaking the line and proceeding directly to the ATM. His justification, “**Dude, I am in so hurry dude**”, indicated a lack of initial consideration for the social norms of waiting for one’s turn. This response demonstrates an **assertive speech act** (Searle, 1975), as he conveyed the urgency of his situation as a fact to justify his actions. When faced with the respondent’s objections, the actor shifted his strategy, proposing a compromise, “Alright, just give me 2 minutes. I have to do it in 2 minutes.” This reflects a **negative politeness strategy** (Brown & Levinson, 1987), attempting to minimise the imposition on the respondent while securing his immediate goal. His eventual gratitude, “**Thanks!**” represented an acknowledgement of the respondent’s concession and serves as a positive politeness strategy to mitigate the prior face-threatening act.

Table 50 Speech Act

Original Response	English Translation
<p>Respondent: Bhai ruk ruk! Bhai bhai bhai. Actor: Yaar mujhe bohat jaldi hai yaar. (without stopping). Respondent: Nahin nahin yaar, ruko thora yaar. Hum bhi eik ghantay se intizaar kar rahe hein. Actor: Ghanta kidhar bhai? Koi bhi nahin hai? Respondent: Nahin yaar bhai (ssssaaa, angry expression with tongue). Hamein de dain hamara thora jaldi hai. Actor: Achaa please 2 minute de dain na, 2 minute mein mera kaam hai yaar.</p>	<p>Respondent: Bro, stop stop! Bro bro bro. it’s my turn man. Actor: Dude, I am in such a hurry dude. (without stopping) Respondent: No no man, stop a little, man. We have also been waiting for an hour. Actor: How hour bro? Is there no one? Respondent: No man bro (ssssaaa, angry expression with tongue). Give it to us, we are in a hurry. Actor: Alright, just give me 2 minutes. I have a two-minute task.</p>

<p>Respondent: (Asked to another boy standing there in a queue) Please yaar bhai, mana karo.</p> <p>Actor: Sirf 2 minute yaar.</p> <p>Respondent: Ok.</p> <p>Actor: Shukriya!</p>	<p>Respondent: (Asked to another boy standing with him in a queue) Man bro! Please stop him.</p> <p>Actor: Only 2 minutes bro.</p> <p>Respondent: Ok.</p> <p>Actor: Thanks!</p>
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5.2.5.5.1. Analysis in the light of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model

5.2.5.5.1.1. Bald-on-record

The respondent used a direct and unmitigated approach in his initial protests, such as “Bro, stop stop! Bro bro bro, it’s my turn man.” According to Brown and Levinson (1987), this bald-on-record strategy is typical in situations where the speaker feels urgency or believes that directness is necessary to assert their rights.

5.2.5.5.1.2. Negative politeness

When the actor persists, the respondent attempts to negotiate through indirect means, addressing another boy in the queue, “Man bro, please stop him.” This shift reflects an appeal to shared responsibility, softening the confrontation while maintaining his stance.

5.3. Discussion

This study presents the key findings drawn from the research, summarizing the linguistic responses of male and female participants in stressful academic contexts. The research aimed to explore how gender influences speech acts and politeness strategies, utilizing Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1975) and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model as theoretical and analytical frameworks. The research employed qualitative and quantitative research design, incorporating observational methods and role-play scenarios with a hybrid sampling approach. Data was collected from **50 participants (25 males, 25 females)** to analyse their linguistic choices in response to various stressful situations in academic contexts. The responses were audio-recorded, transcribed and categorized based on the types of politeness strategies employed. To complement qualitative method, the research also

presents quantitative data in the form of frequency tables to illustrate the distribution of politeness strategies among male and female respondents.

