

**Politeness phenomena in Palestinian Arabic and Australian English:
A cross-cultural study of selected contemporary plays**

Submitted by

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Said Farahat, Melbourne

May, 2009

Statement of Authorship and Sources

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No parts of this thesis have been submitted towards the award of any other degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of the thesis.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethics/Safety Committees (where required).

Signed

Said H. M. Farahat

Australian Catholic University, Australia

May 26, 2009

Arabic Transliteration Symbols

		Bilabial	Inter-dental	Dental	Emphatic dental	(Alveo-) Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Stops	Voiceless			t ت	T ط		k ك	q ق		? ء -
	Voiced	b ب		d د	D ض	J ج				
Fricatives	Voiceless	f ف	θ ت	s س	S ص	Š ش	x خ		ħ ح	h ه
	Voiced		ð ذ	z ز	Ḍ ظ		ḡ غ		ḍ ع	
Nasals		m م		n ن						
Laterals				L ل						
Rhotic (trill)				r ر						
Semi-vowels		w و			y ي					

Short vowels	َ a	ِ i	ُ u	
Long vowels	آ aa	ي ee	و oo	

Retrieved from “http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Arabic/Arabic_sounds” with some modifications.

Glossary of Acronyms

CP:	Co-operative Principle
D:	Social Distance
DCT:	Discourse Completion Task
DR:	Doctor
FN:	First Name
FTAs:	Face-Threatening Acts
H:	Hearer
MP:	Model Person
P:	Power
PI:	Primary Illocution
PP:	Politeness Principles
R:	Ranking of Imposition
S:	Speaker
T:	“tu” Informal “You”
TLN:	Title + Last Name
V:	“vous” Formal “You”

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Statement of authorship and sources	iii
Arabic transliteration symbols	iv
Glossary of Acronyms	v
Abstract	xi

Chapter I. General introduction and thesis structure

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Prelude	2
1.2	Objectives of the study	3
1.3	Research questions	3
1.4	Rationale for the study	4
1.5	Significance of the study	5
1.6	Limitations of the study	6
1.7	The plays as a source of data	7
	1.7.1 The Australian plays	8
	1.7.2 The Palestinian plays	9
1.8	The design of the study	10
1.9	Summary	12

Chapter 2. Theoretical framework and studies on politeness

2.0	Introduction	13
2.1	Theoretical framework	14

2.1.1	Goffman's notion of face	14
2.1.2	Grice's co-operative principle	15
2.1.3	Lakoff's rules of politeness	20
2.1.4	Leech's maxim's of politeness	22
2.1.5	Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness	26
2.1.5.1	Strategies for doing FTAs	27
2.1.5.2	The sociological variables	29
2.1.5.3	Critique of Brown and Levinson	31
2.2	Cross-cultural studies on linguistic politeness	36
2.2.1	Differences on politeness strategies	37
2.2.2	Cultural differences in assessing FTAs	43
2.3	Summary	44

Chapter 3. Methodological issues and methods

3.0	Introduction	47
3.1	Methods of data collection	47
3.2	Texts as a data source	48
3.3	Previous studies that make use of drama	49
3.4	General discussion of politeness strategies	54
3.5	Naturally-occurring data	55
3.6	Interviewing	56
3.6.1	A structured interview	57
3.6.1.1	Discourse completion task	58
3.6.1.2	Role-playing	60
3.6.2	An unstructured interview	62

3.7	Methods of data collection used to carry out this study	63
3.7.1	The main data	63
3.7.1.1	Rationale for using drama as a main data	64
3.7.1.2	Selecting the plays	67
3.7.1.3	Methods used for classifying the main data	69
3.7.1.4	Methods used for analyzing the main data	71
3.7.2	Supplementary data	74
3.7.2.1	Data classification and analysis	74
3.8	Summary	75

Chapter 4. A cross cultural exploration of the concept of face

4.0	Introduction	77
4.1	Background	77
4.2	Discussions on the definitions of the term face	78
4.3	The concept of face a cross cultures	82
4.3.1	The concept of face in Palestinian culture	86
4.3.1.1	Face upgrading/honoring expressions	88
4.3.1.2	Face demeaning/threatening expressions	89
4.3.2	The concept of face in Australian culture	91
4.4	The concept of the loss of face	91
4.4.1	Acts that cause loss of face	92
4.5	Face-enhancing acts	100
4.6	Summary	104

Chapter 5. Request realization and the bald-on-record strategy

5.0	Introduction	106
5.1	Speech act theory	107
5.2	The linguistic realizations of the speech act of request	108
5.3	Request strategy in Palestinian Arabic and Australian English	111
5.3.1	Interrogative clauses	112
5.3.1.1	Requests for information	118
5.3.2	Imperative clauses	122
5.3.2.1	Requests for goods	125
5.3.2.2	Requests carried out in favor of H	127
5.3.2.3	Attention-getters	128
5.3.2.4	Cases of extreme tension	130
5.3.2.5	Cases of urgency	131
5.3.2.6	General discussion on requests performed by imperatives	134
5.3.3	Declarative clauses	135
5.4	Summary	137

Chapter 6. Positive politeness strategies

6.0	Introduction	138
6.1	Positive politeness strategies used to perform requests	139
6.1.1	Use of in-group identity markers	140
6.1.1.1	Address forms	140
6.1.1.2	Swear words	153

6.1.2 Presupposing, raising, or asserting common ground with H	156
6.1.3 Avoid disagreement	159
6.1.4 Taking notice of H's interests, wants, needs, goods	162
6.1.5 Intensify interest to H	164
6.1.6 Including both S and H in the activity	170
6.2 Discussion of findings	171
6.3 Summary	177

Chapter 7. Negative politeness strategies

7.0 Introduction	179
7.1 Modification with negative politeness strategies	179
7.2 Requests performed by negative politeness strategies	182
7.2.1 Be conventionally indirect	182
7.2.2 Give deference	194
7.2.2.1 <i>Please</i> , a marker of politeness	195
7.2.2.2 The honorific marker <i>TafaDal</i>	201
7.2.2.3 Terms of address	204
7.2.3 Hedges	208
7.2.3.1 Tag questions	209
7.2.4 Minimization of the imposition	211
7.2.5 Apologies	214
7.2.6 Be pessimistic	218
7.3 Discussion of findings	218
7.4 Summary	224

Chapter 8. Discussion of findings and implications

8.0	Introduction	226
8.1	The first question	226
8.2	The second question	229
8.2.1	Requests performed by the bald-on-record strategy	229
8.2.2	Requests performed by negative politeness strategies	231
8.2.3	Requests performed by positive politeness strategies	234
8.3	The third question	236
8.3.1	Acts that cause loss of face	237
8.3.2	Acts used to enhance face	238
8.4	Implications for foreign language teaching	240
8.5	Suggestions for future research	242
8.6	Summary	243
References		245
Appendices		260

Abstract

The present study examines the concept of politeness within the framework provided by Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) influential theory of politeness. The study explores politeness phenomena as represented in literary genres, more specifically in contemporary works of drama from Australia and Palestine. Such a study follows in the footsteps of earlier studies of politeness as represented in plays including those by Brown and Gilman (1989), Magnusson (1999), Sifianou (1992) and Simpson (1997). In doing so, the study makes an important contribution to the literature on this area of linguistics as very few studies of politeness have investigated the Arabic language, whether in spoken interactions or literary genres. It also contributes to our understanding of the important concept of "face".

In the study, ten plays: five Australian and five Palestinian plays are analyzed to identify requests as they appear in the written text of each play (rather than in live productions). The linguistic expressions as well as the politeness strategies for doing Face-threatening Acts (FTAs) will be identified, classified and analyzed. In addition, depending on a supplementary questionnaire, "face" will be explored as it is conceptualized by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic. Particular emphasis will be laid on acts that enhance face and acts that cause face loss. As well as contributing further to an important and very vigorous area of research in pragmatics, it is hoped that the findings of the study will allow researchers to gain further insight into the linguistic repertoires of both cultures. The study will therefore provide a base on which interactions between people from both cultures may be undertaken with greater sensitivity. Hence, the study will have two sets of outcomes, the first linguistic and the second intercultural.

Keywords: Linguistics, pragmatics, politeness theory, politeness phenomena, politeness strategies, face, face loss, face-threatening acts

Chapter One

General introduction and thesis structure

1.0 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to present the general framework of the study. It includes a prelude, where a brief history of the work of Brown and Levinson (1987) is introduced. The prelude also briefly mentions the great contribution that politeness theory has made to the field of linguistic pragmatics and the many significant studies that have made use of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness. The chapter also introduces the main objectives of the study. Four objectives are identified; some of them are linguistic objectives which have to do with Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness and its viability and applicability to selected works of drama in Australia and Palestine, while the others are social objectives related to the codes of politeness as they are practiced by members of each community when they come in contact with each other.

The chapter identifies the research questions that provide a focus for the study. Three research questions are discussed. The first question is directly related to Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness. It aims at measuring to what extent politeness theory succeeds in accounting for the data obtained from the plays. The second question is concerned with exploring the politeness strategies and linguistic devices used by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic to mitigate requests. The third question aims to explore the concept of face in Australian and Palestinian cultures together with acts that enhance face and acts that cause face loss.

The chapter also includes sections which address the rationale of the study and its significance and limitations. Since the main source of the study is drama, the chapter includes a brief summary of the plot of each play used as a source of data. Finally, the overall structure of the study is presented.

1.1 Prelude

In 1978, Penelope Brown and Steven Levinson collaborated in the writing of a theory of politeness that was to signal the beginning of a significant interest in the world of language theory in general and Applied Linguistics in particular. Writing under the broad umbrella of pragmatics, the study of people's actual language usage, Brown and Levinson's work was entitled very simply 'Universals in language usage: politeness phenomena'. Although its authors' contribution built on the work of previous scholars such as Goffman (1967) and Grice (1975), the book carved its own place in the field by directing attention solely to the phenomenon of polite interactions and the discourse strategies that Goffman had described as "the traffic rules" (p. 12) of social interaction.

Such has been the attention paid to this one book that in 1987 Cambridge University Press re-issued the paper (with some revision) as a book. In the introduction, Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that "certain precise parallels in language usage in many different languages can be shown to derive from certain assumptions about 'face' – individuals' self-esteem" (p. 2). Moreover, they claim the universal applicability of their theory of politeness.

Since this foundational work was republished in 1987, work on politeness has gone ahead at a rapid pace, so that today it is possible to access many thousands of entries under this heading. Many researchers (Danblon, De Clerck & Noppen, 2005; Felix-Brasdefer, 2006; Ilie, 2005; Locher, 2006; Ohashi, 2008; Ruzickova, 2007; Su, 2008; Vinagre, 2008; Yli-Vakkuri, 2005) have tackled polite behavior in intercultural interactions while others (Al-Zumor, 2006; Béal, 1990; Cordella, 1991; Fukushima, 1996; Lee-Wong, 1996; Salmani-Nodoushan, 2006; Tsuzuki, Takahashi, Patschke & Zhang, 2005; Wierzbicka, 1990) have investigated polite behavior in different cultures.

The present study builds on and extends the literature already referred to above by exploring politeness theory in relation to selected Australian and Palestinian plays. It will focus on requests for two reasons. Firstly, requests are considered by many researchers (Atawneh, 1991; Elarbi, 1997; Sifianou, 1992) working on the area of speech acts as face-threatening acts whose performance needs facework to counteract their threat to face. Secondly, requests are used frequently in everyday interaction.

1.2 Objectives of the study

Like most socio-pragmatic studies undertaken regarding the topic of politeness, the present study has both linguistic and social objectives. The main objectives can be summarized as follows:

- To extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) linguistic theory of politeness to new settings. This, in turn, may allow researchers to test the applicability of the model to the cultures under investigation.
- To search for new perspectives regarding Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness and the concept of face.
- To identify the linguistic expressions and the politeness strategies employed by each culture studied in situations involving Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs).
- To study politeness phenomena in both Australian and Palestinian plays in a way that avoids unwarranted generalizations or stereotyping.

1.3 Research questions

The study sets out to answer in detail three questions. The first question was motivated by the work of many researchers, namely Nureddeen (2008), Schnurr, Marra and Holmes (2007), Vinagre (2008) and many others who made use of Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness to explore politeness phenomena in specific cultures. Some of those researchers (Ide, 1989; Matsumoto 1988, 1989) questioned the politeness theory and its alleged universality, while others such Magnusson (1999) and Doğancay-Aktuna and Kamışlı (2001) described it as a breakthrough in the field of linguistic pragmatics. In order to contribute to the existing literature, this study attempts to explore the following:

- To what extent does Brown and Levinson's (1987) linguistic politeness theory successfully account for politeness phenomena in the Australian and Palestinian plays selected for the study?

The second question this study focuses on concerns the politeness strategies employed to perform requests in the Australian and Palestinian data sets, in addition to the linguistic devices used as softening devices to minimize threat to face. It also seeks to

explore cultural differences that might disrupt communication. The question reflects the strategies posed by Brown and Levinson (1987) in their politeness theory and in Wierzbicka's (1990) claim that people in different countries "speak in different ways – not only because they use different linguistic codes, involving different lexicons and different grammars, but also because their ways of using the codes are different" (p. 44).

- What are the politeness strategies and linguistic softening devices employed in Australian plays and Palestinian plays in order to carry out requests? What are the areas of differences between the two cultures that might cause communication breakdown and communication failure?

The third question seeks to explore the concept of face in Australian and Palestinian cultures. In addition, acts that cause face loss will be investigated in order to deepen our understanding of cultural differences that might cause embarrassment when people of the two cultures come in contact with each other. The study also considers acts that are used to enhance face in the two cultural groups. This consideration reflects the work of many researchers such as Goffman (1967), Ho (1976; 1994), and Brown and Levinson (1987) who emphasize the fact that face is a public image which can be lost, maintained or withdrawn.

- How is face conceptualized by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic? What are the acts that enhance face and cause face-loss in Australian and Palestinian cultures?

1.4 Rationale for the study

Since cultures vary in terms of their conceptualizations of face and the linguistic strategies used to satisfy face, the study of politeness strategies as a means to satisfy face needs across cultures seems to be essential in promoting better understanding between differing cultures. Understanding people's cultural and linguistic behavior not only facilitates communication but minimizes the possibility for confrontation as well. Lack of cross-cultural understanding increases the chances of confrontation. In order to minimize confrontation and increase understanding, the present study investigates Australian culture and Palestinian culture – two completely different cultures in terms of beliefs, traditions

and customs – to achieve some understanding of how such peoples politely address each other in different speech situations.

The study investigates politeness phenomena in Australian and Palestinian plays because very few socio-pragmatic studies on politeness have been conducted in these cultures so far. In order to account for both negative face and positive face, the speech act of requesting, described as a face-threatening act by Leech (1983), Sifianou (1992) and Elarbi (1997) will be investigated because requests have lacked close attention in the linguistic behavior of speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic.

The study differs from Atawneh's (1991), the only study carried out in the Palestinian context, in that while Atawneh's work discusses some aspects of negative politeness strategies, this study will discuss both aspects of face, namely, negative and positive politeness. In addition, both the politeness strategies and linguistic expressions utilized to mitigate the illocutionary force of the requests will be discussed. Another significant difference between the current study and Atawneh's is connected with the concept of face. The concept of face in Australian and Palestinian cultures will be investigated together with acts that enhance face and acts that cause face loss, whereas, the previous study does not discuss those areas.

1.5 Significance of the study

The present study seeks to examine Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness, a theory which has been described by many researchers as the most powerful and influential theory for conducting studies on politeness (Kasper, 1990; Simpson, 1997; Watts, 2003). The study provides further information about the specific politeness strategies employed in Australian English and Palestinian Arabic, in particular, those used to do face-threatening acts (FTAs) and the softening devices employed to mitigate the illocutionary force of utterances.

The study discusses the concept of face across cultures and concentrates on Palestinian and Australian concepts of face as they are realized by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic. It depends on a set of face-related expressions in order to deepen our understanding of the cultural values and traditions of Palestinian culture. In so

doing, the study highlights the importance of the concept of face and its connection with polite behavior. In addition, it gives us a clear idea about the importance of face in collectivistic cultures and individualistic cultures and the consequences of losing face cross-culturally, thus promoting greater awareness of cross-cultural differences.

According to Ting-Toomey (1988), one advantage of studying the concept of face across cultures is that greater mutual understanding can be gained. Knowing the socio-pragmatic rules of a culture is likely to help facilitate social communication and enhance friendliness or, at least, minimize confrontation between people from different cultures.

It is hoped, therefore, that the findings of this study may be used to help increase people's cultural awareness and that those working in such contexts as the education sector may become more aware of the ways in which they employ (often unconsciously) FTAs when they impinge on other people's territories. This, in turn, should help to minimize confrontation and enhance solidarity, especially in teacher-student confrontations which in most cases lead to negative consequences for all involved. The study may also have important implications for migrants who seek a better life in Australia, as it will provide them with further information on how Australian people behave in various situations not only when they consciously seek to do FTAs but also when they do these unwittingly.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The study has several limitations. As the linguistic analyses are very detailed, the number of plays will be limited to ten, five Australian and five Palestinian. This number exceeds the number analyzed by other researchers: Brown and Gilman (1989) analyzed four plays, while Simpson (1997) has undertaken detailed studies of only one dramatic text in order to study politeness phenomena.

Although we can find in the plays speech acts other than requests, such as compliments, offers and advice, the study will be limited to the speech act of requesting for three reasons. First, the number of requests in each play exceeds the number of other speech acts. This in turn gives us an opportunity to investigate more politeness strategies and explore more polite linguistic devices. Second, requests may vary dramatically in various speech situations depending on the social distance between speaker and hearer, the

social power between speaker and hearer and the cost of the request. Finally, requests are face-threatening speech acts, and have been given great attention by other researchers in various speech communities (Atawneh, 1991; Koutlaki, 2002; Rhodes, 1989; Sifianou, 1992; Skewis, 2003).

Since the plays provide little information about how people of both cultures conceptualize face, this study draws upon a second type of data which takes the form of a short questionnaire. The number of respondents to the questionnaire to study the concept of face in Australian and Palestinian cultures was limited to 20: ten respondents from each culture. There was a difficulty in finding more Palestinian respondents who were originally from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank as the great majority of the Palestinians living in Australia were born in countries other than Palestine.

1.7 The plays as a source of data

Since the study makes use of plays as the major data source, it is important to give brief descriptions of them. The plot, theme and characterizations are very important in understanding any play. However, in this study these issues are not discussed in detail because the major concern is the linguistic interactions occurring among the characters, in particular, the politeness strategies.

1.7.1 The Australian plays

The central idea of *Hotel Sorrento* (Rayson, 1990) is to explore the concept of loyalty both to family and to country. The characters in *Hotel Sorrento* need to face the truth about themselves and the past: three sisters who meet together after ten years of expatriation. Hilary is the eldest daughter of Moynihan family. She lives in Hotel Sorrento, a home which belongs to the Moynihan family together with her sixteen-year-old son (Troy) and her sixty nine-year-old father, Wal. Meg, the middle sister, is married to an Englishman and resides in London with her husband. She works as a novelist and her second novel (*Melancholy*) has been nominated for the Booker Prize, but later on her novel is taken off the shortlist because Meg has been accused of plagiarism. Pippa, the youngest daughter, lives in New York and works as an advertising executive. In general, the play investigates the complexities and constraints of family relationships.

Travelling North (Williamson, 1980) emphasizes that life is about renewal, growth and moving on. The incidents in the play revolve around two central characters: Frank a retired civil engineer in his seventies and Frances an old woman and a mother of two daughters who has fallen in love with Frank. Frank is rude and arrogant, whereas Frances is the opposite. She is described by her daughters as an emotional woman whom Frank has exploited for his own purposes. Frank and Frances decide to move to Queensland to escape the bleak southern climate. Frances' daughters are not happy with the idea or with the relationship between Frank and Frances in general, so they express this feeling to their mother on several occasions, subtly trying to persuade her to stay with them in Melbourne. But the two daughters' attempt to convince their mother to leave Frank and abandon the idea of traveling north is unsuccessful. At the end of the play, although Frances is alone after the death of Frank, she refuses to put an end to the previously planned journey to travel north and decides to make the journey by herself.

The *Fat Boy* (Ayres, 2003) is about a fat cheeky young man called Trevor. Trevor is a lonely man who has trouble finding love because he is both gay and fat. His mother, Hope, is a blind sex obsessed psychic woman. Trevor falls in love with James, but their relationship cannot last for long because James has suffered a serious illness. Trevor asks his mother to cure James but she pretends that she cannot. The play ends with sadness as James stays in bed unconscious.

Gary's House (Oswald, 1996) is about a family's attempts to raise itself above its existing status. Gary and Sue-Anne are expecting a baby, so Gary decides to start building a house for the family on a piece of land he inherited after the death of his father. While the work of building the house is going on, Christine, Gary's sister, claims half the land. In a sudden change, Christine decides to build the house from her own money for the baby. At the end of the play, Gary disappears and Sue-Anne marries Vince. The play ends when Gary reappears again and Christine hands the baby over to him.

Dust (Sewell, 1997) is mainly about an ordinary family trying to cope with a tragedy. Doug's son has been killed in a car accident and his daughter Julie, who has mental problems, went missing for years. Julie, who marries Jo, believes that she is pregnant with a son and tries hard to convince her husband of it. However, the doctor makes it clear that a pregnancy is impossible because Julie has had a hysterectomy.

1.7.2 The Palestinian plays

Al-Qamar wa Al-ḍankabut is by Al-Mubayed (1985). The play represents typical Palestinian society, portraying the values and traditions of Palestinian people, as well as their suffering. The playwright dramatizes such suffering in Sheikh Shaamel's family: a sick father, suffering from an undiagnosed disease, a speechless mother, Kunuuz and the only son Eisa. The suffering of the family can be seen not only in the sickness of father and mother but also in the number of children. It is very unusual for a Palestinian family to have only one child.

Sheikh Shaamel decides to leave the country to seek better treatment overseas. He asks his close friend sheikh Abed-Albaqi to take care of Eisa. He also asks Eisa to consult Abed-Albaqi in every matter and to obey him. Before his departure, sheikh Shaamel advises Eisa to take care of his mother and their bookshop, not to become involved with bad people, and most importantly, to maintain the family honor by not saying or doing anything that might tarnish their good name.

Sheikh Shaamel's departure leaves Eisa in charge of the bookshop which he immediately starts to renovate. He pays no attention to his father's advice which is not to meet bad people and to maintain the name of the family. Eisa meets bad people who waste his money and make him poor and miserable. He also damages the good name of the family by becoming involved in anti-social behavior.

ASamt wa Azawaal (Shihada, 1978) is about a greedy landowner called Jaaser who exploits poor farmers for his own interests. His wife, Sihaam, lives an uncomfortable life with him because he commits all his life to accumulating money and ignores her. She falls in love with Jameel, who works for her husband. Jameel resists her love, shows loyalty to his master, and at the same time, keeps fighting for the rights of the poor.

After a long battle between the poor farmers and Jaaser, the man of power and wealth is defeated. The play spreads a clear message that it is not power and wealth that always prevail, but the determination to fight for justice, rights and freedom. The last scene of the play is memorable, because Jameel, the leader of the poor, enjoys the victory in the last moments of his life.

Kanafani's (1982) play, *Jisir Ħlaa Al-Ħabad*, is a vivid drama of uncertainty and despair. Palestinian people find it difficult to cope with the harshness of life. They mix up superstitions with reality. The play starts with a car accident in which Raja, a university student from a rich family, hits a young man in his twenties one day while driving. The man is injured but refuses to go to hospital for treatment because he has no hope of life. He insists that he will die very soon and tells Raja about the ghost who visits him every night to remind him of his date with death. Raja is curious to know his story. She falls in love with the man and helps him to see hope and a brighter future.

Edwan's (1988) play, *Law Kuntu FilisTiinian*, is a play about a group of Palestinian youths who live a miserable life, with no parents, no homes and no hope for a better future. They decide to kidnap an Israeli archeologist, Dr Bandate, and two of his friends in order to secure the release of some of their friends from an Israeli prison. The captors and their Israeli captives communicate with each other frankly and faithfully. They build up mutual understanding of each other's needs. They talk about love and mutual respect, which unfortunately does not last long. An Israeli commando group raids the area to release the hostages, and all the people in the building are killed.

Ali-Jabir's (1998) play, *Al-Maĥkama*, is a naturalistic depiction of the lives of Palestinian people. The play exposes the corruption of powerful people in society and the means they use to exploit public resources for their own interest. It also shows the deep divisions and huge gap between the powerful people and ordinary people. The former are presented as uneducated, ignorant and merciless. In the play, a court scene represents injustice as it is headed by a tyrant judge who declares that he has sentenced half of the people in prison. The play ends with a fight between the powerful people because they distrust one other.

1.8 The design of the study

The present study consists of eight chapters. This chapter has presented an overview of the general introduction. It discusses the objectives of the study, the research questions, the significance of the study, its rationale and limitations. Chapter two discusses the theoretical framework of the study. Goffman (1967) – especially his notion of facework which Brown and Levinson (1987) adapted – will be discussed briefly. In addition, Grice's

(1975) Cooperative Principle is introduced to help the reader understand the nature of conversation and what is meant by implicature as this concept constitutes the underpinning of linguistic indirectness. Speech act theory is discussed to shed light on the nature of directives and to help gain insight into the indirect speech acts which constitute an important part of negative politeness. As far as linguistic politeness theories are concerned, the study will discuss the work of Lakoff (1973), and then Leech's (1983) maxims of politeness. However, since this study makes use of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model, their work will be discussed in greatest detail.

Chapter three is concerned with the methods used to carry out the study. It discusses the various techniques used to collect data. Since the current study depends on drama as a method of data collection, the chapter focuses on drama as a data source. It also discusses the supplementary data which takes the form of a questionnaire. Methods of data classification and data analysis will be discussed.

Chapter four discusses the concept of face across cultures. It defines face as is conceptualized by different researchers. The chapter also discusses empirical studies of face from a cross-cultural perspective. Among the studies are Thai face (Ukosakul, 2005), Iranian face (Koutlaki, 2002), Zulu face (de-Kadt, 1998), Tunisian face (Elarbi, 1997), and Chinese face (Mao, 1994). The concept of face in Australian and Palestinian cultures is introduced together with acts that cause face loss and acts that enhance face.

Chapter five is divided into two main parts. The first part is concerned with the linguistic realizations of requests in Australian English and Palestinian Arabic. Three main clauses are identified, namely, interrogatives, imperatives, and declaratives. The second part discusses the cases where the non-minimized bald-on-record strategy is used.

Chapter six addresses requests performed by using positive politeness. The study will discuss six positive politeness strategies: using in-group identity markers, presupposing common ground with hearer (H), avoiding disagreement, taking notice of H's interests, intensify interest to H and including both speaker (S) and H in the activity.

Chapter seven addresses requests performed by negative politeness. Six strategies will be investigated: being conventionally indirect, hedging, minimizing the imposition, giving deference, apologizing and being pessimistic. Finally, Chapter eight summarizes the thesis and its results and offers further recommendations.

1.9 Summary

The theory of politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) has had a significant impact on the study of linguistic politeness. With its identification of negative and positive face, the theory is seen as a theoretical breakthrough which has opened the door for many cross-cultural empirical studies. The main objectives of this thesis are to extend Brown and Levinson's theory to new settings and examine politeness phenomena in a way that avoids stereotyping. The rationale behind conducting such a study is that few socio-pragmatic studies on politeness have been conducted on Australian and Palestinian cultures. It is hoped that this study can create mutual understanding between the peoples under investigation. Understanding the socio-pragmatic rules of other cultures facilitates social communication and enhances friendliness, or at least minimizes confrontation. This study makes a significant contribution because it explores the concept of face and the politeness strategies in new settings – Australian and Palestinian cultures – where few socio-pragmatic studies have been conducted.

Chapter Two

Theoretical framework and studies on politeness

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part discusses the theoretical framework of the study. The work of Goffman (1967) on the concept of face will be investigated because it constitutes the underpinnings of Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness. Grice's (1975) Co-operative Principle (CP) and his maxims of conversation will also be discussed in order to explore the notion of implicature which is strongly connected with indirect speech acts.

In order to obtain a general understanding of the historical development of politeness theories, the study will discuss briefly the work of Lakoff (1973), in particular her account of the rules of politeness. Leech's (1983) maxims of politeness will be investigated, highlighting the concept of the cost-benefit scale as a premise of the theory. Finally, the work of Brown and Levinson (1987) will be investigated thoroughly because that is the theoretical basis of the current study. Politeness strategies used to mitigate face-threatening acts will be discussed together with the sociological variables used to calculate the seriousness of face-threatening acts. This section concludes with a critique of Brown and Levinson's work in order to draw attention to the potential shortcomings of the theory.

The second section will address cross-cultural studies on politeness. More emphasis will be given to studies related to Australian and Palestinian cultures in order to deepen our understanding of the politeness strategies used to perform various speech acts in different cultural contexts. Cross-cultural differences in linguistic politeness that might cause communication breakdown will be highlighted. Following Béal's (1990) classification of the major causes of cross-cultural socio-pragmatic failure, two problems will be investigated, namely: "differences in politeness strategies" and "differences in the assessment of what constitutes a face-threatening act" (p. 19).

2.1 Theoretical framework

2.1.1 Goffman's notion of face

Goffman (1967) in his essay, "Interaction Rituals: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior", was concerned with social interaction, whether it is face-to-face or mediated interaction. By social interaction, Goffman means the behavior of individuals as an attribute of social order in a particular society, rather than an attribute of the behavior of an individual person (Marquez-Reiter, 2000). For Goffman, this social behavior is on loan to the individual from society and it is governed by certain legalized and endorsed societal rules.

The term "face" was employed by Goffman (1967) to refer to the public image a person projects for himself or herself (p. 5). Goffman assumes that social interaction plays an important role in determining our position in, as well as our knowledge of, the world. Therefore, face is central to social interaction in that its presentation achieves some sort of social harmony. Hence, it is interactants' mutual responsibility to maintain face because the loss of face during an encounter may precipitate a breakdown in the exchange.

Goffman (1967) maintains that, although face is the possession of the individual, it is on loan from society and can be withdrawn from the person once he or she behaves in a way that runs contrary to the rules endorsed by the society (p. 10). In short, Goffman's image of face is collectively orientated. The individual does not have an absolute freedom to do whatever he or she wants; instead the society monitors the behavior of individuals and gives accreditation to their face wants if they keep themselves in line with its norms. Once a person behaves otherwise, face will definitely be at risk and its possible loss may incur negative consequences.

Goffman (1967) was aware of individual as well as of cross-cultural differences when dealing with face saving, stressing the fact that "each person, subculture, and society seems to have its own characteristic repertoire of face-saving practices. It is to this repertoire that people partly refer when they ask what a person or culture is really like" (p. 13).

As far as face is concerned, Goffman (1967) distinguishes three terms pertaining to face. First, we can say that a person has a “good face, or maintains face” when the “line he effectively takes presents an image of him that is internally consistent, that is supported by judgements and evidence conveyed by other participants, and that is confirmed by evidence conveyed through impersonal agencies in the situation” (p. 8). Second, we can say that a person is in “wrong face” when “information is brought forth in some way about his social worth which cannot be integrated, even with effort, into the line that is being sustained for him” (p. 8). Third, we can say that a person is “out of face” when he “participates in a contact with others without having ready a line of the kind participants in such situations are expected to take” (p. 8).

Not only does Goffman (1967) define the concept of face; he also acknowledges the crucial role in saving self-face, arguing that: “The combined effect of the rule of self-respect and the rule of considerateness is that the person tends to conduct himself during an encounter so as to maintain both his own face and the face of other participants” (p. 11). Moreover, he also puts forward certain practical procedures that might help to save face, beginning with the avoidance process in which a person abjures interaction with others, if a potential loss of face is likely to happen.

However, according to Goffman (1967), once contact takes place, other procedures, namely: “defensive procedures”, should be introduced to maintain face and enhance hearers’ face. First, when feeling that an activity may incur face threat to the hearer, one may, at once, cease the activity. Second, one may, at a suitable moment, alter the subject of the talk if one feels that the conversation is incompatible with the line supported by others. Third, one is required to show “diffidence and composure” (p. 16).

2.1.2 Grice’s Co-operative Principle (CP) and the Maxims of Conversation

The article written by Grice in 1975 has been considered by many researchers as a breakthrough in linguistic pragmatics. Grice’s main concern was the natural (non-logical) language within the philosophy of language (Burton, 1980; Lakoff & Ide, 2005). That is to say, Grice transcended the traditional theoretical usage of language and focused instead on language use (Fraser, 1990; Sifianou, 1992; Watts, 2003).

Interestingly, Grice (1975) envisaged conversation as a cooperative, straightforward and purposeful effort, governed by a set of general principles which he expected interlocutors to follow when engaging in conversational interactions. In this context, he writes

Our talk-exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks, and would not be rational if they did. They are, characteristically, to some degree at least, co-operative efforts; and each participant recognises in them, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction. (Grice, 1975, p. 45)

Grice (1975) was a pioneer who systematically studied the meaning of a sentence that exists beyond the conventional meaning of the words constituting the sentence which he called “implicature” (p. 43). He introduced the term implicature to language in a special way to serve his specific aims. He maintained in this regard: “I wish to introduce, as terms of art, the verb *implicate* and the related nouns *implicature* (cf. *implying*) and *implicatum* (cf. *what is implied*)” (pp. 43-44). He argues that all interactants are rational individuals who are interested in message efficacy. In order to achieve this end, Grice postulated a framework for language use, based on what he called the Co-operative Principle (CP), consisting of a set of maxims and sub-maxims which interactants supposedly follow when communicating. The naming of the maxims was chosen to follow the naming devised by the nineteenth century German philosopher, Kant. Four maxims were identified to be responsible for controlling conversation in the right direction. Those maxims consist of several sub-maxims which give a guided description of the manner in which an appropriate conversation should be played out. Consider the following extract taken from Grice’s article:

On the assumption that some such general principle as this is acceptable, one may perhaps distinguish four categories under one or another of which will fall certain more specific maxims and submaxims, the following of which will, in general, yield results in accordance with the Cooperative Principle. Echoing Kant, I call these categories Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner. (Grice 1975, p. 45)

For the purpose of illustration, I shall reproduce these principles as they appear in Grice’s (1975, pp. 45-46) paper.

A- Maxim of Quantity

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

B- Maxim of Quality

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

C- Maxim of Relation

1. Be relevant

D- Maxim of Manner

- 1- Avoid obscurity of expression.
- 2- Avoid ambiguity.
- 3- Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
- 4- Be orderly.

Grice (1975) maintains that the first three maxims and sub-maxims under each category are about “what is said”, whereas the fourth one is about “how what is said is to be said” (p. 46). Moreover, he asserts the general applicability of these maxims to all interactions irrespective of the topic chosen, the vocabulary used and the type of speech act intended to be carried out (Sifianou, 1992). However, according to Grice, sometimes people might choose to depart from the observance of such maxims. In such a case, the addressee has to search for the implicit message of the speaker.

In an attempt to characterize how people exploit these maxims in favor of conversational implicature, let us consider the following example introduced by Grice (1975) as an evidence of flouting the maxim of quantity. A is writing a testimonial about a student who is a nominee for a philosophy job: “Dear Sir, Mr. X’s command of English is excellent, and his attendance at tutorials has been regular” (p. 52). In order to make the letter more appropriate, more information is needed about X’s skills in philosophy. The absence of the required information in A’s statement could not be attributed to ignorance because X is one of A’s students. However, it seems that A wants to deliver more information about X but not in a written form. If X has really poor skills in philosophy, then the implicature becomes clear and the flouting of the maxim is purposeful and intended by A.

Grice (1975) acknowledges the need for more maxims that are not mentioned in his paper, where conversational implicature may be generated, arguing that “There are, of course, all sorts of other maxims (aesthetic, social, or moral in character), such as ‘Be polite’ that are also normally observed by participants in talk exchange, and these may also generate conversational implicature” (p. 47). Lakoff (1973), Leech (1983) and Brown and Levinson (1987) built on Grice’s work and produced their own theories of politeness.

Despite its outstanding contribution in dealing with conversational implicature on the one hand, and in solving “puzzles which arise in a truth-based approach to semantics” (Leech, 1983, p. 80), on the other, Grice’s (1975) CP is open to accusations by some scholars of having problems and limitations of its own and in lacking cross-cultural applicability. Leech (1983), for example, criticizes the CP on the ground that the theory fails to account for the relation between sense and force, arguing with regard to this:

So much has been written in general support of Grice’s concept of the CP that I may take this principle to some extent for granted. But it is necessary to give some explanation here of (a) why the CP is needed, and (b) why it is not sufficient, as an explanation of the relation between sense and force. (p. 79)

Leech (1983) argues that the CP fails to account for the reason people often are indirect when communicating with others and what relation governs sense and force when dealing with non-declarative sentences. He also claims that the CP cannot “stand up to the evidence of real language use” (p. 80).

Davis (1998) discusses Grice’s (1975) theory and reaches the conclusion that “Grice’s virtual discovery of implicature was a major achievement, a breakthrough in linguistics and philosophy of language. Nevertheless, his theory of implicature [...] is a near-complete failure” (p. 1). Davis’ criticism is based mainly on the assumptions that, first, Grice’s theory produces improper predictions as well as proper ones. Second, the conversational principles do not have enough power to derive precise implicature. Third, conversational implicatures work even in the absence of validity conditions (co-operation and mutuality of knowledge) which are necessary for their existence.

Grice (1975) himself insists on the universality of his Co-operative Principle, depending basically on rational behavior, whether it is verbal or non-verbal. Such a claim does not go without challenge cross-culturally, especially by non-Anglo-Saxon scholars. Matsumoto (1989), a Japanese linguist, for example, questions the alleged universal applicability of the CP to languages such as Japanese, where the social context coupled with the complex system of honorifics do not have enough space in the theory:

Grice's theory of conversation, which is based on the propositional content of utterances, fails to explain the salient characteristics of conversations in Japanese, in which the social context of an utterance (the speaker's attitude towards the referents and situation and towards the interlocutors) is necessarily lexically encoded in any type of conversational exchange, and a specific form is expected by the participants to be used in the given situation. (p. 215)

Sifianou (1992), also challenges the Co-operative Principle and its maxims, in particular, its alleged universality, arguing that

A number of linguists have challenged Grice's maxims on a variety of grounds, especially as far as informativeness (maxim of quantity), truthfulness (maxim of quality), and their purported universality are concerned. However, the question which I would like to consider concerning the Gricean conversational maxims is their alleged universality. (p. 16)

However, although Grice's (1975) work has been severely criticized by some researchers, it is considered by many others as a work of continued relevance and power. Brown and Levinson (1987), for example, maintain, in support of the validity of the model, that "Grice's theory of conversational implicature and the framework of maxims that give rise to such implicatures is essentially correct" (p. 3).

Although Grice's Co-operative Principle and its associated maxims have been criticized by some researchers, it is quite reasonable to acknowledge the fact that Grice's work is a milestone on linguistic pragmatics and current criticism does not undermine its significance as a theory of conversation. It has inspired many linguists and triggered many new insights. As a consequence of Grice's work, new approaches to language studies, such as those of Lakoff (1973), Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) and Leech (1983), have emerged which constitute the basis for many studies carried out on politeness from a cross-

cultural perspective. These contributions will be discussed in some detail in the following pages.

2.1.3 Lakoff's Rules of Politeness

Lakoff (1973) was among the first to draw on Grice's Co-operative Principle, with some expansion, as a basis on which to set up rules for studying politeness phenomena. She expanded the notion of grammatical rules as well as the notion of well-formedness to the area of pragmatics (Fraser, 1990; Marquez-Reiter, 2000; Watts, 2003). She argues in this regard that "we should like to have some kind of pragmatic rules, dictating whether an utterance is pragmatically well-formed or not, and the extent to which it deviates if it does" (Lakoff, 1973, p. 296).

To account for deviant utterances which can be considered as ill-formed from neither a syntactic nor a semantic viewpoint, Lakoff (1973) proposes two rules to constitute the basis of what she called "pragmatic competence" (Fraser, 1990; Marquez-Reiter, 2000; Sifianou, 1992):

1. Be Clear
2. Be Polite

(Lakoff, 1973, p. 303)

While the first rule "Be Clear" seems to be Gricean in origin, as it states that the person should say what he wants to say clearly and properly, the second rule seems to be in conflict with the first one. This is because people quite often violate the rule of clarity in order not to be seen as impolite. They perform speech acts such as requests indirectly when communicating with other people where the social distance is high in order not to be coercive, hence, sacrificing the rule of clarity for the sake of politeness. Lakoff (1973) maintains that there is an apparent conflict between the two rules. She argues that if the main concern is directed towards conveying a certain message straightforwardly, then the focus will be on clarity. However, if the main concern is to establish a harmonious relationship with H and avoid coercion, then politeness prevails.