A thorough analysis of the findings reveals notable gender-based variations in linguistic behaviour. Female participants predominantly relied on **negative politeness** strategies to maintain social harmony by using **apologies, hedging, and indirect requests**. Male participants, on the other hand, exhibited **more direct communication**, with a higher tendency toward **bald-on-record** and **positive politeness** strategies. However, responses varied based on context. For instance, in the "**Spillage Incident**," female participants were more direct and face-threatening, whereas male participants responded with politer strategies. Conversely, in the "**Noisy Gathering**" scenario, female participants opted for indirect complaints while male participants demonstrated confrontational behaviour, often incorporating humour or explicit language. These findings confirm existing literature on differences in gendered communication, illustrating that women generally prioritise maintaining interpersonal relationships, while men tend to assert dominance or employ humour in stressful situations. This chapter further discusses the broader implications of these findings and provides recommendations based on observed linguistic patterns.

5.3.1. Frequency of the Use of Politeness Strategies by Male and Female Participants

The table given below exhibits the frequency of politeness strategies employed by male and female participants in stressful academic situations. It provides a comparative overview of how both genders navigated politeness, reflecting their linguistic choices in mitigating or intensifying face-threatening acts:

Politeness Strategies	Female Participants	Male Participants
Positive politeness	9	16
Negative politeness	17	20
Bald-on-Record	9	10
Off-Record	3	1

These findings suggest that males employed positive politeness (16) more frequently

than females (9), indicating a preference for strategies that foster camaraderie and social bonds. However, both genders demonstrated a high use of negative politeness, with males (20) slightly surpassing females (17), highlighting their shared tendency to acknowledge imposition while maintaining respect. The use of bald-on-record strategies was relatively balanced (9 for females, 10 for males), showing a willingness to be direct in specific contexts. However, females used off-record strategies (3) more than males (1), suggesting a slightly higher reliance on indirectness. These trends indicate that while both genders utilised a range of politeness strategies, males leaned more toward directness with a mix of camaraderie and imposition, whereas females exhibited more variability in their strategic choices, adapting based on situational demands.

5.3.2. Findings

The findings of the research conducted indicate distinctive differences in politeness strategies deployed by both genders in the given context. It is observed that female respondents employed predominantly cooperative, respectful and solution-oriented strategies in most situations under study. Politeness strategies like negative politeness (17) (apologies and indirectness) and positive politeness (09) had been used by female participants to maintain social harmony and avoid direct imposition. Their minimal employment of bald-on-record (9) and off-record strategies (3) also reflects their tendency to maintain social harmony in interactions. Yet, in some high-pressure contexts, like the “cafeteria spillages”, female respondents showed a higher impulse to use direct face-threatening acts without politeness makers, reflecting that their responses were not always indirect or mitigated.

In contrast, the male participants had more humorous responses. While they employed politeness strategies, they utilised more positive politeness (16) and bald-on-record strategies (10), which favoured rapport or bluntness rather than indirectness. Negative politeness (20) was implemented especially where negotiation or conflict avoidance was necessary, but their off-record usage (1) was negligible.

Their language usage also differed according to the nature of the stressful incident. As for instance, in the “Noisy gatherings at University hostels”, male participants occupied more aggressive language, without humour and more explicit terms based on expressives and bald-on-record strategies were used by them. However, in the

“cafeteria spillages”, they were politer than women. Hence, this suggests that politeness strategies were not gendered but context specific.

The contextual dependence of responses makes gender stereotypes overly simplistic, as speakers of both sexes adjust their linguistic choices based on the perceived severity of the situation. Frequency of data obtained in the present research supports the fact that while overall females do prefer more linguistic mitigation strategies in threatening interactions, they are also able to confront face-to-face when the context demands it. Males prefer a direct and expressive style but employ politeness strategies strategically, particularly in those contexts where politeness is socially obligatory.

This research was to examine male and female speakers’ linguistic choices in stressful academic situations and their modification of politeness strategies for effective communication. The results illustrate that females employed primarily cooperative and indirect politeness strategies, often drawing on negative politeness to mitigate face-threatening acts.