Lakoff (1973) associated her second rule “Be Polite” with a set of sub-rules to account for the pragmatic well-formedness of utterances. These are:

- R1. Don’t impose. (Distance)
- R2. Give options. (Deference)
- R3. Make A feel good – be friendly. (Camaraderie)

Lakoff (1973) argues that these rules exist in every culture, but cultures may differ in showing preference for one over another. She states in support of this viewpoint:

I am claiming here that these rules are universal. But customs vary. ... What I think happens in case two cultures differ in their interpretation of the politeness of an action or an utterance, is that they have the same three rules, but different orders of precedence for these rules.

(Lakoff, 1973, p. 303)

Lakoff (1973) begins her rules with formal politeness “Don’t impose” in which distance and formality are always associated with such types of politeness. Then, she moves to less formal or informal politeness “Give options”, where deference is the salient feature of such types of politeness. The third rule “Make A feel good – be friendly” indicates intimacy towards the addressee, where linguistic politeness encodes expressions that satisfy the hearer’s wants of being liked and desired (Sifianou, 1992; Watts, 2003).

Although Lakoff’s work on politeness was looked at as a pioneering contribution, it was subjected to serious criticism by many scholars. Brown and Levinson (1987), for example, support studying politeness phenomena in terms of strategies, but, at the same time, reject the notion of rules. They argue that studying politeness in terms of rules can be fruitful only with ritualized speech acts such as greetings. However, generalizing such an analysis to other speech acts is problematic.

Sifianou (1992) argues that the problem with Lakoff’s rules of politeness stems from the definitions of the expressions constituting those rules. They are not sufficiently clearly and neatly defined to avoid misinterpretation. Formality does not always show

politeness, nor is an aloof person always polite, especially in Greek society. Also, giving a person options is not always taken as an indication of expressing deference.

Sifianou (1992), like Fraser (1990), also articulates her dissatisfaction with Lakoff's claim that all Grice's maxims of conversation can be put under the rule of clarity. Such a claim, Sifianou argues, is "perhaps wishful thinking" (p. 23). When the teacher, the lawyer and the doctor practice their everyday communications, they do not always pay attention to politeness. Leech (1983) maintains that some speech acts involve politeness while others do not. For instance, greeting, thanking and demanding involve politeness while announcing, reporting and threatening seem to be neutral in terms of politeness.

2.1.4 Leech's Maxims of Politeness

In an attempt to set up what is known as "general pragmatics", Leech's (1983) principal concern with linguistic politeness phenomena constitutes a significant part of this contribution (Watts, 2003). This can be viewed as the study of "the general conditions of the communicative use of language" (Leech, 1983, p. 10). Besides general pragmatics, Leech postulates the existence of two other systems namely: "pragmalinguistics" which is defined as "the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions" and "socio-pragmatics" which is concerned with the specific "local conditions of language use" (Leech, 1983, p. 11).

To study general pragmatics, Leech (1983) draws on the rhetorical approach, which he views as "the effective use of language in its most general sense, applying it primarily to everyday conversation, and only secondarily to more prepared and public uses of language" (p. 15). Within the rhetorical approach, Leech makes a distinction between "textual rhetoric", consisting of "Processibility Principle", "Clarity Principle", "Economy Principle" and "Expressive Principle"; and "interpersonal rhetoric", consisting of "Co-operative Principle (CP)", "Politeness Principle (PP)" and "Irony Principle" (p. 16).

Leech (1983), like Lakoff (1973), expands on Grice's (1975) Co-operative Principle to find plausible solutions for some problems raised by the Co-operative Principle, such as why people often tend to be indirect when conveying a certain message (Fraser, 1990; Marquez-Reiter, 2000; Sifianou, 1992). He considers politeness to be the

key pragmatic phenomenon for conveying messages indirectly and one of the reasons for flouting the Co-operative Principle.

Since politeness is considered to be a major pragmatic factor regulating social interactions, Leech (1983) proposes a thorough and detailed description of the politeness model based on the concept of maxims, hence, following Grice's (1975) work of maxims. Each is associated with specific types of illocutionary acts (Kasper, 1990), and consists of two sub-maxims which function as social regulators governing the relationship between self and other. For the purpose of clarification, I have reproduced these maxims and sub-maxims below as they appear in Leech's work:

- (I) Tact Maxim (in impositives and commissives)
 - (a) Minimize cost to other
 - (b) Maximize benefit to other
- (II) Generosity Maxim (in impositives and commissives)
 - (a) Minimize benefit to self
 - (b) Maximize cost to self
- (III) Approbation Maxim (in expressives and assertives)
 - (a) Minimize dispraise of other
 - (b) Maximize praise of other
- (IV) Modesty Maxim (in expressives and assertives)
 - (a) Minimize praise of self
 - (b) Maximize dispraise of self
- (V) Agreement Maxim (in assertives)
 - (a) Minimize disagreement between self and other
 - (b) Maximize agreement between self and other
- (VI) Sympathy Maxim (in assertives)
 - (a) Minimize antipathy between self and other
 - (b) Maximize sympathy between self and other

(Leech, 1983, p. 132)

If we carefully scrutinize the above maxims and sub-maxims, we cannot fail to notice that a core concept of Leech's (1983) model is the cost-benefit scale which determines the relationship between a speaker and a hearer. The speaker is seeking either to minimize the cost or maximize the benefit to the self or to the other.

Leech (1983) also distinguishes between two types of speech acts: speech acts that are intrinsically impolite such as requests and orders, and those that are intrinsically polite such as thanks and offers. By putting forward this proposition, Leech conceptualizes negative politeness as a way of diminishing the impoliteness of impolite illocutions and conceptualizes positive politeness as a way of increasing the politeness of polite illocutions (Fraser, 1990; Marquez-Reiter, 2000; Sifianou, 1992).

What is similar between Grice (1975) and Leech (1983) is the notion of disparity among the maxims. While the maxim of tact seems to be powerful, the maxim of generosity does not operate as powerfully. The same seems to be true for the approbation maxim, which is evaluated as more important than the modesty maxim. However, Leech acknowledges cross-cultural differences in this regard arguing that different cultures may vary in their value judgments, placing more emphasis on one or another of the maxims. While Mediterranean cultures, for example, consider the generosity maxim far more important than the tact maxim, Western cultures lay more emphasis on the tact maxim.

Although Leech's (1983) maxims of politeness have significantly contributed to the study of linguistic politeness, they have been criticized by some researchers on different bases. Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that "If we are permitted to invent a maxim for every regularity in language use, not only will we have an infinite number of maxims, but pragmatic theory will be too unconstrained to permit the recognition of any counter-examples" (p. 4). Classifying speech acts as intrinsically polite or impolite constitutes a challenge to Leech's model of politeness. Fraser (1990), for example, argues that "the problem arises because he asserts that particular types of illocutions are, ipso facto, polite or impolite. While the performance of an illocutionary act can be so evaluated, the same cannot be said of the act itself" (p. 227).

Not only has Leech's (1983) model of politeness been criticized with respect to the number of maxims and the notion of intrinsically (im)polite acts, but it has also been

accused of repeating the ideas of previous researchers. Atawneh (1991), for example, accused Leech of repeating the same ideas, arguing that

This PP and its maxims seem to make a good model. However, the question is: whether Leech has offered something new and different from previous models or he has only changed the names and kept the same basic notions of politeness. (p. 52)

In addition, Atawneh (1991) argues that the scale of directness presented by Leech (1983) is “another way of representing the choice of the linguistic structure based on the degree of risk involved in the imposition as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987)” (p. 52). Moreover, Atawneh maintains that the politeness principles and the maxims and submaxims in Leech’s model of politeness are better represented as “face wants in the theory of Brown and Levinson” (p. 54). Watts (2003) states that the notion of hearer authority in Leech’s model, for example, which plays a role in assessing the cost/benefit value of the tact maxim is similar to the Brown and Levinson (1987) social variable power.

Wierzbicka (1990) suggests that some of Leech’s (1983) maxims reflect anglocentricism, in particular the “approbation maxim”, where Leech (1983) states that by maximizing praise of others politeness is communicated (p. 132). It might be argued that empirical evidence from Palestinian culture suggests that this is not always true. Praising someone in his or her presence, in many situations, is looked at suspiciously as it can appear to lack sincerity and might cause the person to lose face. This is deeply engrained in Palestinian culture and referred to by expressions such as *almadih fi alwajih šateema*, meaning “praising someone in his presence is an offence”. Although praising is very important in Palestinian culture, it is commonly performed only in presence of others who know the person.

The validity of the generosity maxim, which Leech (1983) maintains works well in Mediterranean cultures, is questionable in Palestinian culture. The example “We must come and have dinner with you” is classified by Leech as impolite, however, in Palestinian culture it is considered a very polite response to show closeness and enhance intimacy. It is very common among in-groupers to invite themselves to each others’ houses to have a drink or share food. A person may phone his friend saying “I’ll invite myself to have a cup of coffee with you tonight”. Very often, the hearer will respond by saying “A cup of coffee

is not good. Since you are coming, let's have dinner together". Sharing food or drink with another person is considered as a silent way of uncovering emotions and passing a message, "We respect you; we love seeing and talking to you; you are a nice person".

2.1.5 Brown and Levinson's Theory of Politeness

Brown and Levinson's (1987) linguistic politeness theory (face-saving model) is based on, and influenced by, Goffman's (1967) notion of face as well as the English folk term. They maintain in this regard that "our notion of 'face' is derived from that of Goffman and the English folk term, which ties face up with notions of being embarrassed or humiliated, or losing face" (p. 61). The best place to begin our sketch of the underpinning assumptions of Brown and Levinson's face model is by seeing how the authors themselves state their position.

The central point in politeness theory is what Brown and Levinson (1987) call a "Model Person" (MP) which is defined as a "willful fluent speaker of a natural language" (p. 58). Every MP, according to Brown and Levinson, is endowed with what is termed "face" and "rationality" (p. 58). Face is defined as "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (p. 61). Rationality refers to the application of a specific "mode of reasoning from ends to the means that will achieve those ends" (p. 58).

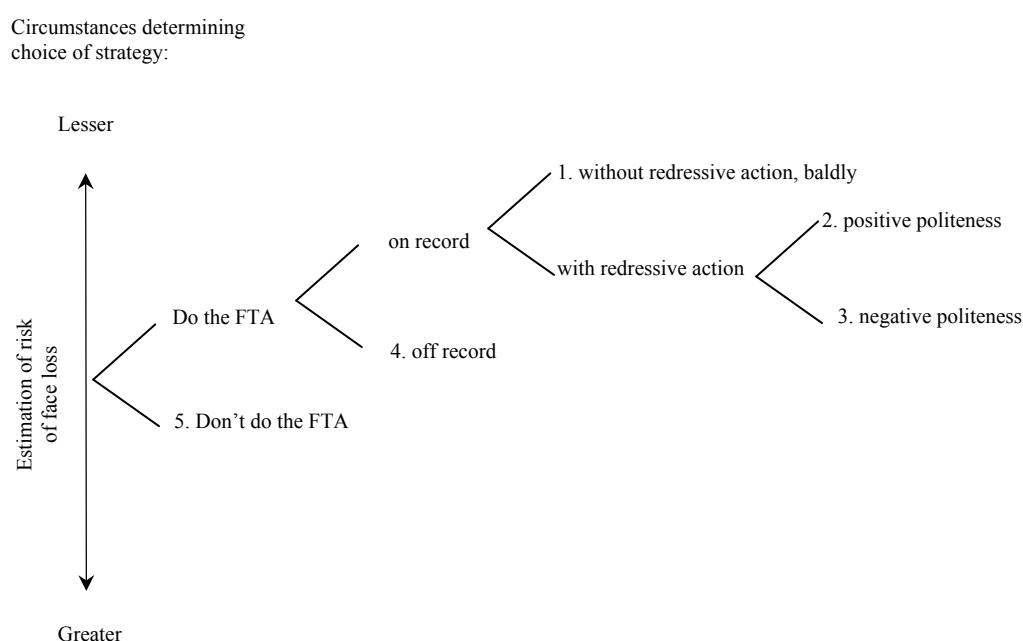
Like Goffman (1967), who pictures face-saving as the "traffic rules of social interaction" (p. 12), Brown and Levinson (1987) are also aware of the important role of face in carrying out an interaction. Since face may be threatened, according to Brown and Levinson, it is the interactants' mutual responsibility to co-operate in face-saving during an encounter, as the speaker's face and the hearer's face are potentially vulnerable to threat. Hence, the need for face-saving procedures is essential to minimize threat to face and for carrying out an interaction and preventing a potential breakdown as "our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks" (Grice, 1991, p. 307).

As far as face is concerned, Brown and Levinson (1987) treat it as "basic wants" instead of "norms or values" because every member in the society knows in general the desires of other members (p. 62). They also distinguish two different aspects of face: negative face, which is defined as "the want of every competent adult member that his

actions be unimpeded by others” and “positive face” which is defined as “the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others” (p. 62). Moreover, Brown and Levinson assume that certain kinds of speech acts are intrinsically face threatening. They subsume face-threatening acts (henceforth FTAs) into acts which threaten negative face such as “orders”, “requests”, “offers” and “promises” and acts which threaten positive face such as “expressions of disapproval”, “criticism”, “accusation” and “insults” (p. 66).

2.1.5.1 Strategies for doing FTAs

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), all rational agents choose to do FTAs with certain redressive strategies in accordance with the type and cost of the FTAs in a particular society. A list of different strategies for saving face once a speaker intends to do any FTA is proposed by Brown and Levinson. To fully conceptualize how those strategies work, it is best to quote the schema put forward by Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 60).



According to Brown and Levinson (1987), one can choose a bald on-record strategy without redress to do an act A in the following situations: First, if both the addresser and the addressee implicitly agree that face wants should be sacrificed in favor of personal interests. This is best manifested in cases of urgency or efficiency. Second, when feeling that the cost of FTA is expected to be very small, H’s face is not vulnerable to

threat. Finally, where the variable Power (P) is in favor of speaker over hearer, S's face is not lost in case of doing an FTA.

One might choose to do FTAs by employing positive politeness strategies to minimize the seriousness of any potential face damage. Positive politeness is envisaged as "approach-based" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 70) and it is directed towards H's positive face. It maintains H's face by claiming that S likes what H likes. This can be fulfilled by treating H as a person who is very close to S or both belong to the same social group or, in general, both share the same interests. Brown and Levinson (1987) identify 15 positive politeness strategies for doing FTAs. For further information on politeness strategies see Brown and Levinson (1987, pp. 103-129).

One might choose to do FTAs by utilizing negative politeness strategies. Generally speaking, negative politeness strategies are directed towards H's negative face and they are described as "avoidance-based" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 70). In other words, S is aware of H's wants and does his best to avoid transgressing into H's territory. Actions used to satisfy H's negative face are approached via apologizing to the hearer, paying him deference, impersonalization, hedges or by giving hearer an "out" to let him or her get the impression that it is not obligatory to do or refrain from doing an action. For more information on doing politeness with negative politeness strategies, see Brown and Levinson (1987, pp. 129- 211).

Finally, doing an act off-record entails doing it indirectly to escape any direct responsibility of doing FTAs. Uttering, for example, "It is cold today" can be used as an indirect request to switch on the heater. Generally speaking, an off-record strategy is employed when the cost of FTAs is seen to be high. The linguistic realizations employed to do FTAs using an off-record strategy can be quoted as "metaphor and irony, rhetorical questions, understatement, tautology, all kinds of hints" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 69). For further information on off-record strategies, see Brown and Levinson (1987, pp. 211-227).

2.1.5.2 The sociological variables for assessing the seriousness of FTAs

To assess the cost of any potential FTA, Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 74) introduce three sociological dimensions, namely:

1. The ‘social distance’ (D) of S and H (a symmetric relation).
2. The relative ‘power’ (P) of S and H (an asymmetric relation).
3. The absolute ranking (R) of impositions in the particular culture.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), these sociological variables operate independently on the one hand, and they are seen to be interconnected on the other. In order to illustrate the independence of each variable, each can be taken separately, assuming that only the variable under investigation is changeable while the other two variables are held constant.

On measuring the sociological dimension D, we assume the consistency of the other two dimensions P and R. Let’s consider two utterances that may be uttered in the same situation,

1. Excuse me, would you by any chance have the time?
2. Got the time mate?

(Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 80)

Considering the above examples, we notice the formality of the first example and hence assume that S and H are complete strangers and the gap between them on the D scale is wide enough to the degree that it imposes a formal linguistic expression with mitigating devices such as “excuse me” and “would you by any chance”. However, in the second example, the degree of intimacy is very high and, as a result, the social distance is very low. Therefore, the cost of the FTA is minimized by the word “mate” which indicates that both S and H know each other well or they belong to the same social group.

Considering the second sociological dimension Power, we can assume the invariability of the other two dimensions: Distance and Ranking of the Imposition.

However, the variable Power is not constant. For the purpose of illustration, consider the following examples:

3. Excuse me sir, would it be all right if I smoke?

4. Mind if I smoke?

(Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 80)

In Example 3, the seriousness of the FTA seems to be very high due to asymmetric power relation between S and H. The authority of H over S necessitates the use of extra softening linguistic devices such as “Excuse me”, “sir” and “would it be all right” to lessen the seriousness of the FTA. However, the linguistic structure of Example 4 articulates the power of S over H to the degree that S does not care or think of saving H’s face. Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that such an example might be uttered by a boss in the presence of an employee.

Turning to the third sociological dimension, the Ranking of Imposition in a particular culture (R), we assume, in the same way, the consistency of the variables D and P, where the R variable remains unstable in the following examples:

5. Look, I’m terribly sorry to bother you but would there be any chance of your lending me just enough money to get a railway ticket to get home? I must have dropped my purse and I just don’t know what to do.

6. Hey, got change for a quarter?

(Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 81)

Both the examples above might be uttered by the same person who is out of money in the same situation to a stranger. In Example 5 the speaker considers the seriousness of the FTA is very great, therefore, the language chosen should be in accordance with the weight of the FTA. In contrast, in Example 6 the speaker considers the cost of the FTA is lower. Consequently, the language chosen is in line with the degree of threat posed by the FTA. Brown and Levinson (1987) comment on the above examples arguing that:

Our conclusion is that in the ranking of the imposition in Anglo-American culture, asking for a substantial amount of money without recompense is much more of an imposition than a request to search in one's pockets for change. In each case above, the first option ... is a linguistic realization of the negative-politeness strategy, and the second ... is a realization of the positive politeness strategy. (p. 81)

Depending on the value of the sociological variables, Power, Distance and Ranking of the Imposition, Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 76) introduced the following formula to calculate the cost of FTAs:

$$W_x = D(S,H) + P(H,S) + R_x$$

The formula says that W_x is the numerical value that measures the cost of any FTA in a particular society, simply by means of an additive process of the value of the social variables D , P and R , where D measures the social distance between S and H ; for example, the social distance between family members or close friends is always low, whereas distance is high between strangers. P measures the power of H over S , whether this power is gained from authority, social status or profession. R measures the seriousness of any FTA in a particular society. In other words, R measures the degree of imposition associated with a certain speech act. Commenting on the formula, Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that "By D and P we intend very general pan-cultural social dimensions which nevertheless probably have 'emic' correlates. We are not here interested in what factors are compounded to estimate these complex parameters; such factors are certainly culture specific" (p. 76).

2.1.5.3 Critique of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness

Despite its remarkable contribution to the area of linguistic pragmatics, Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model has been subjected to criticism by many researchers, especially those who do not have an Anglo-Saxon background. Most of the early criticism has been generated by Japanese and Chinese researchers working in the field of linguistic politeness. Brown and Levinson distinguish between two face-wants: positive face-wants and negative face-wants. It is the concept of negative face that has been criticized most, on the basis that the negative face mentioned in the theory is concerned with individual face

wants while in cultures such as Chinese and Japanese the individual's face is considered less important than the group's face.

Matsumoto (1988), a Japanese linguist, was among the first researchers to question the universality of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. Her main objection was based (as stated by Pizziconi, 2003) on two central points. First, the concept of self as viewed by Brown and Levinson (1987) is different from the one viewed by Japanese people. Contrary to Anglo-Saxon cultures, in Japanese culture, individuals are not independent but are part of a social network. Therefore, unlike Western people, the need to be free from action and free from imposition is not a priority for Japanese people, but rather, interdependency and creating "smooth harmonious relations with others" are valued (Pizziconi, 2003, p. 1475). Since, according to Matsumoto, individuals have different need-orientations, the need to protect the negative face, as it is envisaged by Western people, is alien to the Japanese.

Second, Matsumoto (1989) questions the alleged need for polite behavior, as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), that is, to minimize face-threatening acts in Japanese culture. She argues, like Haugh (2007) and Ide (1989), that the need to express polite behavior in Japanese culture is not to minimize a threat to face but rather to place the person in his or her right position in relation to other people. That is to say, the verbal forms of politeness employed only when performing a certain speech act to minimize the imposition has no room in Japanese culture. Matsumoto summarizes her argument in the following way:

A close relation between politeness and one's desire to save face is likely in any culture. Yet evidence from Japanese makes it questionable to assume that the given universal definition of face can provide the right predictions of Japanese politeness phenomena. It is not simply that the Japanese focus on only one of the constituents of 'face' (positive or negative) but that the nature of 'face' and the underlying motivation for the use of 'polite expressions' cannot be subsumed under the supposed universal assumptions of Brown and Levinson. (Matsumoto, 1989, p. 219)

Matsumoto (1989) also argues that, in contrast to English, neutral utterances regarding social context are not found in Japanese. In a similar vein, Ide (1989) states that the use of honorific or non-honorific forms is not optional in Japanese, but is rather "the socio-pragmatic equivalent of grammatical concord", and is therefore, governed by social

rules (p. 243). Matsumoto also points out that expressing politeness in Japanese is not achieved through additional expressions to the basic utterance, but the structure of the sentence necessitates the choice of certain types of linguistic elements in accordance with the social context. Hence, she concludes that “alternatively, we could redefine ‘face’ so that all utterances in Japanese could be considered as intrinsically face-threatening” (p. 219). Bearing in mind the cross-cultural differences between the English language and the Japanese language, Matsumoto (1989) argues that the existing discrepancies between Brown and Levinson’s (1987) model of face and the Japanese honorific system can be partly attributed to the differences in the “motivations underlying the manifestation of politeness” (p. 207).

Ide (1989) criticized Brown & Levinson’s (1987) linguistic theory for its inability to account for politeness phenomena encoded in the Japanese honorific system. She argues that Brown and Levinson’s (1987) claim of universality cannot be upheld. Ide (1989) distinguishes two types of linguistic politeness, namely: “discernment, realized mainly by the use of formal linguistic forms” and “volition, realized mainly by verbal strategies” (p. 232). She also points out that politeness in Japanese can be achieved by employing formal means or verbal strategies or both. However, it is the formal form (discernment), according to Ide, that is disregarded by Brown & Levinson’s face model.

Gu (1990), in a study of politeness phenomena in modern Chinese, argues that, face is an important element in politeness and being polite necessitates being able to maintain face. He also maintains that the relationship between politeness and face is a means-to-end one. Since one’s face is threatened, it is politeness that is used to mitigate the threat. This means that all FTAs cause damage to one’s face. Consequently, they are all impolite. To account for the discrepancies between the Chinese codes of politeness and the ones identified by Brown and Levinson, Gu compares some English linguistic behaviors with their Chinese counterparts:

Excuse me
Forgive me
Pardon me
Accept my thanks

(Gu, 1990, p. 241)

Gu argues that, Brown & Levinson (1987) classified the above linguistic acts as bald-on-record acts, on the one hand, and acts that threaten H's negative face on the other. However, "Chinese equivalents are on the contrary intrinsically polite acts" (Gu, 1990, p. 241). Gu concludes that Brown & Levinson's face models fails to account for the concept of face in Chinese on the assumption that, first, the Chinese concept of negative face seems to be different from the one identified by Brown and Levinson. Second, Brown & Levinson overlook the "normative aspect of politeness" (p. 242), which in Chinese culture governs individuals' linguistic behavior as well as their talk sequences during an encounter. Hence, Gu concludes that "Brown and Levinson's model is not suitable for Chinese data" (p. 241).

Mao (1994) also conducted a study to ascertain the extent to which the Chinese components of face – *mianzi* which represents social perceptions of a person status or self-esteem, and *lian* which is associated with social conduct and moral integrity – are in line with Brown & Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness. He stressed the idiosyncrasy of the two components of the Chinese face arguing that "face does not have to be considered as the sole prerogative of the individual. Insofar as Chinese *mianzi* and *lian* are concerned, face is a public property" (p. 469). In short, contrary to Brown & Levinson's (1987) face model which perpetuates face as public self image, Chinese face is conceived as public image and is, therefore, on loan to the individual from society. Consequently, one is required to show complete compliance with the norms and rules legalized and endorsed by the society.

What seem to be remarkable features of *mianzi* and *lian* are not merely exclusive to the Chinese face. Other cultures such as Iranian, according to Koutlaki (2002), have something in common with the face articulated by Mao (1994) and others. The two components of Iranian face, "pride" and "honour" (p. 1733), communicate something different from the one identified by Brown and Levinson (1987). Such a difference emerges from cross-cultural variables. In Iranian culture, as stated by Koutlaki (2002), the prevalent social norm relies on interdependence, whereas in Brown & Levinson's (1987) image of Anglo-Saxon culture, individuality and dependence are prevalent.

Koutlaki (2002) argues that not only does the difference lie in the conceptualization of face, but it also extends to encompass the speech acts under investigation: offers and

thanks. While Brown & Levinson (1987) classify linguistic expressions such as offers as acts that threaten hearer's negative face, and subcategorize expressions of thanks as acts that threaten speaker's positive face, expressions indicating offers and expressions of thanks are utilized in Iranian culture to enhance one's face rather than threaten face as speakers use them to "express their recognition of and adherence to socially sanctioned rules" (Koutlaki, 2002, p. 1734).

The concept of negative face in Brown and Levinson's (1987) face model does not appeal to Nwoye (1992). In his discussion of the notion of face in Nigerian Igbo society, Nwoye maintains that the Igbo face and the one identified by Brown and Levinson's (1987) are completely different. Where Igbo face is concerned with the group's image, Brown and Levinson's (1987) concept of face is concerned with the individual's image.

From the above discussion, it is clear that the major challenges to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory arise from the idea of negative face. Many researchers have claimed that Brown and Levinson (1987) have a "strong anglocentric bias" (Wierzbicka, 1990, pp 44-45). Wierzbicka (1990) has also argued that the concept of negative face and positive face as presented by Brown and Levinson shows clearly the authors' anglocentric bias.

However, although the Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness has been criticized by some researchers, it is considered the most influential and widely used theory of politeness. This is clearly stated by many researchers such as Watts (2003) who argues that "Brown and Levinson's work will undoubtedly continue to exert as much influence on research into the subject in the coming years as it has in the past" (p. 10). Chen (2001) and Magnusson (1999) consider it as a breakthrough and a vigorous theory for studying linguistic politeness. Muehleisen and Migge (2005) argue that "politeness phenomena have become a fruitful field of linguistic research ever since Brown and Levinson's (1987) classic study on the subject" (p. 1). It could be argued that the controversy over Brown and Levinson's politeness theory does not in any way degrade or vitiate the theory, but rather opens the door for more studies to be conducted and for new perspectives to be explored.

2.2 Cross-cultural studies on linguistic politeness

According to Uk-ky (2008) the fundamental principle of politeness is to “preserve harmony by showing good intentions and consideration for the feelings of others” (p. 1). Therefore, every culture and language develops a linguistic system that enables speakers of that language to communicate effectively. Allan (2001) maintains that “whether or not language was motivated and developed for this purpose, its grammar is certainly influenced by the fact it is a means of social interaction, a means of revealing one’s thoughts and perceptions to others” (p. 3). In the process of carrying out social interaction, people communicating interculturally produce polite utterances, impolite utterances and neutral utterances. However, when people of different cultures communicate with each other, cultural differences emerge as a result of employing different codes of politeness.

Since the appearance of Brown and Levinson’s (1978, 1987) work on cross-cultural politeness phenomena, many cross-cultural pragmatic studies have taken place, aiming at exploring differences in various speech acts. Among the most respected studies is the one conducted by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989), which is widely known as “Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project” (CCSARP), where the politeness strategies employed by native and non-native speakers were investigated. Sifianou’s (1992) work on British English and Greek politeness phenomena became more widely known after it had been published in book-form by Oxford University Press. Other cross-cultural studies have become more and more accessible as journal articles or doctoral dissertations. For example, Atawneh (1991) studied requestive strategies in Palestinian Arabic and American English. Delgado (1994) studied the directive speech in the linguistic performance of Colombians, Castillian Spanish and U.S. English. Mulken (1996) studied politeness markers in French and Dutch requests.

Since the current study is investigating politeness phenomena in Palestinian and Australian drama, a special emphasis will be laid on studies conducted in these cultures in order to explore diverse politeness strategies in different settings. Many cross-cultural studies will also be investigated briefly in order to obtain a deeper understanding about the politeness strategies employed and the potential cultural differences that might cause misunderstanding. It is worth mentioning that, being a multicultural community, Australian culture provides rich soil for cross-cultural studies on politeness when compared to

Palestinian culture. While I have had access to only one study on politeness in Palestinian society, I have had access to several studies conducted on Australian English. Following Béal's (1990) classification of the major causes of cross-cultural socio-pragmatic failure, two problems were identified, namely: "differences in politeness strategies", and "differences in the assessment of what constitutes a face-threatening act" (p. 19).

2.2.1 Differences on politeness strategies

Although Brown and Levinson (1987) claimed the universality of the concept of face and the politeness strategies employed to minimize threat to face, those strategies are sometimes considered as a source of sociopragmatic failure across cultures. What is considered polite in one culture or situation is perceived differently by another. Goffman (1967) is completely aware of this, arguing that "each person, subculture, and society seems to have its own characteristic repertoire of face-saving practices" (p. 13). The same view is upheld by Allan and Burridge (2006) who argue that "what counts as courteous behaviour varies between human groups" (p. 29). Since politeness is so strongly implicated in social behaviour, we expect cross-cultural differences and social differences among individuals belonging to the same social group because the linguistic strategies employed are based on the interlocutor's socio-cultural background.

According to Atawneh (1991), speakers of Palestinian Arabic and American English showed different cultural-orientations in terms of the politeness strategies employed. While speakers of Palestinian Arabic showed a preference for positive politeness strategies, speakers of American English preferred negative politeness strategies. Similar orientations towards different politeness strategies were reported by Sifianou (1992) who argued that Greeks used positive politeness strategies more than British who preferred negative politeness strategies.

Atawneh (1991) also found differences between speakers of Palestinian Arabic and American English in their usage of negative politeness. He found that Americans preferred indirect conventionalized forms to express politeness which aimed at not imposing on the hearer when performing a request. In contrast, Palestinians preferred other strategies to mitigate requests. For example, using supportive moves – giving reasons or explanations – and apologies were found to be common strategies to mitigate requests. This is very

similar in many respects to French culture. According to Mulken (1996), speakers of French mitigate their requests by using supportive moves, usually in a form of giving reasons or explanations either before or after the request. This finding is similar to that of Béal (1990) that speakers of French go into detail when responding to a request for information, mentioning names of persons and places.

Using supportive moves as a means of conveying politeness is not however the preferred norm of politeness for speakers of Dutch. According to Mulken (1996), Dutch speakers show a preference for lexical downgraders which are usually associated with the head act. Mulken argues that if a Dutch businessman, with a limited proficiency in French communicates with a French counterpart, he or she will transfer his or her communicative habits. Since, in many cases, there is no literal translation for the Dutch internal politeness markers, the speaker is unlikely to employ supportive moves, leaving the head act unmitigated. This means that the Dutch speaker is seen as impolite even when every effort was made to be polite.

In relation to the strategy of “Don’t do the FTA” (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 60), Atawneh (1991) maintains that, in high risk situations, speakers of American English were found to prefer this strategy more than speakers of Palestinian Arabic who increased the number of redressive devices to diffuse the potential threat to face. The use of different politeness strategies between speakers of American English and Palestinian Arabic can be attributed to cultural differences. In Palestinian culture, silence is negatively evaluated and it is taken as an indication of ignoring the other person which is considered an immoral act, therefore, Palestinians tend to increase the mitigating devices to minimize threat to face. Silence is strongly connected with paying respect to old people. Young people remain silent in the presence of old people to give them the chance to take the first turn in a conversation.

Atawneh (1991) argues that differences in the linguistic systems of speakers of American English and Palestinian Arabic, in particular in the modal systems, were found to be responsible for differences in the degrees of the politeness employed. According to Atawneh, in Arabic, the modal system is less elaborated than that of English. While in English modals can be used either in the present or in the past, in the Arabic language, on the other hand, modals can be only used in the present. For example, in Arabic, the modal

mumkin can be translated as “can”, “could”, “will”, “would”, and “should” (p. 104). In English usage to increase the degree of politeness, speakers, for example may use *could* instead of *can*. However, in Arabic, this is not possible because Arabic speakers cannot use a past morpheme with *mumkin*. Hence, the range of politeness communicated by the two cultural groups will not be the same in similar situations.

Atawneh (1991) also argues that differences in the linguistic system between Arabic and English were found to be responsible for the difference in the relative frequency of occurrence of the politeness marker *please* in the linguistic performance of speakers of Palestinian Arabic and American English. It was found that speakers of Palestinian Arabic used the politeness marker *please* twice as often as speakers of American English because of the influence of the Arabic language. He attributed the reason to the fact that in Palestinian Arabic the expressions “*ʔidha samaht* [if you allow], *ʔidha mumkin* [if possible], *ʔarju(k)* [please], *ʔidha takarramt* [if you be generous]” can all function as “please” in English (Atawneh, 1991, p. 203). Therefore, speakers of Palestinian Arabic transferred their expressions into English.

In a study investigating the linguistic behaviour of speakers of French and speakers of Australian English, Béal (1990) found that speakers of Australian English and speakers of French used different politeness strategies when formulating requests. This was considered as a major cause of clash between the two groups. Under the general heading of negative politeness, speakers of Australian English and French showed different orientations. While speakers of Australian English showed a preference for indirectness, speakers of French used a strategy identified by Brown and Levinson as “impersonalize speaker and hearer”, where the speech act is performed by avoiding the pronouns “I” and “you” which directly refer to S and H (p. 190).

To explain cross-cultural differences in using different politeness strategies between speakers of Australian English and French, Béal (1990) reported a clash between a French employee and an Australian secretary, who was offended and nearly refused to type an urgent document sent by the director via the French employee. Investigating the speech situation, according to Béal, it was found that the way the secretary was addressed by the French employee was the reason for the clash. The French employee clearly said to

the secretary “this has to be done immediately” (p. 20). If the structure of the request is considered, it becomes very obvious that the request has been carried out baldly without mitigation and, therefore, sounds abrupt and impolite from the secretary’s point of view. In Australian English, in such a situation, requests most often are carried out indirectly. However, in French culture, since the request is not personal, as stated by Béal (1990), “this is not me asking, the order comes from above, it is me and you versus the system” (p. 20), it can be carried out directly without mitigation.

Interestingly, according to Béal (1990), it is not only speakers of Australian English who find it hard to accept the French habit of requesting, but some speakers of French also find the request “would you mind doing this for me” irritating (p. 20). The reason, according to Béal, is that speakers of French do not make requests personal and find it hard to accept the acknowledgment of debt encoded in the request, in particular, when it comes to the phrase “for me” (p. 20).

Cultural differences also arise between speakers of French and Australian English when showing different orientations to politeness strategies. In Brown and Levinson’s (1987) terminology, the employment of “positive politeness strategies” versus “negative politeness strategies” was found to be a source of clash. The cultural habit connected with such strategies is that of approaching other people in their territories. Béal (1990) maintains that speakers of Australian English typically followed the same “pattern of rules” when invading someone’s territory with a request (p. 21). They often make their presence known by making a throat-clearing noise, or by apologizing and/or calling the person by his or her name. It is then the addressee who responds by saying “yes” or “mmm?” (Béal, 1990, p. 22) which is interpreted as a signal for the person to ask his or her question. In other words, it is the intruder’s responsibility to pacify the person being annoyed.

However, speakers of French follow completely different interactional habits when approaching someone in a working area. According to Béal (1990), speakers of French consider a working area as a common ground shared by all workers, so, they can enter any opened door without constraint. What is different for Australians is that it is the person being approached who should make the first move and establish eye contact in order to give the person an impression that he or she is not an intruder. Béal argues that this

“acknowledgement constraint” is a feature of positive politeness (p. 23). Failure to establish eye contact, when one is aware of other people’s presence to his or her office, is considered to be rude. Tension and misunderstandings arise when speakers of French transfer their interactional habits and appear to intrude on speakers of Australian English in their offices.

Béal (1990) also found differences between speakers of French and Australian English in the request exchange. Speakers of French were found to use features of positive politeness such as “elliptical forms”, “colloquial lexical items” and “cooperative overlap” (p. 24). They were also found to make frequent overlap as soon as they could guess the final part of an exchange. Such an overlap, according to Béal, is used as a “way of sharing interest and enthusiasm” (p. 25), in Brown and Levinson’s (1987) terms, it is a kind of positive politeness. However, for speakers of Australian English such an overlap hinders communication as it runs contrary to the Anglo-Saxon habits of communication where one speaker commonly pauses before another takes his turn.

Cross-cultural differences in using politeness strategies between speakers of Australian English and Chileans were found to be a source of misunderstanding and consequently a source of sociopragmatic failure. According to Cordella (1991), Chileans used positive politeness strategies to perform the speech act of apology. In contrast, speakers of Australian English used negative politeness. It was found that an apology in Spanish is used to strengthen solidarity between interlocutors, whereas, in Australian culture harmony can be achieved by avoiding imposing on the hearer. In Brown and Levinson’s (1987) terms, this is seen as a negative politeness strategy.

In a study investigating politeness in British English and Japanese, Fukushima (1996) revealed that differences in using politeness strategies were realized in the linguistic performance of speakers of British English and Japanese. Speakers of British English were found to prefer indirect strategies in situations whereas speakers of Japanese were inclined to use direct strategies. Fukushima attributed the differences between the two groups to perception of in-group and out-group relationships. In other words, the two groups value the social distance differently. For British speakers, a next-door neighbor in a student’s hall that is not a friend is considered as an out-group member; hence, negative politeness is used. On the other hand, speakers of Japanese consider a neighbor as an in-group member and,

therefore, positive politeness is used to foster solidarity. Atawneh (1991) also points out that speakers of American English were more sensitive to the social distance than speakers of Palestinian Arabic. Therefore, in situations where the social distance between speaker and hearer was great, speakers of American English used different politeness strategies and more redressive devices than speakers of Palestinian Arabic who opted for less mitigating devices or a direct strategy.

Tsuzuki, Takahashi, Patschke and Zhang (2005) found cultural differences in using politeness strategies between speakers of Chinese and American English. They report that the use of imperative forms to perform requests is more conventionalized in Chinese culture than in American society. For Chinese speakers, imperative forms were considered more polite in all the situations investigated when the social distance between interlocutors was low, but this was not so for speakers of American English. As stated by the researchers, this difference reflects different cultural orientations in terms of politeness. While Chinese culture seems to be positively oriented, American culture is negatively oriented. Such cultural differences can cause misunderstanding if not taken into account when doing impositive face-threatening acts by members of the two cultures.

Cultural differences also exist between speakers of Japanese and American English. According to Wierzbicka (1990), the main difference between Japanese and American cultures lies in the direct expression of wishes, preferences and desires. While Anglo-Saxon culture encourages people to state directly what they want, Japanese culture discourages them from doing so. This is very similar to Arab cultures. As stated by Feghali (1997), Arab speakers often mask their “desired wants, needs, or goals during discourse” (p. 358). The cultural differences between Japanese and Americans can be clarified further by considering the following examples:

- 7. JAPANESE don't say: 'I would/wouldn't like (want) this'
- 8. ANGLO-AMERICAN do say: 'I would/wouldn't like (want) this'

(Wierzbicka, 1990, p. 52)

Since it is considered impolite in Japanese culture to state what you would like directly, it is also considered impolite as well to inquire about other people's wishes directly. For

example, saying “Shall I open the window?” is more appropriate than “Would you like me to open the window?” (Wierzbicka, 1990, p. 54). Such cross-cultural differences cause cultural clashes and misunderstandings if they are not taken into consideration when people from Anglo-Saxon cultures communicate with Japanese people.

What is unique and culture-specific about polite verbal interaction seems to be true for non-verbal politeness. To be more specific, the role played by the body language is significant in encoding politeness in many cultures. However, encoding politeness by using body language may be seen as a source of discomfort if it is practiced in another culture. According to Uk-Ky (2008), while bowing in Korean culture, in particular among men, is used to indicate respect, in Australian culture it may be interpreted as “satirical or humorous” (p. 3). It is worth mentioning that bowing in Palestinian culture, when kissing the right hand of the father or the mother was practiced in the past to show respect, but it has disappeared in many families in more recent times.