However, in high stress conditions like the “cafeteria spillages”, they were more confrontational, drawing on face-threatening acts, as compared to males, who answered back with higher levels of politeness. On the other hand, in “Noisy gatherings at hostel”, female participants selected an indirect and formal strategy, appealing to negative politeness, in order to request compliance. Where as, male participants were overwhelmingly more confrontational, employing bald-on-record strategies and even abusive speech. These variations illustrate that linguistic choices are context-dependent, since both males and females adapt their speech acts and politeness strategies according to the specific nature of the stressors and the underlying social dynamics.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendation

6.1. Finding of the study

The objective of the study was to learn about the nature of the linguistic responses of male and female students of IIUI and how they utilized politeness strategies in stressful academic situations. The first research question focused on the nature of linguistic responses elicited by both female and male participants across the five selected stressful academic situations. The results showed that both groups demonstrated awareness of social norms and contextual sensitivity when communicating under stress. Their linguistic responses reflected conscious attempts to manage conflict, maintain interaction, and express emotions appropriately without disrupting communication. Female participants generally produced more cooperative and cautious responses. They tended to use softeners, indirect expressions, and mitigating language to reduce the intensity of conflict and maintain social harmony. Their tone was mostly polite and emotionally balanced, reflecting empathy and relational awareness. In contrast, male participants exhibited a more direct and assertive style of response. Their linguistic behavior was characterized by straightforward statements, open disagreement, and an emphasis on clarity or control of the situation. However, some male respondents also softened their directness through humor, friendly tone, or mild positive politeness to avoid escalation. Overall, the findings indicated that stress influenced the tone and delivery of language, but both genders awareness in managing interpersonal dynamics through their responses.

The second research question examined whether male and female students use politeness strategies differently in their speech acts. In terms of politeness strategies in their speech acts, there are some clear gender variations. Female participants were much more likely to maintain social harmony than their male counterparts and used negative politeness strategies and commissive speech acts, among others, to maintain social harmony, reduce the tension, and avoid confrontation. Male participants generally used their speech acts more directly and said things more assertively even while they also made use of expressives and bald-on-record strategies but at times, attempted to reduce the intensity of their directness with positive politeness and humour.

6.2. Limitation of the Study

Although this study provides valuable insights into gender-based politeness strategies in stressful academic situations, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The data was collected from a single institution, International Islamic University, Islamabad, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other academic or cultural contexts. During data collection, it was sometimes challenging to ensure availability of male and female respondents. Apart from this, behaviours of some respondents were so disrespectful.

Moreover, since the respondents were unaware that the situations were pre-designed, their emotional intensity and environmental conditions could not be fully controlled, even though this approach ensured natural reactions. The study also focused mainly on verbal communication, excluding non-verbal elements such as tone, gestures, and facial expressions that might influence perceptions of politeness. Finally, personality differences, prior relationships among participants, and psychological factors were beyond the scope of this research.

6.3. Implication of the Study

The comparison of linguistic responses between male and female participants across all five situations reveals significant gender-based differences in speech acts, politeness strategies, and overall linguistic choices. These distinctions were shaped by situational context, relational dynamics, and the stress level of the interaction. While both genders demonstrated varying approaches to conflict resolution, the differences in their communication styles are stark, particularly in terms of the use of humour, directness, and emotional tone. This study's implications highlight both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it extends Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies Model and Speech Act Theory to stressful academic contexts, showing that politeness and speech acts are flexible and context-dependent, influenced by both emotional states and gender differences. The findings reinforce that communication under stress reflects not only linguistic choices but also deeper social and psychological factors that shape interaction.

Practically, the results can guide teachers, students, and university administrators in promoting respectful, empathetic, and effective communication across academic settings. The study implies that politeness awareness and pragmatic competence should be incorporated into communication courses and training workshops to enhance students' emotional

intelligence and conflict management skills. By linking theoretical understanding with real-world application, these implications contribute to creating a more cooperative, sensitive, and respectful academic environment.

6.3.1. Use of Politeness Strategies and Emotional Tone

Females consistently employed respectful and relationally sensitive language, even in highly stressful situations. Their responses demonstrated a preference for negative politeness strategies, such as hedging, indirectness, and acknowledgement of the interlocutor's face needs. For instance, females often used softened phrases like **"please"** or **"could you"** to express concerns without escalating tension. This aligns with findings from Lakoff (1975), who noted that women's language often emphasises politeness and deference. Furthermore, females refrained from using abusive or offensive language, even when the actor's behaviour was disruptive or frustrating. Their communication reflected an underlying effort to maintain harmony and resolve conflicts amicably.