2.2.2 Cultural differences in assessing face-threatening acts (FTAs)

Cultural differences in evaluating the cost of a certain speech act constitute a main source of tension. According to Béal (1990), French and Australian English speakers assess the same request differently. Speakers of French perceive requests for general information about a person’s whereabouts and borrowing small items from another office as not face threatening. Consequently, such requests are carried out baldly without redress in the form of an imperative or a statement. The difference in the perception of “territory” between speakers of French and Australian English is the most likely reason for the clash. As one French speaker put it “it’s not your pen or your stapler anyway, the company provides them” (Béal, 1990, p. 27).

In another cross-cultural study, Béal (1992) argues that, alongside speech acts such as requests, compliments, greetings, the routinely question “Did you have a good weekend?” (p. 23) can be a source of cross-cultural clash and clearly reflects the different orientations and values in terms of interpersonal communication between the two cultures. According to Béal (1992), speakers of Australian English use the question as a polite routine question, whereas for French speakers, it is a genuine question if there is a close relationship between participants. It is also used as a sign of getting closer to the other

person and a way of showing real interest. Therefore, the answers to the same question are completely different. Australians use short answers without going into any detail; in contrast, speakers of French answer the question in detail, mentioning some personal things. The way in which speakers of Australian English and French answer the same question may lead to a cultural clash and negative stereotyping. Speakers of Australian English accused speakers of French of being “self-centred, forceful and insensitive to other people”. French speakers, on the other hand, accused speakers of Australian English of being indifferent and showing a “lack of sincerity” (p. 25).

Differences in the seriousness of a certain speech act were found to be responsible for differences in apology structures between speakers of American English and speakers of British English, on the one hand, and speakers of Arabic on the other. According to Al-Zumor (2006) Arab learners of English as a second language were found to use more intensifiers than speakers of American English and speakers of British English. While speakers of American and British English used expressions such as “I am sorry” and “Excuse me” (p. 6), speakers of Arabic used these strategies preceded by intensifiers, for example, “I am very very sorry”. Interestingly, cultural differences were also found among speakers of Arabic, who came from five Arab countries, when issuing expressions of apology. Speakers of Sudanese Arabic, according to Al-Zumor (2006), were found to use more intensified adverbials with expressions of regret.

2.3 Summary

Central to Goffman’s (1967) work is the concept of face. Although face is individual, Goffman argues, it can be withdrawn from the person if he or she does not behave in line with the norm endorsed by society. Once face is damaged, certain repair procedures can take place in order to restore face.

Grice’s (1975) maxims of conversation have added much to the field of linguistic pragmatics. According to Grice, four maxims, govern interlocutors’ conversational behavior. However, many researchers have criticized those maxims on various grounds. For example, Leech (1983) argued that the theory of conversation fails to account for the relationship between sense (structural form of an utterance) and force (function of an utterance in different contexts). Davis (1998) targeted the conversational principles,

accusing them of lacking the power to derive precise implicature. Sifianou (1992) challenged the alleged universality of the maxims and criticized the theory for ignoring the expressive aspect of language.

Lakoff's (1973) rules of politeness have been reflected on, discussed and debated by many researchers in the field of linguistic politeness. However, many researchers working in the field have expressed their dissatisfaction with those rules. Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that studying politeness in terms of rules can only be advantageous if ritualized speech acts such as greetings are considered. Sifianou (1992) targeted the definitions of the expressions constituting those rules, challenging their clarity. Leech (1983) states that not all speech acts involve politeness, in particular those which directly threaten face such as the speech act of threatening.

Leech's (1983) maxims of politeness are based on the concept of cost-benefit scale which works in two opposite directions: maximize benefit to other/minimize benefit to self and so on. Like other previous politeness theories, Leech's work has been subject to criticism. Fraser (1990) challenged Leech's account of speech acts as intrinsically polite or impolite. Wierzbicka (1990) accused Leech's maxims of anglocentricism.

Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory is well-known for its two face components: negative face, the need to be free from imposition, and positive face the need to be acknowledged and approved by others. Although Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness is considered the most pragmatic theory for studying politeness, it has been targeted by many non-Anglo researchers for its supposed inability to account for politeness phenomena in all cultures. Matsumoto (1989) argues that the concept of face in politeness theory and Japanese face are different. She also points out that the aim behind behaving politely in Japanese is not to minimize the threat to face, but to place the person in his or her appropriate social position. Ide (1989) accused Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of ignoring discernment which is crucial to Japanese politeness. Mao (1994) and Nwoye (1992) targeted the individual image proposed by politeness theory, arguing that it is different from the public image which is predominant in Chinese and Igbo cultures. Similarly, Koutlaki (2002) states that Iranian face, which relies on interdependence, differs from Brown and Levinson's (1987) concept of face.

Cross-cultural studies on politeness demonstrate that cultural clash and cases of misunderstanding can occur as a result of differences in politeness strategies, and differences calculating the cost of a certain speech act. In relation to the first type, it was found that Australians, Americans and British people preferred negative politeness strategies, whereas Palestinians, Chileans and French people preferred positive politeness strategies. Cultural differences were also found to cause misunderstanding when the same strategy was used in different cultural contexts. While speakers of Australian English preferred to perform requests indirectly, speakers of French personalized the speaker and the hearer.

Differences in calculating the cost of a speech act were found to be sources of misunderstanding and cultural clash between different groups. Speakers of French and Australian English were found to evaluate the same speech act differently due to different cultural norms. Japanese and British were found to use different politeness strategies when addressing next-door neighbors because the two groups evaluated social distance differently. Similarly, speakers of Palestinian Arabic and American English varied their responses as a result of variation in measuring the value of the social distance. Speakers of Arabic were also found to use more intensifiers in their apologies than speakers of American English and British English because the imposition associated with a certain speech act is evaluated differently.

Chapter Three

Methodological issues and methods

3.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide insights into the methods used to collect data for carrying out the study. In order to give an overview of the methods of data collection used in linguistic pragmatics, the chapter makes use of Silverman's (2004) categorization of three different types of data: literary texts, naturally-occurring talk and interviews. Under the heading of texts, the chapter will discuss three topics: texts as a data source, previous studies that make use of texts and general discussion of politeness strategies found in the plays. Since this study depends mainly on plays as a source of data, the focus will be on studies that make use of plays. Both the playwrights' comments on dramatic dialogue as a source of data and the findings of the studies will be examined.

Under the heading of naturally-occurring data, the chapter will discuss what is meant by natural data and the advantages and the limitations of this technique. Likewise, interviewing people as a method for collecting data will be investigated and two types of interviews will be covered: structured and unstructured. Under structured interviews, two methods of data collection will be investigated: the Discourse Completion Task (DCT) and Role-Playing. The advantages and limitations of the data obtained by using structured and unstructured interview techniques will be addressed.

Having discussed the various methods used to collect data for studies in the area of linguistic pragmatics, the chapter discusses two types of data used to carry out this study: first, the main data, which is collected from plays; second, the supplementary data, which is collected by a short questionnaire. The chapter also discusses the procedures used to select the plays. In addition, the rationale for using drama as a source of data is discussed. The procedures used to classify and analyze both the main and the supplementary data are addressed.

3.1 Methods of data collection

There has been much debate in sociolinguistic research over the methods employed to collect data (Varghese & Billmyer, 1996). Most of the debate has been concerned with the validity and reliability of different methods of data collection. The question of whether

the variation found among the subjects is genuine or due to the instruments used is a significant issue. Labov (1966) found that the instruments used to collect the data influenced the differences found amongst the same group of subjects. Kasper and Dahl (1991) state that there are two contributing factors to variability in pragmatics. The first one is the “variability which reflects the social properties of the speech event, and the strategic, actional and linguistic choices by which interlocutors attempt to reach their communicative goals”. The second is the “variability induced by different instruments of data collection” (p. 5).

Data collection for conducting research on linguistic politeness takes three different forms. Echoing Silverman’s (2004) classification of the data used for conducting social science research, the types of data collection can be classified as naturally occurring data, written texts and interviews. By naturally-occurring data we mean the data collected by observing people’s behavior in authentic situations. Texts include all written materials e.g., magazines, novels, plays. Interviews are defined as “conversation with a purpose. Especially, the purpose is to gather information” (Berg, 1998, p. 57). According to Silverman (2004), the most salient difference between the first two types of data collection and the last type lies in the researcher’s intervention. While in naturally-occurring data and texts the researcher has a reduced influence on the data collected, the reverse is true of interviews. That is to say, in interviews, the researcher elicits the data in accordance with the proposed aims of the study, but still attempts to find out new information about the social world.

3.2 Texts as a data source

Texts are defined by Silverman (2004) as “words and/or images which have become recorded without the intervention of a researcher” (p. 119). The use of written materials as a data source to conduct studies on linguistic politeness is not as common as other methods of data collection. However, recently, there has been increased interest shown by researchers in this form of data in order to conduct research on linguistic pragmatics; many different researchers (Bagwasi, 2008; Bennison, 1998; Brown & Gilman, 1989; Burton, 1980; Culpeper, 1998; Hatipoglu, 2007; Skewis, 2003; Sifianou, 1992; Weber, 1998) have employed texts as a source of data. Since the present study depends on dramatic dialogue to collect data, in this chapter, only studies that make use of dramatic dialogue as a data source will be discussed.

3.3 Previous studies that make use of drama

The study of linguistic (im)politeness, depending on dramatic discourse, has increased in recent years. Some researchers, Rudanko (2006) and Magnusson (1992, 1999), have studied Elizabethan drama (Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* and *Henry VIII*) while others such as Buitkiene (2006); Abdesslem (2001) and Simpson (1997) have moved towards modern drama (Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Christopher Hampton's *The Philanthropist*, Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story*). In what follows, the work of these dramatists and others will be discussed in order to highlight the strengths of this source of data.

Buitkiene (2006) investigates the relationship between power and politeness in Williams' play *A Streetcar Named Desire*. She also argues that both dramatic dialogue and naturally-occurring conversation share similarities: "turn taking patterns; characters or persons perform certain speech acts; their utterances are situation dependent; they may say one thing but mean something else" (p. 16). The findings of Buitkiene's study uncover the following results. There is a closely interrelated relationship between power and politeness. A more powerful speaker is seen to control opportunities to vary the length, content and direction of the turn. Moreover, he or she can either hide his or her power and resort to negative politeness strategies or exert their power using the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy. On the other hand, a less powerful speaker is seen to use more negative politeness to express deference. For example, unfinished sentences such as "I –uh–"elliptical sentences e.g. "Stella's sister?" hesitation pauses e.g. "Why, I – live in Laurel", modal adjuncts such as "No, I – rarely touch it" and other mitigating phrases like "I'm afraid I'm – going to be sick!" are frequently used in the play (Buitkiene, 2006, p. 18).

Abdesslem (2006) investigates the politeness strategies used in Hampton's play *The Philanthropist*. He makes use of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model to account for the linguistic behavior of the characters. The study yields different politeness strategies. Both positive and negative politeness strategies are employed depending on the cost of the speech act. In Abdesslem's study, positive politeness strategies are examined. The strategy of "intensifying interest to H" is used throughout the play. The character Don exaggerates his sympathy for and interest in John's play. Then he uses a series of other positive politeness strategies, for example, the strategy of "showing agreement with H". Don shows

agreement with John, saying “yes, yes, I like that, generous” before he does a face-threatening act. This demonstrates the strategy of “claim common ground with H” as does the use of “you know” indicating some shared knowledge and hence encouraging H to cooperate (p. 125). Many negative politeness strategies are also used to minimize the cost of the FTA. Don, for example, uses the strategy of “impersonalize” when he intends to criticize John’s play in order to mitigate the threat to John’s face. He also uses the strategy of “show reluctance to impinge on H” when he says “but on the other hand” (p. 125), where the use of “but” prepare the H for the FTA. Hedges are also used to mitigate the FTA: the quantifier “certain” in “there are certain ... lapses” is used (Abdesslem, 2006, p. 125). The strategy of “initiate small talk” is also employed to minimize the threat to face.

Bennison (1998) investigates the conversational behavior of the characters in Tom Stoppard’s play *Professional Foul*. Believing in the necessity of using different linguistic frameworks if one is to capture the richness of character, Bennison (1998) makes use of discourse analysis and pragmatics. In discussing the pragmatic aspect, he depends mainly on Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness model and Leech’s (1983) maxims of politeness to examine the politeness strategies employed. According to Bennison, the character Anderson tends to favor positive politeness strategies through paying respect to the addressee’s positive face wants. He upholds the maxim “maximize praise of others”. He praises both McKendrick’s and Chetwyn’s universities, and by so doing he praises, by association, the people who work at those universities. Bennison argues that the praise becomes superficial when Anderson fails to name the university that McKendrick works at. However, his praise to Hollar appears to be more sincere; he seems to be pleased to see Hollar outside the door of his house. This is evident from the language he uses where the bald-on-record strategy – which is frequently used among ingroupers and in cases where the social distance between S and H is low – is used when he invited him to enter his house. According to Bennison, having a higher status, Stoppard’s character Anderson shifts his politeness behavior, making no effort to satisfying Hollar’s positive face needs when he rejects his request to smuggle his thesis out of the country. Anderson considers that protecting his own negative face is more important than threatening Hollar’s positive face; hence, he interrupts him with no fear of retaliation. However, when dealing with Crisp, where a symmetrical power relation prevails, Anderson’s linguistic behavior completely changes. He uses two hedging devices “I realize it’s none of my business” and

“you may think I’m an absolute ass, but...” (p. 65). He also apologizes for giving bad advice and for failing to identify McKendrick as a conference participant.

Weber (1998) explored David Mamet’s *Oleanna* in order to investigate the power relation in a dramatic dialogue. The differential power relation is clearly noticeable in the play as most of its dialogue occurs in the institutional context of higher education. John, the professor, enjoys a great deal of power over Carol, the student. Weber distinguishes between a “powerful” and a “powerless” speech style (p. 119). She argues that powerful speech is marked by “disaffiliating, non-supportive interruptions”, whereas powerless speech is characterized by “hesitations, repetitions and uncompleted turns” (p. 119). Applying this proposition to the results obtained from the study, Weber finds that John exerts his power over Carol, frequently interrupting her. On the other hand, Carol’s speech style demonstrates many hesitations, repetitions and uncompleted turns which ostensibly signal lack of power. The results of this study also demonstrate that, in many cases, John uses the same strategies employed by Carol when criticizing Carol’s essay. In an attempt to account for such an unpredictable move, Weber attributes the reason to the fact that John aims to “lessen or soften the anticipated antithetical emotional reaction that Carol may have to him” (p. 120). According to Weber, John’s language is almost excessively polite. He uses negative politeness strategies, positive politeness and off-record strategies. He praises Carol when describing her as “an incredibly bright girl”. He emphasizes his feelings of empathy and expresses solidarity with her “I have no desire other than to help you” (p. 120).

Simpson (1997) discusses the politeness phenomena in Edward Albee’s play *The Zoo Story*, arguing that “dramatic dialogue provides excellent source material for explaining the basic patterns of everyday conversation” (p. 130). Although stressing the profitability of using dramatic dialogue to study conversation, Simpson insists that naturally-occurring talk and dramatic dialogue are not identical. This is simply because, according to Simpson, characters in plays and real people are not identical. Also, while dialogue in naturally-occurring conversations occurs straightforwardly face-to-face, in drama, dialogue is more sophisticated as there are two communicative layers. There is a character-to-character communication on the one hand, and there is a playwright-to-audience communication on the other. Moreover, in dramatic conversation, the dramatist supervises and controls interaction to achieve a particular purpose. According to Simpson,

the study yields unexpected results. Instead of employing phatic communication that might redress the potential face-damage, character Jerry uses many utterances that constitute a direct threat to the negative face of his interlocutor, Peter. He uses the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy, showing no care about H's face wants, imposing on H and hence threatening H's negative face. He also threatens Peter's positive face by using terms of address that are considered as over-familiar such as "Well, boy" (p. 171). However, Peter's discourse is more face-satisfying, full of positive politeness devices. He demonstrates extensive use of hedging verbs like "think", "seem" and "suppose" (p. 172), which indicate that Peter is not dogmatic in his views. He also uses negative politeness (*I'm sorry*) in which he takes the responsibility for committing the FTA.

In 1992, Magnusson conducted a study to explore the politeness strategies employed in Shakespeare's play *Henry VIII*. The study focuses on directive speech acts. Magnusson embraces Brown and Levinson's (1987) standpoint that the specific configuration of the social relationship between S and H, including the social distance and the power of H over S, plays a major role in determining the verbal behavior used to repair the potential damage of face. He argues that it is true that the rhetorical strategy used by one character is determined by the verbal artistry of the dramatist, but the verbal artistry of the dramatist is also affected by the "social poetic of maintenance and repair, the social rhetoric of politeness" (Magnusson, 1992, p. 392). He also argues that although these politeness strategies can be deliberately manipulated, they commonly operate without being controlled by speakers and writers. Magnusson's study reveals that both positive politeness and negative strategies are used. The strategy of claiming common ground is used, where actors share a particular piece of knowledge. The strategy of claiming reciprocity is also employed throughout using a pronoun shift in expressions such as "you know – I know" (p. 398). Although the in-group language is used in the play, it is multiplied in situations where threat to face is likely to happen such as advice-giving. According to Magnusson, because there is a noticeable differential power relation between King Henry and other people, negative politeness strategies such as distancing devices and respect forms are abundant in the play. Norfolk, who is one of the King's court, uses the strategy of impersonalizing to dissociate himself from the role of fault-finder and Buckingham from the role of fault-maker.

Sifianou (1992) conducted a cross-cultural study investigating politeness phenomena in English and Greek. She mainly made use of drama to collect data for the study. She strongly believes that modern literature is like a mirror that reflects and portrays different classes and different people. Not only does it investigate their linguistic behavior in various situations, but also their “attitudes and values about language itself” (p. 5). Furthermore, she argues that, unlike other types of literature, playscripts are a special example of written literature in that they are intended to be spoken to an audience. She also points out that modern plays and everyday talk have something in common in their structure and lexicon. She strengthens her claims by arguing that

I believe that a careful choice of a variety of modern plays by various playwrights who themselves claim that one of their aims is to represent actual speech, and who may have spent hours recording and listening to real interactions, can be a rich source of natural data and of powerful insights into everyday conversational structures. (p. 6)

Another influential study of linguistic politeness, using drama as a source of data was conducted by Brown and Gilman (1989). The study’s main purpose was to test the applicability of Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness model to Shakespeare’s dramatic works. Four great tragedies, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth* and *Othello*, were chosen because, according to the researchers, “dramatic texts provide the best information on colloquial speech of the period” (p. 159). Furthermore, Brown and Gilman (1989) argue that

Dramatic texts offer good possibilities for the study of politeness theory. They offer wide social and characterological scope, and because the speech is not elicited from informants but was created by authors for purposes of their own, dramatic texts can surprise analysts, as Shakespeare has surprised us, into discoveries they had not envisioned. Studying a dramatic text with politeness theory in mind has much in common with studying protocols of spontaneous child speech with a grammar and theory of acquisition in mind. (p. 208)

The results of Brown and Gilman’s (1989) study show that power relations are an important factor in determining the politeness strategies employed. For example, Cordelia and the doctor have an asymmetrical power relation. Therefore, according to Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory, we expect the doctor, who has less power, to be more polite

than Cordelia. He uses politeness markers such as “So please...” and terms of address “your majesty” (p. 187) to pay deference to Cordelia. Brown and Gilman concluded that the results obtained from the study with regard to the variable Power are congruent with politeness theory. The same is also true for the variable Ranking of imposition, where politeness increases when the cost of the speech act is high and decreases when the cost is low. However, the results that reflect the variable Distance (D) contrast with what is predicted by politeness theory. According to Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory an increase in D means less intimate interaction and as a result less liking. But the opposite is true in the plays. To account for this mismatch, Brown and Gilman (1989) argue that politeness in the plays is governed by feeling. It is also found that interactive intimacy is insignificant. It is found that “with the extension of positive feeling (liking or better), the speaker becomes more polite; and if positive feeling is withdrawn (dislike, hostility), the speaker become less polite” (p. 192).