Males, in contrast, displayed a greater reliance on humour as a strategy, particularly in stressful scenarios involving close friendships. This use of humour served both as a tension-relief mechanism and a positive politeness strategy to foster camaraderie. However, in highly stressful situations, males occasionally resorted to abusive language or overtly direct speech acts, such as shouting or dismissive remarks. For example, when confronted with noisy disturbances or personal space violations, male respondents expressed frustration through direct reprimands or sarcastic comments, often escalating the situation. Such behaviour aligns with research by Coates (2004), which highlights men's tendency to use humour and assertiveness in competitive or stressful interactions.

6.3.2. Patterns of directness and indirectness

Males were more likely to employ bald-on-record strategies, such as issuing blunt directives or openly expressing their annoyance without mitigating devices. This direct approach often led to heightened conflict or unresolved tensions, as the actor's disruptive behaviour persisted in many instances. In contrast, females combined directness with mitigation, using qualifiers and explanations to assert their point while avoiding outright confrontation. For example, when addressing noisy behaviour, female respondents often

contextualized their concerns by explaining the impact on their studies, thereby appealing to the actor's sense of reason and empathy.

6.3.3. Use of Abusive Language

A significant gender-based difference emerged in the use of abusive language. Males, particularly in situations of heightened stress, occasionally used abusive or offensive language to express their frustration. This reflects a less controlled emotional tone, often exacerbating the conflict. Females, however, consistently refrained from using any abusive terms, maintaining a respectful tone throughout their responses. Their approach prioritized relational harmony, even under pressure, highlighting a gender difference in linguistic restraint and emotional regulation.

6.3.4. Adaptability to Context and Relational Dynamics

Females demonstrated greater adaptability in their linguistic choices, tailoring their responses based on the relational dynamics and situational demands. They balanced assertiveness with politeness to address the conflict while preserving interpersonal harmony. This aligns with Holmes (1995), who noted that women's language often reflects a cooperative style that prioritizes relationships. Males, while less adaptive, adjusted their tone and language in certain high-stakes scenarios, occasionally shifting to a more conciliatory approach to de-escalate tension. However, this adaptability was less frequent and often replaced by humour or sarcasm.

6.3.5. Humor and Relational Impact

Only males used humour as a key strategy, often to diffuse tension or assert dominance in stressful interactions. While this occasionally alleviated the stress of the situation, it also risked being perceived as dismissive or inconsiderate, particularly when the respondent's concerns were not taken seriously. Females, on the other hand, did not employ humour, instead focusing on respectful and emotionally grounded communication. This difference underscores a gendered approach to conflict resolution, where males prioritize immediacy and social bonding, while females emphasize understanding and relational maintenance.

6.4. Recommendations

There are few recommendations for future studies:

- 1.** Colleges and universities should have structured training programs to help students be able to employ their politeness strategies and speech acts to manage their stressful academic contexts affecting their interpersonal competence and ability to bounce back from the negativeness that stress produces.
- 2.** Awareness programs should consider the impact of gender differences in communication styles. Cultivating awareness could promote mutual respect and reduce the likelihood of miscommunication.
- 3.** Academic programs should include conflict resolution and negotiation to help students more productively manage encounters which produce stress.
- 4.** Students should be encouraged to find a positive medium in approach by mixing directness with politeness strategies so that they are expressing themselves clearly while also maintaining social smoothness.
- 5.** The use of humor should be endorsed, as humor can act as a mitigating device, and it is worth noting that humor will not detract from the gravity of the stress situation.
- 6.** Faculty should be trained to recognize communicative stressors, and to develop supportive classroom environments in order to distill unnecessary tension that may hinder student interaction.
- 7.** The research could also expand beyond role play and explore naturalistic, observable accounts of classroom interaction using cross-cultural differences to provide a broader scope of applicability.

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