3.4 General discussion of politeness strategies found in the plays

If we consider the politeness strategies used in the plays discussed earlier in this chapter and the ones identified by Brown and Levinson (1987) in their politeness model, we can argue that there are many common features. Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that people of higher power can use the bald-on-record strategy without fear of retribution. In Buitkiene’s (2006) findings, we notice that a powerful speaker controls the length, content and direction of the turn, whereas a less powerful speaker uses negative politeness to show deference. Bennison’s (1998) results demonstrate similar strategies. Anderson, Stoppard’s character, uses the bald-on-record strategy when addressing Hollar because of his relative power status. However, when symmetrical power prevails between S and H, we expect a change in the linguistic strategies employed. And this is what happens. Anderson uses a different code of politeness when addressing Crisp. He uses negative politeness strategies when he decides to perform a face-threatening act. This is also true for Weber’s (1998) findings, where the power status is an important factor in determining the politeness strategies employed. Powerful speech is marked with “disaffiliating, non-supportive interruptions”, whereas powerless speech is characterized by “hesitation, repetitions and uncompleted turns” (p. 119). These remarks are in many respects similar to Holmes’ (1995) findings in her study of New Zealand society, where she made use of naturally-

occurring data. Also, the findings obtained from the plays are similar to the ones obtained by Yuan (2001) when he investigated the results obtained from oral DCT and written DCT.

Turning now to the other politeness strategies, it is found that both negative and positive politeness strategies are used depending on the social distance between S and H, the relative power and the degree of imposition. In Simpson's (1997) study, both positive and negative politeness strategies are used. Peter, Albee's character, uses many positive politeness strategies such as the hedging verbs "think", "seem" and "suppose" which indicate that Peter is not a dogmatic person (p. 172). He uses the negative politeness strategy of apologizing when he intends to do a face-threatening act. Magnusson's (1992) findings show that Shakespeare's characters use negative and positive politeness. In relation to positive politeness strategies, claiming common ground with the hearer and claiming reciprocity are used. In regards to negative politeness, the strategy of impersonalizing is used.

It might therefore be argued that, broadly speaking, the results obtained from the plays are consistent with the general principles of Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory. The question of whether the politeness strategies employed in the plays are a true representation of what might appear in naturally-occurring data in similar situations needs further investigation. However, since no study has invalidated the results obtained from plays, I feel it is reasonable to support the stand of the researchers (Brown and Gilman, 1989; Buitkiene, 2006; Burton, 1980; Simpson, 1997; Sifianou, 1992) who argue that dramatic dialogue can be a good source of data for the study of linguistic politeness.

3.5 Naturally-occurring data

To many researchers, naturally-occurring talk is the most reliable and fruitful data gathering technique as it is "derived from situations which exist independently of the researcher's intervention" (Silverman, 2004, 159). Wolfson (1983) argues that "ethnographic research is the only reliable method about the way speech acts function in interaction" (p. 95). Migdadi (2003) argues that naturally-occurring talk has the "advantage of reflecting the actual use of language" (p. 39). Barbour (2008) states that ethnographic research "can encompass both the sweeping and the very focused" (p. 93). That is to say, this approach is useful in understanding the workings of the whole culture or specific tasks.

Although the data collected from naturally-occurring talk have been praised by many researchers, many researchers working on the field of politeness have cast doubt on this method. Atawneh (1991) argues that natural data samples are “difficult to collect and may not provide the needed information for analysis if a certain variable is looked for” (p. 117). Migdadi (2003) also maintains that one disadvantage of naturally occurring data is that the “researcher/fieldworker has to rely on memory or on the taping of long stretches of talk, hoping that the speech act under analysis will occur in the course of interaction” (p. 39). Another drawback of this data type mentioned by Migdadi lies in the difficulty of controlling the different social variables involved. Silverman (2004) states that one should not go too far in distinguishing naturally occurring data from research provoked data as “no data are ever untouched by human hands” (p. 159). Similarly, Lin (2005), in her study of the politeness phenomena in Chinese, criticized the data collected from authentic conversation. She argues that collecting naturally-occurring data can be very time-consuming. In addition, it is difficult or even impossible to control the “contextual as well as the social variables, such as power, distance, gender and age” (p. 76). There is no guarantee that these data will contain the required samples necessary for conducting the research. However, it might be argued that there are some challenges to controlling the social and the contextual variables in the naturally occurring data, but it is not impossible. Likewise, Brown and Gilman (1989) criticize naturally-occurring data, arguing that “Data sets are often critically incomplete; analyses cannot be objective; tests of statistical significance are seldom appropriate” (p. 208).

It could be argued that the controversy over naturally occurring data emerges from the nature of the research and from the values of the researcher. I believe that the conclusions and implications to be drawn from a study are grounded, to some extent, on the moral and political beliefs of the researcher. Hence, conducting research on social sciences using naturally occurring data as a method to collect data can lead to reliable results if the researcher tries his best to manage the different variables and has enough time to collect comprehensive data sets.

3.6 Interviewing

According to Bouma and Atkinson (1995), the main purpose of interviewing people for social research is to obtain information from an informant. Patton (1987) also argues that

the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind. The purpose of open-ended interviewing is not to put things in someone's mind (for example, the interviewer's preconceived categories for organizing the world) but to access the perspective of the person being interviewed. (p. 278)

Interviewing is especially favored with qualitative research. But it can produce both qualitative and quantitative data "capable of addressing both process and outcome issues" (Clarke & Dawson, 1999, p. 72). Barbour (2008) views interviewing as both "an art and a science" (p. 113). Guba and Lincoln (1981) considered it as the "backbone of field and naturalistic research and evaluation" (p. 154). Interviews can be carried out by different means, for example, face-to-face, on the telephone, on the internet and in person and in different settings such as schools, hospitals, factories, petrol stations and offices. Interviews can be divided into three categories, based on their structures: a structured (formal) interview, an unstructured interview (informal) and a semi-structured interview (Berg, 1998).

3.6.1 A structured interview

A structured interview is defined by Adams and Schvaneveldt (1985) as a "list or grouping of written questions which a respondent answers" (p. 202). There are two ways to get the questionnaire answered. First, an interviewer can obtain a written response. Second, an interviewer can get an oral answer by using either face-to-face interview or telephone interviewing. In both cases people are asked to reply to the same set of stimuli. That is to say subjects are asked identical questions in a systematic and consistent order. The rationale behind this technique is that by exposing informants to the same set of stimuli, it is easy to get comparable responses (Clarke & Dawson, 1999). Although some researchers such as Weisberg, Krosnick, & Bowen (1996) mention some differences in terms of the results obtained when using face-to-face interview or telephone interview, they confirm the reliability and the viability of both techniques.

The questionnaire, according to Clarke and Dawson (1999), is one of the most widely used techniques for data collection. It can be utilized to provide a "wealth of descriptive data pertaining to individuals or groups" (p. 68). Babbie (1989) also argues that closed-ended questions provide "a greater uniformity of responses and [are] more easily processed" (p. 140). It can be used as a main source of data or it can be used as a

supplementary source. A questionnaire is mainly concerned with description and measurement. Two common forms of questionnaires used by researchers to study the speech acts are discourse completion task and role-playing.

3.6.1.1 Discourse completion task (DCT)

According to Varghese and Billmyer (1996) the DCT is “a questionnaire containing a set of very briefly described situations designed to elicit a particular speech act” (p. 39). Subjects are required to read each situation carefully and respond in writing. The method of collecting data by elicitation (DCT) to study speech acts was initiated by Blum-Kulka (1982) to study the speech act performance of learners of Hebrew as a second language and then she adapted it into the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Pattern Project (CCSARP) in 1984.

Since its creation by Blum-Kulka (1982), the DCT has become a very popular technique of data collection to study linguistic politeness (Bataineh & Bataineh, 2006), because it has many advantages over other methods of data collection. Varghese and Billmyer (1996) maintain that “without question the DCT surpasses all others in ease of use” (p. 39). Beebe and Cummings (1996) state that this technique allows researchers to collect a very large amount of data in a short period of time. They concluded that the data collected by DCT and those collected from naturally occurring talk are consistent in terms of the patterns and the formulas. Atawneh (1991) states that the advantage of the DCT technique lies in the fact that it allows control over the contextual variable of situation. This, in turn, may have an effect on the respondent’s choice of a particular expression.

Despite the fact that the DCT has been used as a data gathering technique by many researchers (Blum-Kulka, 1982; Lin, 2005; Nureddeen, 2008), certain concerns have been raised over its structure, validity and reliability. Wolfston, Marmor and Jones (1989) identified some of the limitations of the data collected by the DCT technique. They targeted the design of this technique, arguing that “a fundamental question has to do with the validity of written responses to short dialogues which by their very nature, lack the context of an ongoing verbal interaction” (p. 182). In 1994, Rose investigated the cross-cultural validity of the DCTs in non-western contexts. He studied the speech act of request in the linguistic performance of Japanese native speakers and American native speakers.

Then, he investigated requests in the performance of Japanese native speakers, using the multiple-choice questionnaires (MCQ). The findings of the study revealed significant differences between the results obtained from the DCT and MCQ. Although many previous studies, according to Rose (1994), characterized Japanese speakers as preferring indirectness and vagueness when performing requests, in the data obtained from DCT, Japanese speakers were found to prefer direct strategies in all the eight situations investigated. By contrast, in the data obtained from MCQ, in seven situations out of eight, speakers chose opting out and indirect strategies. Consequently, Rose argues that the data obtained from the DCT is not representative of Japanese face-to-face interaction and “must be treated with caution” (p. 9).

Likewise, Varghese and Billmyer (1996) examined the internal structure of the DCT, depending on three versions of a DCT designed to elicit requests. These three versions were administered to 55 students at the University of Pennsylvania: version I was distributed to 10 males and 10 females. Version II was administered to 10 males and nine females. Version III was distributed to eight males and eight females. The findings revealed considerable differences between the elaborated and the unelaborated versions in the following areas: the length of the request act, the number of the supportive moves, and the frequency of alerters.

Beebe and Cummings (1996) investigated the data obtained from a written DCT and naturally-occurring data obtained from telephone conversations. The subjects of the study were 11 native English-speaking teachers of English as a second language at Columbia University and 11 native English-speaking teachers of English as a second language at New York State University. The findings of the study revealed differences between the data samples obtained from the telephone conversation and the DCT in the amount of talk, turns taken, the use of semantic formulas, repetitions and elaborations. As regards repetitions and elaborations, they were extremely infrequent in the written data. In their discussion of the reasons for such differences, Beebe and Cummings argue that the lower overall amount of talk could be attributed to the small number of turns. The DCT biases respondents to pack their refusal in the first turn. Moreover, the nature of the DCT has an unfortunate effect on the responses. As stated by Beebe and Cummings, the written nature of the task is test-like and imaginary which “biases respondents toward an answer

that summarizes rather than elaborates and that responds definitively rather than hedges and negotiates” (p. 71).

In an attempt to investigate and evaluate methods of data collection, Yuan (2001) conducted a study on the speech act of complimenting and compliment responses in the southwestern Mandarin spoken in Kunming, China. She depended on four methods of data collection, namely, written DCT, oral DCT, field notes, and recorded conversations. The data were collected by means of DCT. The subjects were Chinese people of different ages, genders and education. The total number of the subjects was 175, 87 responded to the DCT questionnaire orally, and 88 responded in writing. An oral interview was conducted for 51 out of the 87 after the oral sessions. The naturally-occurring data were collected by observing people in different fields of life for a period of four months. The findings of the study conducted by Yuan revealed that the data collected by the oral DCT technique were characterized by “longer responses, more [exclamation] particles, more repetitions, more omissions compared to written data” (p. 288). All these features, Yuan argues, are characteristics of naturally-occurring data. Thus, she concludes that the oral DCT technique is more efficient than the written DCT if the main focus of the study is on natural speech. Comparing the DCT data (oral and written) with natural conversation data, the study yields the following results. Exclamation particles appear more frequently in the natural data and in the data obtained by interviewing people. Repetition is also an area of difference, where repetition occurs frequently in the natural data and the data obtained from an oral DCT compared to the data obtained from a written DCT. As regards inversion, the data taken from written DCT demonstrate zero occurrence, compared to a frequent occurrence in the data collected by oral DCT. Similar results appear with omission, where omission occurred frequently in the oral DCT data and natural data, but it was not found in the written DCT data.

3.6.1.2 Role-playing

Role-playing is an elicitation method of data collection that has gained popularity in recent years (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). According to Lin (2005), role-playing takes two forms: monologic (closed) or interactive (open). In both cases, people are asked to imagine themselves in situations dictated by the researcher, and act out what would they say under

those situations. As stated by Kasper and Dahl (1991), the aim of this method of data collection is to generate data similar in many respects to those obtained from natural talk.

There are some noticeable advantages to the data collected by role-playing technique. First, subjects are exposed to the same stimulus, which makes the data gathered more controlled and more directed towards the requested goal. Atawneh (1991) argues that the data collected by role-playing is “easier to adapt to the purpose of research, easy to collect and to analyze” (p. 117). Yuan (2001) states that the data collected by oral role-play better represent natural talk than the data collected by a written DCT. Second, as stated by Kasper and Dahl (1991), open role-plays provide a much richer source of data than DCT. This method produces “oral production, full operation of the turn-taking mechanism, impromptu planning decisions contingent on interlocutor input, and hence negotiation of global and local goals, including negotiation of meaning” (p. 19).

However, there are real challenges pertinent to this type of data collection. Many researchers question the artificial nature of the situation presented to be commented upon as well as the researcher’s presence during the process of data collection which might affect the results obtained and make for less natural-like talk. For example, Xie, He and Lin (2005) argue in this regard that:

What underlies the continuous popularity of the discourse completion tests or role-plays is that researchers can control and manipulate various variables and delete those ‘irrelevant’... . Who can guarantee that the informants are necessarily familiar with all those hypothetical situations and all aspects of social interactions? (p. 452)

Another limitation pertaining to a structured interview has to do with the language of the questionnaire. Sometimes, the language of the questionnaire constitutes a real challenge to respondents. Babbie (1989) points out that “inevitably some questions will not fit a given respondent’s situation” (p. 247). That is to say, due to individual differences, we cannot guarantee that all subjects understand the language of the questionnaire in a similar way and the same questions are applied equally well to all respondents. Therefore, we cannot guarantee that the disparity found among the results obtained is due to real differences or occurred as a result of different understandings and interpretations among the subjects.

3.6.2 An unstructured interview

Unlike the structured interview, the unstructured interview is less rigid in that it does not use schedules of questions. Barbour (2008) points out that the “hallmark of interviewing in qualitative research is the use of open questions, which allow respondents to focus on the issues of greatest importance to them, rather than the agenda being determined entirely by the researcher’s interests” (p. 17). Naturally, it operates, according to Berg (1998), from a set of assumptions which are different from those of structured interview. First, interviewers do not know in advance what the necessary questions are. They have to think of questions appropriate to a given situation. They, sometimes, have to generate new questions in line with the development of the encounter. Holding the belief that each respondent has his or her own words and can provide relatively different information, interviewers, using the unstructured interview technique, modify their questions to suit the purpose of the interview.

Elarbi (1997) argues that “subjects’ remarks and comments about themselves or about something that has happened to them” (p. 239) are part of such running conversations and can provide vital information. Therefore, in order to fully understand what exactly is meant by these remarks, researchers sometimes need to seek further explanation from the interviewees about the “meanings and connotations of words and expressions” (p. 239). This advantage is unattainable from data collected by methods other than interviewing.

Although the unstructured interview has the advantage of giving respondents the opportunity to express their feelings and beliefs more openly than in a structured interview (Adams & Schvaneveldt, 1985), it suffers lots of limitations. As Babbie (1989) states, data collected by using open-ended questions must be coded before being submitted to computer analysis. This coding process necessitates interpretation of the meanings of responses, hence, “opening the possibility of misunderstanding and researcher bias” (p. 140).

A limitation of the data collected by interviewing, according to Elarbi (1997), has to do with issues such as bias, and a lack of objectivity. Researchers working in social sciences cannot be completely free from the influence of their personal beliefs and cultural

background. There is also a complex relationship between the interviewer, the interviewee and the nature of the questions being asked. The interviewee may “adjust his/her answer to those he believes the researcher expects, or he/she wants to use for specific purposes” (p. 239).

Silverman (2004) argues that “what people say in answer to interview questions does not have a stable relationship with how they behave in naturally occurring situations” (p. 29). In a similar vein Fielding and Fielding (1986) point out that “researchers who generalize from a sample survey to a large population ignore the possible disparity between the discourse of actors about some topical issue and the way they respond to questions in a formal context” (p. 21).

Interviewing is also subject to external factors. Weisberg et al. (1996) recommend that interviews should be conducted without an audience, arguing that respondents might modify their answers to get the agreement of friends and family members instead of reporting his/her own feelings. Children playing in the same room where the interview is conducted might distract the respondent, hence affecting the “quality of answers” (p. 107).

Another challenge pertaining to interviews, according to Babbie (1989), is that when we ask respondents to give information we should continually keep asking ourselves whether they have the ability to perform it reliably. In other words, interviewers should make some sort of assessment of respondents to make sure that they are trustworthy and dependable. However, it is obvious that conducting an assessment prior to interviewing people is difficult for the researcher undertaking cross-cultural research.

3.7 Methods of data collection used to carry out this study

3.7.1 The main data

As regards data collection, this study depends on plays as a main source and a short questionnaire as a supplementary source of data to explore face and politeness in Australian and Palestinian cultures. In relation to the use of plays as a data source the study was influenced by Magnusson, 1999; Simpson, 1997; Sifianou, 1992; and Brown and Gilman, 1989 who all use data from plays. Ten contemporary plays – five Palestinian and five Australian – written by different playwrights, were studied carefully. Each play was

read many times. The aim behind this procedure was to get a general overview of each play's plot, theme, and characters; to identify requests and relate them to earlier and later dialogue. It also aimed to trace the linguistic behavior of each character from the beginning to the end of the play, focusing on the linguistic changes that accompany the changing of Power, Distance, and Ranking of imposition.

To identify requests, the study made use of Blum-Kulka's (1989, p. 276) classification of requests into head act and supportive move(s). She states the following possible structures of a head act and supportive move(s):

- a. The minimal unit only
- b. Post-posed: Head Act + Supportive Move(s)
Pre-posed: Supportive Move + Head Act
- c. Multiple Heads

Requests were identified according to their syntactic structure and to their pragmatic function in the dialogue. The head act was not separated from the dialogue in which it occurred. That is to say, the head act together with the supportive move was recorded. Consider the following example:

1. FRANK: I'm, er, hmm, sincere about what I say,
Frances, so please think it over because I really do,
hmm, love you ... Are you there?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 76)

In Example 1, the head act is "think it over" and the elements before and after it are supportive moves. When recording the data, the whole dialogue was quoted. The aim behind this procedure was to facilitate the analysis, which usually dealt with the head act and the supportive moves as a connected unit.

3.7.1.1 Rationale for using drama as a main data source

The main question directing the discussion has been why use written texts, since collecting data from texts to conduct research on linguistic politeness is not as popular as

other methods (naturally-occurring data and Discourse Completion Task) of data collection? The answer is quite simple. On the Palestinian side there is nothing else available. There are plays, novels and short stories, but, as stated by Brown and Gilman (1989), “politeness theory is a very psychological theory that cannot be tested with a speaker’s words alone” (pp. 170-171). Novels and short stories are excluded because they do not provide us with such an extended attempt to recreate and explore a speaker-hearer dialogue. The only possible and practicable source is “the language written to be uttered as though spontaneously arising from a given situation which we find in dramatic texts” (Salmon, 1987. p. 265).

Although the Gaza Strip and the West Bank have been under the Israeli occupation for more than 60 years, the last ten years have witnessed a dramatic deterioration in all sectors; in particular, security. Nearly every day there is fighting, bombing and shelling. Moreover, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank were separated from each other, leaving no possible way for people to communicate face-to-face with each other. As a result, collecting naturally-occurring data from these areas is extremely difficult. Moreover, being very conservative, Palestinian society imposes severe restriction on collecting naturally occurring data, to the extent that it becomes quite hard or even impossible. The constraints become more complicated when it comes to recording women’s talk or collecting any data about their interactions, in particular in the Gaza Strip. There are real fears that the researcher may be working as a collaborator and that recorded conversations may be manipulated by using modern technology and exploited to put pressure on women to collaborate with an enemy. This issue is extremely sensitive and people not only reject the idea of tape-recording women’s speech, but do all they can to prevent it.

Given that, it would be difficult to explore the variable of gender in the study appropriately. Furthermore, if we concede to Lin (2005) and Migdadi (2003) – both of whom conducted research on linguistic politeness in peaceful countries – that it is hard to control the social variables P, D, and R in the naturally-occurring data, it becomes more challenging to control those variables in war zones such as the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Collecting data from research-oriented questionnaires in Palestine in the current situation is very difficult as well. Being here in Australia, I found it impossible to travel

back to Gaza to choose reliable informants because the borders from the outside world to Gaza have been closed since the early days of working on this research. There were also real fears of being caught in crossfire and, hence, being injured or even killed. Another matter needs to be addressed which has to do with the psychology of the people. In a war zone we cannot guarantee that on the day of answering the questionnaire all subjects are in a good mood and have not recently experienced hardships. If the subjects answer the questionnaire when they are suffering from the impact of shelling or lack of food, they may be psychologically unstable; their linguistic performance will definitely be affected, leaving us to question the reliability of the study.

There are other sound reasons for choosing plays as a source of data. As stated by Silverman (2004), both naturally occurring data and the data obtained from texts have been recorded without the researcher's intervention and therefore have that in common. That is to say the creation of naturally-occurring talk and texts serve genuine purposes other than using them to investigate a particular phenomenon. Plays are written to be acted on a stage and naturally-occurring talk is created for communication.

If one compares the interactional organization of the drama dialogue with the one of naturally-occurring talk, it is apparent that they are similar. Seedhouse (2004) talks about four easily noticeable features of natural talk: adjacency pairs, preference organization, turn-taking and repair. He defines adjacency pairs as "paired utterances such that on production of the first part of the pair (e.g., question) the second part of the pair (answer) becomes conditionally relevant. Preference organization, according to Seedhouse, is not related to the notion of liking or the desire to do something, but rather it "involves issues of affiliation and disaffiliation, of seeing, noticeability, accountability, and sanctionability in relation to social actions" (p. 23). That is to say, in this perspective, the ultimate aim of interaction is to achieve social goals. People interviewed or asked to respond to certain questions under the pressure of the data-collection may produce language to satisfy this purpose and as a result are not necessarily speaking as they would under ordinary circumstances.

Turn-taking is another feature of naturally-occurring talk. This feature is frequent in dialogues in plays as well. According to Nofsinger (1991), the order of turn-taking, in certain circumstances, is determined by certain factors such as wealth, social status and

fame. In terms of politeness, these factors are connected with the social variable of Power which has a strong effect on the politeness strategies employed. In some cultures e.g., Palestinian culture, turn-taking is a politeness strategy used to show respect to H's positive face. Parents usually take the first turn in official family meetings; older brothers take the turn before a younger brother. In brief, turn-taking in Palestinian culture, is part of the social system, most often governed by age and power.

The final part of interactional conversation is repair. Seedhouse (2004) defines repair as "the treatment of trouble occurring in interactive language use" (p. 34). He also considers repair as a vital mechanism for maintaining the "reciprocity perspective and intersubjectivity" (p. 34). In dramatic conversation, repair is used to rectify communication troubles resulting from, for example, misunderstanding or difficulty of hearing. In such circumstances, words expressing apologies or expressions encoding positive or negative politeness are utilized, depending on the relationship between S and H.

Having examined the structure of natural talk and drama conversation, it could be argued that they have similar important features in common. Hence, dramatic conversation can be a reliable source of data for conducting linguistic research (Brown and Gilman, 1989; Burton, 1980; Sifianou, 1990; Simpson, 1997). However, it is worth mentioning that, as stated by Beebe and Cummings (1996), each method of data collection has its strengths and its weaknesses. We are dealing with human behavior, and the difficulty of uncovering the truth is a real challenge for researchers. Many different methods can be used to achieve theoretical understanding and help the researcher reach the goals he or she has set for the study in an as objective way as possible.

3.7.1.2 Selecting the plays

In order to select plays that would offer rich insights into the politeness phenomena, I focused on issues that would be significant in conceptualizing and understanding politeness. First, the plays chosen were all contemporary because linguistic politeness is not static, but it changes over the course of time (see Allan and Burridge, 2006). Second, since the current study investigates social interaction, plays concerned with social life were given priority. Third, to maximize the chance of obtaining a reasonable number of requests, I took into consideration two important things: the number of people involved in

interaction in the play and the length of the interchanges between characters. Plays containing a large number of people were given priority over plays containing a small number because there would be a more comprehensive set of interactions. Plays containing many short dialogues were chosen because they provided better chances of getting more requests than plays containing monologues.

The plays were carefully chosen to highlight the social variables of P, D, and R and the contextual variables of age and gender. For example, to test the value of the social variable D, the plays chosen contained some people who knew each other well and others who did not. In relation to the variable P, plays were chosen in which the characters had three power relations: + power, when H was socially superior to S; – power when H was S's social inferior; = power when both S and H were of equal social status. As regards the variable R, plays containing face-threatening situations were selected. Finally, plays containing different age groups and sexes were selected.

Consider, for example, Williamson's (1980) play *Travelling North*. In this play, I had an opportunity to investigate the three social variables of D, P and R, in addition to the contextual variables of age and gender. This play contains people (family members) who know each other well and strangers who do not. It also contains people who have different and equal power status: it has a doctor, a patient, parents and their children. Furthermore, it contains impositive speech acts of varying degrees, where different politeness strategies are employed by speakers. In relation to other contextual variables, the characters presented in the play are of different ages and sexes. The same criterion was applied to the Palestinian plays chosen. Consider, for example, Al-Mubayed's (1985) play *Al-Qamar wa Al-ḍankabut*, this play is somewhat similar to the Australian play *Travelling North* in that both plays deal with families, friends, neighbors, strangers and doctors. In addition, the ages of the characters in the two plays are similar. There are adults, middle-aged people and old people. The reason behind such choices was to look closely at the linguistic behavior of people and examine the politeness strategies employed in similar settings across the two cultures.

3.7.1.3 Methods used for classifying the main data

In order to classify the data collected, the study made use of Brown and Levinson's (1987) classification of the strategies of doing face-threatening acts. Depending on the linguistic devices used, sentences containing the speech act of requests were classified broadly under three strategies namely: doing FTAs by using the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy, doing FTAs on-record with redressive positive politeness and doing FTAs on-record with redressive negative politeness. The overall number of requests of each category was calculated along with its relative frequency of occurrence in the data.

Further classification of each category was carried out. For example, requests performed by using the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy, they were classified and categorized under five headings, namely, requests for information, where S's aim behind the request is to obtain some information, requests carried out in cases of real and metaphorical urgency, requests carried out in favor of H and requests carried out where S is experiencing extreme tension. Each group was discussed. Examples from both Australian plays and the Palestinian plays were introduced.

As regards requests performed by using redressive devices, the study discussed two types. Following Brown and Levinson's (1987) classification: requests performed by the bald-on-record strategy with positive politeness and requests performed by the bald-on-record strategy with negative politeness. In the case of the first strategy, requests were categorized under six groups, namely: use of in-group identity markers, presupposing common ground with H, avoiding disagreement, taking notice of H's interest, intensify interest to H, and including both S and H in the activity. The overall number of the requests under each category was counted and given a percentage for its relative frequency of occurrence. The aim of this procedure was not to compare the frequencies in Australian English and Palestinian Arabic but rather to show the relative frequency of occurrence of each strategy in relation to other strategies within the same data set. For clarification purposes, consider how positive politeness works:

2. HOPE: What's wrong love?

(Ayres, 2003, p. 13)

The request in Example 2 is classified as request for information. The linguistic device used to convey positive politeness is the word “love”. When accounting for the reason beyond using positive politeness instead, for example, negative politeness, the reason was attributed to the low value of the variables D and P and to the low cost of R.

The linguistic devices used to convey positive politeness under each category were discussed. For example, under the category of use of in-group identity markers, the term first name (FN), taboo words, and terms of endearments were discussed. The study investigated the use of FN in different settings and among people where the social variables P, D, and R were not static. In other words, the discussion focused on the employment of FN in relation to the variables P, D, and R in the data. To be more comprehensive when discussing issues related to positive politeness strategies, I provided examples from other cultures, commenting on them and highlighting areas of divergence.

In order to investigate the bald-on-record strategy with negative politeness, the study made use of Brown and Levinson’s (1987) classification. Requests carried out by employing this strategy were classified and categorized. Six strategies, namely: be conventionally indirect, hedge, minimize the imposition, give deference, apologize and be pessimistic were identified. Each strategy was further classified. As regards the strategy of conventional indirectness, the study made use of Searle’s (1979) classification of the requests performed by using conventional indirectness. Depending on their semantic formula, requests were categorized under six groups: sentences concerning H’s ability to perform A, sentences concerning S’s wish or want that H will do A, sentences concerning H’s doing A, sentences concerning H’s desire or willingness to do A, sentences concerning reasons for doing A and sentences embedding an explicit directive illocutionary verb inside one of these contexts. The reason behind such a procedure was to move from the general to the more specific discussion of indirect requests and to look more deeply at differences between Australian and Palestinian cultures.

Although requests performed by using conventional indirectness are relatively small in the data compared to requests carried out directly (e.g. requests for information), they receive special emphasis because there is a great deal of difference between the Australian and the Palestinian data. All those areas which proved to be linguistically different were highlighted. In addition, pragmatic differences were emphasized. Consider

the following example, in Palestinian Arabic, the literal translation for *can* and *could* is *tasstaTeeð/ btiqdar*. These expressions, although they are linguistically synonyms of *can*, do not have the same pragmatic function, giving H an option to comply or not when performing indirect requests. In brief, when discussing conventional indirect requests, two points were stressed: the syntactic and the pragmatic differences between the data of the two languages.

With regard to the other negative politeness strategies, they were carefully investigated. The use of each strategy was calculated according to its relative frequency of occurrence in the data. The linguistic devices used for each strategy to mitigate requests were discussed in detail, depending on the social variables Distance, Power and Ranking of imposition. Areas of similarities and differences in the data of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic were highlighted to shed light on the syntactic and the pragmatic behavior of those mitigating devices.

3.7.1.4 Methods used for analyzing the main data

Burton (1980) argues that “a rigorous and comprehensive analysis of dialogue style must be able to draw on a rigorous and coherent theoretical and descriptive framework for the analysis of all naturally occurring conversation” (p. ix). As has been stated previously, for the purpose of this study Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness model was utilized. The analysis depended mainly on the tri-dimensional scale for calculating the cost of speech acts. They are the social distance (D) between S and H, the relative power (P) H has over S and the ranking of imposition (R) of a certain speech act in a particular culture. However, some researchers (Byon, 2004; Skewis, 2003) emphasize the variables of power and distance, ignoring the variable R, arguing that the value of the two variables would determine the cost of the speech act. That is to say, if the value of P is high and the value of D is high too, then the cost of the speech act (R) will definitely be high. This proposition is not necessarily true. In my study, many instances of real urgency and metaphorical urgency, proved the opposite, where people used the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy in cases where both the social distance and relative power variables were high. Therefore, this study focused on the three variables.

The distance variable was given a binary value depending on whether S and H knew each other or not. If S and H knew each other quite well, the value of the D variable was –distance. In contrast, if S and H did not know each other, the variable was given the value +distance. As regards the power variable, it was treated as a ternary value. First, if S was higher in position or social status than H, the value of the power variable was –power. Second, if H was higher in position or social status than S, the value of the power variable was +power. Finally, the value =power was given to the variable when both S and H were equal in position or social status. The value of R was determined by the type and the number of the redressive devices employed. For example, if the cost of the request is low, and the social distance and the relative power are low too, the request will be carried out on-record without mitigation. However, if the cost of the request is high, it will be mitigated by positive or negative politeness devices, depending on the relationship between S and H. The table below demonstrates how the variables P and D work in different settings and among different people.

Setting	referents	Power	Distance
School	teacher	+	–
	student	–	–
Hospital	doctor	+	+
	patient	–	+
Family	father/mother	+	–
	children	–	–

The table reads as follows: in the school setting, the power relation between a teacher and a student is marked +power and –power respectively. In the case of the social distance, since the teacher and the students know each other quite well, the variable distance is given the value –distance. In the hospital setting, the power value is in favor of the doctor (+power). The social distance between the doctor and the patient is usually high. In the family setting, the power relation is in favor of the parents (+power) over the children (–power), whereas the social distance is always low.

It is important to mention that the value of the variables is contextually determined. For example, the relative power of the doctor over the patient only holds inside the hospital. It may change in a different setting, say, a court, where the patient is the judge

and the doctor is the plaintiff or the defendant. The social distance variable is similarly changeable. If you meet a person for the first time, for example, at work, the value of the variable distance will be +distance. However, after a while, if you and your colleague started chatting to each other, the value of the variable distance would decrease. The same is true for the imposition of a certain speech act within a particular culture. Any change of the variables P and D would definitely affect the degree of imposition. For example, asking someone for a favor, where the social distance is low would be seen as less impositive than asking someone where the D variable is high. Furthermore, some speech acts are more impositive than others, for example, requests are more face-threatening than offers.

To see how the variables D, P, and R work, let us consider examples from the plays, focusing on changing the value of each variable and then notice the cost of the request. Consider the following example, where the social distance between S and H is low:

3. HIL: Don't look at me. I am not gonna clean 'em.

(Rayson, 1990, p.10)

To discuss examples like this one, the researcher examined two things: the language and the social variables P, D, and R. As regards the language, while Hil's utterance is unquestionably efficient and clear as a directive, its forthrightness will be interpreted as peremptory and rude by many people. However, when considering the social variables, it became clear that the dialogue was not interpreted as rude or impolite because it was carried out between family members, where the social variables were neutral. That is to say they were neither in favor of S nor H. If there is inequality between S and H in terms of the social variables, I try to account for the linguistic performance and social variables as well.

Let us now consider an example where the social distance between S and H is high and notice the change in the linguistic devices used:

4. ATTENDANT: Excuse me, sir, madam. Do you have an invitation?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 84)

In this example the social distance between S and H is high, so S uses negative politeness devices (excuse me, sir and madam) to minimize the cost of the requests.

To examine how the third variable R works, we look at two things: the linguistic devices used to mitigate the face-threatening nature of the request and the value of D and P. If the value of D and P is low and there are no mitigating devices, the request is considered less face threatening. However, if the value of D and P is low and there are mitigating devices, the cost of the request is determined by the type and number of the mitigating devices.

3.7.2 Supplementary data

Besides the main data, the study made use of supplementary data to study “face” in Australian and Palestinian cultures. The data was gathered using a short questionnaire in order to give respondents the freedom to comment and write about their own experiences. Twenty respondents: 10 Palestinians and 10 Australians were involved in the interviews. The respondents were chosen carefully to represent different social sectors in order to collect diverse data. Among them were people of power such as a manager, a principal and people of higher education e.g. PhD holders, university students and teachers. Ordinary people such as workers were also among the respondents. Gender differences were also taken into consideration because there are real differences between women and men with regard to polite behavior (Holmes, 1995). There were six male respondents and four female respondents in each cultural group. The ages of the respondents ranged from 20 to 55.

3.7.2.1 Data classification and analysis

The work on face was based on and influenced by Goffman’s (1967) work on facework, in particular the notion of the loss of face and the notion of maintaining face. Following Goffman’s classification, the data obtained from the interview was classified into two groups. First, acts that cause loss of face. Second acts that maintain or enhance face.

In order to analyze the data, the researcher addressed the definitions of the term loss of face as conceptualized by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic.

The discussion was mainly concerned with the different terms employed to stand for and explain the term. Areas of similarity and difference between the definitions presented by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic were highlighted.

Acts that caused loss of face were discussed in the two cultures. Following Ho's (1994) classifications of the acts that cause loss of face, the study made a distinction between the loss of face caused by one's inability to fulfill certain social expectations and the loss of face caused by other people's failure to meet social expectations. Similarities and differences that cause loss of face between the two cultures were highlighted. In relation to acts used to maintain face, the study addressed all the acts mentioned in the data, focusing on areas of similarity and difference between the two cultural groups.

3.8 Summary

The aim of this chapter was to describe and evaluate the methods and the methodological issues used to carry out the study. The use of dialogues in plays as a source of data was discussed extensively. It was found that many researchers working in the field of linguistic politeness have made use of this type of data. A majority of the researchers emphasized the value of drama as a data source, arguing that it provides substantial material for studying conversational interaction.

With regard to other methods of data collection, there is no consensus on the validity and reliability of these methods for conducting research into linguistic politeness. Lin (2005) argues that naturally occurring data is time consuming. Migdadi (2003) maintains that there are difficulties in controlling the social variables. Atawneh (1990) states that naturally-occurring data are difficult to collect in some contexts and may not provide the necessary information. Brown and Gilman (1989) doubt the objectivity of the analysis of the data collected by this technique.

The DCT technique was also subjected to criticism by researchers working in the area of linguistic politeness. Beebe and Cummings (1996) found crucial differences between the data taken from telephone conversation and the data obtained from DCT in the following areas: amount of talk, turns taken, repetitions, and elaborations. Rose (1994) questioned the data obtained from the DCT and dismissed it for not representing Japanese

face-to-face interaction accurately. Wolfson, Marmor and Jones (1989) targeted the design of this technique, in particular, the validity of written responses to short dialogues. Similar criticism was made by Xie, He, and Lin (2005) of the role-playing technique, questioning the familiarity of the situations created to all informants. Fraser (1991) also questioned the artificial nature of the presented situations. Elarbi (1996) questioned the objectivity of the data obtained from interviews, arguing that researchers can never be fully free from their personal beliefs and therefore never reach complete objectivity. Silverman (2001) argues that there is a mismatch between what people say in an answer to interview questions and their linguistic behavior in natural situations.

Since the findings obtained from the studies that make use of drama as a source of data are consistent with Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, I strongly support this type of data to conduct research on linguistic politeness. I share with others (Brown and Gilman, 1989; Sifianou, 1992; Simpson, 1997) the view that theatre can mirror life and what happens on stage is not often inconsistent with the codes of politeness people use in everyday interaction. Not all theatre presents language and etiquette radically different from the language and etiquette found in everyday life. The Australian and Palestinian plays used in this study present characters in a reasonably naturalistic way. Hence, it is with confidence that the plays can be subjected to thoroughgoing linguistic analyses in the following chapters.

Chapter Four

A cross-cultural exploration of the concept of “face”

4.0 Introduction

This chapter explores the concept of face across cultures, focusing in particular, on the Palestinian and Australian contexts. The origin of the concept of face will be addressed using evidence provided by researchers such as Ho (1976; 1994), Mao (1994), Oetzel et al. (2001), and Watts (2003). Since there is no consensus on the definition of face, the chapter will discuss some of the definitions available in an attempt to establish a better understanding of this key concept. Among the definitions discussed are those of Brown and Levinson (1987), Goffman (1967), O’Driscoll (1996), and Ting-Toomey (1999). The chapter will also discuss various empirical studies on face including cultures as diverse as Thai (Ukosakul, 2005), Iranian (Koutlaki, 2002), Tunisian (Elarbi, 1997), Chinese (Mao, 1994) and Igbo (Nwoye, 1992).

The chapter will investigate expressions related to face, for example, upgrading/honoring expressions and face demeaning/threatening expressions. The term “loss of face” and acts that cause loss of face in Australian English and Palestinian Arabic will be addressed. The chapter will also investigate acts that enhance face in Australian and Palestinian cultures, in order to fully understand how people can enhance each other’s face during an encounter. Areas of similarities and differences between both cultures will be emphasized.

4.1 Background

Haugh and Hinze (2003) argue that the concept of face has been used by different groups of researchers, such as social anthropologists, pragmalinguists, sociolinguists, sociologists and psycholinguists, to refer to different social phenomena. They also argue that “face” has been used in an “academic sense” by a range of researchers, such as Brown and Levinson (1987), primarily as an “explanatory mechanism in the study of politeness discourse” (Haugh & Hinze, 2003, p.1582).

According to Ho (1976; 1994), Mao (1994), Oetzel et al. (2001), and Watts (2003), the concept of face originated in China. Oetzel et al. argue that “Goffman (1955) was one

of the first Western writers to examine face and his definition of face was influenced by the Chinese concept of face” (p. 237). Ho (1976) argues that “the concept of face is, of course, Chinese in origin, and the term is a literal translation of the Chinese *lien* and *mien-tzu*” (p. 867).

Goffman (1967) argues that all people within all cultures project a public face-image, “a sense of positive identity and public self-esteem” (Morand, 1995, p. 55). He also emphasizes the fact that face is a public image and can be lost, maintained or withdrawn. All individuals do their best to present themselves, in public, as proficient, experienced, appealing and interesting. Therefore, they do their utmost to negotiate face in order to save their faces and their interlocutors’ faces (see Chapter two for a further discussion of Goffman’s important work). Since the appearance of Goffman’s seminal work, the study of face has become an issue of great interest. Many researchers have built on Goffman’s original work. Brown and Levinson (1987) use Goffman’s work as an underpinning for their study of politeness theory. More recently, Ting-Toomey (1988) lays the basis for “face negotiation theory”, where she claims that face represents an individual’s claimed sense of positive image in the context of social interaction.

Following Goffman’s (1967) concept of face, Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory, and Ting-Toomey’s (1988) face-negotiation theory, researchers have investigated face and face threatening acts cross-culturally. Recently, researchers have become aware of the effects of face and politeness when learning a second or a foreign language. Wang et al. (2005) investigates the role of politeness in educational contexts. Watson (1999) investigates the effects of the fear of intimidation, embarrassment, and loss of face on Asian students’ academic achievements while learning in Australia. Similarly, Greenwood (1997) investigates the behavior of three Japanese female students inside the classroom and the effects of the concept of the loss of face on their behavioral interaction on the one hand and on their academic achievements on the other.

4.2 Discussions on the definitions of the term “face”

Although face as a universal concept exists nearly in every culture, it has lacked a universal definition. Ng (2008) argues in this regard that although there is an agreement about the universality of face, there is little agreement about the definition of face across

cultures. Ho (1976) maintains that “although everyone appears to have some notion of what face entails, a precise definition of it proves to be a most difficult task” (p. 867). In order to address this issue, various definitions of the term face will be discussed in the following pages.

Goffman (1967) conceptualizes an individual’s face as something that is not “lodged in or on his body, but rather something that is diffusely located in the flow of events in the encounter” (p. 7). Building on this conceptualization and understanding of the nature of face, Goffman defines face as

The positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self – delineated in terms of approved social attributes – albeit an image that others may share, as when a person makes a good showing for his profession or religion by making a good showing for himself. (p. 5)

Brown and Levinson (1987) define face as “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself” (p. 61). There are two facets of the public image a person wants to claim: positive, to be loved and approved, and negative, to have unrestricted action and be free from imposition.

Ting-Toomey (1999) conceptualizes face as “identity and respect. It is a keen sense of favorable feelings about self-worth and what we want others to think. It is the degree that we are willing to consider the other person’s identity in a wide range of communication situations” (p. 1). In another study, Ting-Toomey (1998) envisages face as a “claimed sense of favorable social self-worth that a person wants others to have of her or him. It is a vulnerable identity-based resource because it can be enhanced or threatened in any uncertain social situation” (p. 187).

Watts’ (2003) definition of face is strongly influenced by Goffman’s (1967) definition, in particular that face is “on loan” (p. 10) during the whole conversation between a speaker and a hearer. He argues that

Face, then, is a socially attributed aspect of self that is temporarily on loan for the duration of the interaction in accordance with the line or lines that the individual has adopted. It is not our personal construction of the self, although the different faces we are required to adopt in different interactions do contribute towards that construction. (p. 125)

Lee-Wong (2000) stresses the social identity of face. She envisages face in terms of social relationships with other people. In other words, face in Lee-Wong's view is something that can be lost or maintained during the course of an interaction. Therefore, protecting face is a reciprocal process between a speaker and a hearer. This conceptualization is very similar to Goffman's, where the person is defined within a social context.

If one loves one's face, one should avoid face loss and attempt to maintain one's face; in looking after one's own face, it is imperative that one looks after alter's face. Face maintenance is essentially an act of balancing – the perception of self in relation to other. (Lee-Wong, 2000, p. 24)

O'Driscoll (1996) conceptualizes face as an additional want to the negative and positive wants shared by all higher animals, arguing that

We are beings with a highly complex social organization. The result of this is that our self-esteem depends in large part on the attitudes of other people towards us. This aspect of our self-esteem – the part that depends on others' attitudes towards us – is *face*. (p. 12)

Ho (1976) treats face as the immediate respect a person would like to have from others. He argues that

Face is the respectability and/or deference which a person can claim for himself from others, by virtue of the relative position he occupies in his social network and the degree to which he is judged to have functioned in his social network and the degree to which he is judged to have functioned adequately in that position as well as acceptably in his general conduct. (p. 883)

Spencer-Oatey (2005) distinguishes between two face types: "Respectability face" and "Identity face". She defines "Respectability face" as the "prestige, honor or good name that a person or social group holds and claims within a (broader) community". "Identity face", on the other hand, is defined as a "situation-specific face sensitivity, that is highly vulnerable" (pp. 102-103). She argues that "respectability face" can be quantitatively measured. There are certain variables that play a crucial role in determining the relative

weight of one's face such as age, sex, education, wealth, and status. Such variables are not invariable and can be differently assessed in different cultures. For example, in Palestinian culture, age is a very important variable. The face of an old man takes precedence over the face of a young man.

Ruhi and Isik-Guler (2007) distinguish three aspects related to face in Turkey: "face as self-representation", "face maintained" and "face as relational work" (p. 690). They argue in connection to the first aspect that face is "linked to attributes of a person or a group that are claimed as the public image by the person/group or presented as the image perceived by others" (p. 690). Face maintained involves the "evaluation of the person's (or group's) attributes, achievements, and behaviors with respect to societal norms, legal regulations, role specifications, expectations that the person or the group have of themselves, or expectations that others have of the person/group" (p. 691). Face as relational work "concerns the quality of interpersonal attention directed to a person/group" (693).

Nwoye (1992) distinguishes between what he calls "individual face" versus "group face". He uses "individual face" to refer to the individual's needs to satisfy his or her face wants and desires and to project a good self-image for himself or herself in public. "Group face," on the other hand, refers to the individual's "desire to behave in conformity with culturally expected norms of behavior that are institutionalized and sanctioned by society" (p. 313). Put it another way, in cultures that embrace "individual face" the individual places his desires and needs over the group's, whereas in cultures that adopt the "group face" the individual sacrifices his desires for the sake of the group s/he belongs to. Ting-Toomey and Kurogi (1998) argue that in collective cultures, the face of the group is more important than the individual's face. In individualistic cultures, on the other hand, the face of the individual is more important than the face of the group.

Some researchers such as Ukosakul (2005) have equated face with expressions such as self-esteem, pride, honor, but Lim (1994) holds a different view, arguing that

Face is not what one thinks of oneself, but what one thinks others should think of one's worth. Since the claim of face is about one's image held by others, one cannot claim face unilaterally without regard to the other's perspective. ... The claim for face is the claim that the other should acknowledge, whether explicitly or implicitly, that one possesses the claimed virtues. ... Face in this sense, is different from such psychological concepts as self-esteem, self-concept, ego, and pride, which can be claimed without regard to the other's perspective. (p. 210)

The definitions of face have generated a great deal of discussion. Building on the definitions above, it seems important to draw attention to some basic principles related to the definition. First, face may be defined in terms of the projection of one's social self in the public domain, i.e., the aspects of one's self that a person reveals to others. Second, it could be argued that the majority of the definitions discussed earlier conceptualize face as more than the mere possession of the individual. The person cannot assign a value to his/her own face. It is the social group that one belongs to which gives an evaluative judgment regarding the person's face. Since people build their judgments on the values upheld by society, the conceptualization of face across cultures would be, to some extent, different due to the existence of different values. In the following pages, various empirical studies investigating the concept of face cross-culturally will be discussed in order to further explore the complexities of the concept of face.

4.3 The concept of face across cultures

In many cultures, the upper part of the body is considered to be the most important part of the body because it contains the head and the face. For example, in Thai culture, according to Ukosakul (2005), a human body is divided into three parts which have different levels of importance. The most important and meaningful is the upper part of the body, which includes the head. Being located at the highest part of the body, the head, as perceived by Thai people, is believed to be exalted whereas the feet are dishonored. Therefore, touching one's head carelessly or casually must be avoided and if it happens accidentally, repair work should be undertaken immediately. Ukosakul (2005) also argues that it is considered as an offence to pass any object over one's head. In Igbo society, as described by Nwoye (1992), face refers to the area above the neck from the front of the head to the hairline. The most prominent part of the face is the eyebrows. They are considered the locale where concepts such as shame and honor reside. Similarly, in Palestinian culture the most important part of the body is the head because it contains the

face. As in Thai culture, it is considered as an offence to pass any item over the head of a person.

Face is also used metaphorically across cultures to stand for notions such as “respect, honor, status, reputation, credibility, competence, family/network connection, loyalty, trust, relational indebtedness and obligation issues” (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi 1998, p. 190). For example, in Thai culture, face-related idioms reveal that face metaphorically represents four aspects of a person: “one’s personality, one’s countenance, one’s emotions” and the “concept of honor”. These aspects of the Thai face are similar to the concepts held by other cultures such as Chinese, Japanese and other Asian cultures who associate face with concepts such as dignity, self-esteem, prestige, reputation and pride (Ukosakul, 2005, p. 119).

Mao (1994) argues that the Chinese face consists of two components, namely, *mianzi* and *liǎn*. *Mianzi* stands for “prestige or reputation, which is either achieved through getting on in life, or ascribed (or even imagined) by members of one’s own community”, whereas *liǎn* refers to the respect a person gains from the people due to his moral behavior (p. 457). Mao also maintains that there is a difference between losing *liǎn* and losing *mianzi*. To lose *liǎn* is considered far more dangerous than to lose *mianzi*. If someone’s *mianzi* is lost due to a misfortune or to a certain failure, say, losing a financial fortune in the share market, his/her *liǎn* will not be affected. However, if one’s *liǎn* is lost, it is difficult to keep his/her *mianzi* intact.

Koutlaki (2002) states that Iranian face consists of two face components, namely, *šæxsiæt* and *ehteram*. *Šæxsiæt* means “personality, character, honour, self-respect, social standing”. A person who behaves according to the codes of behavior endorsed by the society can be characterized as *bašæxsiæt*, meaning “with *šæxsiæt*”, whereas a person who shows no respect to others and behaves in an offensive manner is characterized as *bišæxsiæt*, meaning “without *šæxsiæt*” (p. 1742). The second component of face is *ehteram*. It can be rendered as “honour, respect, esteem, dignity”. *Ehteram* “establishes the positions and statuses of the interactants with respect to one another and is shown through the adherence to the established norms of behaviour according to the addressee’s position, age, status and interlocutors’ relationship” (p. 1742).

Elarbi (1997) argues that *wižžeh* in Tunisian Arabic can be glossed as “face” in English. It is used metaphorically to represent politeness. Besides *wižžeh*, according to Elarbi, the “beard”, “mustache” and “eyes” as parts of the face are also used metaphorically to describe certain behavior (p. 14). The beard and mustache represent prestige and reputation when they are used to describe men. Both terms can be used interchangeably to refer to the same thing. A person described as having a beard or a mustache is being approved by his society as reputable and moral. Whereas, if the person is described as having no beard or no mustache, this indicates shame, and it is considered a serious accusation to the person’s reputation and represents his group’s condemnation of his despicable or immoral behavior.

The metaphorical usage of face among the Igbo is prominent. Nwoye (1992) argues that “face” is used to stand for “shame, negative, or positive dispositions towards others, honor, good and bad fortune, and so forth” (p. 314). This is clearly noticeable in Igbo society, where people use a variety of expressions to stress this fact. For example, the expression “there is no shame on his (eye) brows” indicates an assessment of the person being described as shameless (p. 312).

Rosenberg (2004) argues that face is a “multi-faceted term, and its meaning is inextricably linked with culture and other terms such as honor and its opposite, humiliation” (p. 1). She also points out that cultures have different assessments of the importance of face. According to Rosenberg (2004), in “high-context cultures”, which include countries such as “Korea, China, and Japan in Asia, Middle-Eastern countries such as Egypt and Iran”, the concepts of shame and honor are more important than in low-context societies such as “U.S. and Western countries” (p. 2). Similarly, Fox (2008) points out that the “Asian concept of face is similar to the Western concept of face, but it is far more important in most Asian countries” (p. 1). Ng (2008) stresses the importance of face in Asian cultures as well as Western ones. Ho (1976) states that “while it is true that the conceptualization of what constitutes face and the rules governing face behavior vary considerably across cultures, the concern for face is invariant” (pp. 881-882).

It could be argued that both Rosenberg (2004) and Fox’s (2008) claims are questionable. The point in question is that what constitutes shame and honor is culture-specific. Each culture assesses shame and honor in relation to its values, traditions and

social norms. For example, according to Strecker (1993), in Hamar culture, the bigger an animal a person kills, the more honorable he will appear among his people. This tradition seems ridiculous to Western people and appalling to vegetarians who refrain from eating meat to protect animals. Since honor can be achieved through actions that are valued differently in high-context cultures and low-context cultures, it seems that honor is accorded differently in these two cultural groups. Likewise, the concept of shame cannot be understood across the two cultural groups. For example, while certain issues relating to women are very sensitive in both Egypt and Iran, the same issues are not as significant in U.S. and Western countries. It is worth mentioning that Sarah Palin (American Vice Presidential candidate for the Republicans in 2009) has a daughter who gave birth to a baby before getting married. In both Egypt and Iran, such an action is among the most shameful, whereas in U.S. it is no longer considered as a despicable act. In short, researchers who issue evaluative judgments on cultural issues, describing one value or standard as more or less important in one culture than in another, ignore the fact that “every culture is so distinctive than one would have to spend years if not a lifetime mastering its rich intricacies and nuances” (Morand, 1995, p. 54).

The second point to be addressed is Fox’s (2008) claim that face is far more important in Asian cultures than in Western cultures. Redding and Ng (1982) comment on this point, arguing that the negative consequences of losing face in Chinese culture affect the individual as much as they affect the group one belongs to. This claim invites the question “How do Westerners and Asians conceptualize face?” “How can we measure the importance of face in two different cultures?” In order to answer the first question we need a thorough investigation in both cultures to identify how these cultures define and conceptualize face. To answer the second question, we need to find the common ground between Western and Asian cultures so that this shared basis can be used as a starting point for comparison. This is no easy matter, since we are talking about different cultures which embrace different values and traditions. It could be also argued that the stronger consequences of losing face in Chinese culture, compared to those of its loss in Western cultures are attributed to different norms of social life. While in Western cultures the individual constitutes the core concept of the societal structure, in Asian countries the group constitutes the basis. Nevertheless, in every society people strive to project a good self-image in public and, accordingly, use face-saving procedures as much as necessary during an encounter.

4.3.1 The concept of face in Palestinian culture

In Palestinian culture, *Wajih*, meaning “face”, is used to describe the front part of the head from the forehead to the lower jaw. However, it is also used metaphorically to stand for expressions such as “respect” “shame”, “honor”, and “dignity”. Unlike other cultures such as Chinese culture (Mao, 1994) and Iranian culture (Koutlaki, 2002) which employ two expressions to refer to face, Palestinian culture does not make such a distinction. However, in the folk sense, Palestinian culture distinguishes between two types of face-related expressions. Echoing Agyekum’s (2004) classification, the key concepts can be referred to as “face upgrading/honoring” and “face demeaning/threatening” actions (p. 77). Both types figure prominently in many face-related expressions.

Goffman’s (1967) definition of face as the “positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact” (p. 5) fits well with Palestinian face. Every person takes care of his/her social behavior because face is not an individual property, but rather, it is the possession of the whole social group one belongs to. So, avoiding anti-social behavior is not only desirable but obligatory as well. In order not to tarnish the name of the family and put one’s face in danger, every person has to think twice before uttering a word and ten times before carrying out an action. In some situations, a person has to avoid some actions, even though carrying out these actions may make one feel good and fulfill one’s ordinary expectations, in order not to create a clash between one’s face wants and the face wants of his or her social circle. If it happens and one’s face is lost through committing some anti-social actions or violating certain social rules, it is not easy to redeem face and make a fresh start.

According to Goffman (1967), face functions as “the traffic rules of social interaction” (p. 12). Brown and Levinson (1987) stress the role of face as a significant factor that affects the manner in which interlocutors interact socially (Ruhi & Isik-Guler, 2007). *Wajih* in Palestinian culture functions as a deterrent, making people abide by the institutionalized and sanctioned code of politeness. At the same time, the significance of face in this society prevents people from violating social rules and engaging in actions that might be considered as antithetical to the interests of the group. Similarly, as Strecker (1993) argues, in Hamar culture, face is a “coercive social concept and indirectly speaks of social chains” (p. 3). Ruhi and Isik-Guler (2007) claim that in Turkish culture “it is the

avoidance of face damage that is the predominant cultural schema” (p. 695). De Kadt (1998) argues that the fear of losing face prevents Zulu people from behaving inappropriately. Nwoye (1992) also maintains that in Igbo society, the fear of darkening face and, hence, tarnishing the name of the group the person belongs to deters people from breaking the norm of politeness. In Thai society, face guides people to behave well in order to be socially acceptable (Ukosakul, 2005). Igbo face, according to Nwoye (1992), is used as a “mechanism of social control and as a deterrent against anti-social behaviour” (pp. 314-315). Likewise, Lee-Wong (2000), states that the Chinese face has a major and basic role to play in the establishment of the social code.

In Palestinian culture, face plays an important role in solving disputes among people. For example, if members of two families engage in any kind of dispute which leads to direct confrontation, a mediator is always called in. The first step the mediator takes is to prevent any future clash or confrontation between the members of the two families. This can be always done by using an expression such as *wijhi daleeha* which could be interpreted as “I stake my reputation on it”. Once the two families agree to show respect to the face of the mediator, it is considered as a commitment from the two families to end all kinds of hostilities. If a member of one family harasses any member of the other family, he or she is said to “affront the face of the mediator”. Affronting the face of the mediator is a very serious matter, because mediators are always well-respected people in the community. The facework used to restore the face of the mediator is in proportion to the severity of the affront.

Like Goffman (1967) and Brown and Levinson (1987), Ho (1994) stresses the reciprocity concerns for saving face during an encounter. According to Ho, the need to save face exerts a pressure on the individual to behave in line with the requirements necessary to maintain face in a particular culture. The actions carried out by one person will be under scrutiny and the more face he or she claims the more pressure will be put on them in terms of the social visibility of his or her actions, and hence the constraints imposed on their actions will be greater. The need to protect self’s face and the other’s face affects the line of the encounter. Therefore, to avoid losing face is an overriding concern in many cultures. Such reciprocity concerns dominate in Palestinian culture. The proverb *daamil annaas kamaa tuhib lan tudaamal*, meaning “Do as you would be done by”

(Baalbaki & Baalbaki, 2003, p. 32), encapsulates such a concept. This sense of reciprocity prevails among members of the community irrespective of the social status of the person or his or her relative power. People in power cannot overlook others' face needs to be treated politely in public. Hence, showing respect to other people means paying respect to the self in Palestinian culture.

4.3.1.1 Face upgrading/honoring expressions

In Palestinian culture, there are some expressions that uphold face and portray the positive image of the person. Some of these expressions are used to describe face and give an overall picture about the person being described, while others are used to describe a person after carrying out an immediately honorable action. For example, the expression *fi wajhu nuur* which literally means that “there is light on his face” is used to describe people who have good and sincere faith in God. It is also taken as an indication that the person being described is good and righteous. Being a righteous person implies that the person is moral, polite, well behaved and considerate. It is hard to describe a person as being righteous where such features are absent. The above expression is more general in that it covers social and religious values. A similar expression to the one above, which is used to describe the face of people who show sincere devotion to God, is *wajhu kalqamar*, meaning “his face is like the moon”. Linguistically speaking, this expression is a simile where the face of the person is described as the moon. It has the same connotative function as the expression *fi wajhu nuur*, but it is less popular when it comes to describing religious people. It is often connected with description of the face and it is considered as certifying the beauty of the person being described. It is associated with women rather than men and denotes their physical beauty.

Two expressions used in Palestinian culture to enhance face are *fi wajhu dam* and *fi wajhu hayaa?*, meaning literally “there is blood on his face” and “there is bashfulness on his face” respectively. Since blood is vital for life in the human body, it is used metaphorically to describe polite people. This expression is used for people who behave according to the sanctioned rules and to the codes of politeness. It is important to mention that this expression is not used to address the person directly, but it is used to praise and elevate the person's face in his or her absence. Other related expressions connected with the concept of politeness are *ʾinsaan thaqeel* and *ʾinsaan xajuul* which literally mean “a

heavy person” and “a modest person” respectively. The person is described as a heavy man or woman only if he or she is polite and well respected in the community. In the second expression, although the word *xajuul* has a negative meaning in other situations, it is considered the opposite in this situation and is equivalent to the adjective *polite*.

The other two remaining face upgrading/honoring expressions are connected directly with actions. They are *bayaD wajhu/bayaD wjuhna*, meaning “he whitens his face/he whitens our faces” and *rafaδ raasu/rafaδ ruusna*, meaning “he raised his head/he raised our heads”. These expressions are connected only with honorable actions, irrespective of whether the action is religious, social, educational or humanitarian. They are used to enhance and support not only the face of the person but also the face of his family. Similarly, in the Akan culture of Ghana, expressions that upgrade or honor face are used to show respect and exalt the person. Expressions such as “she brightens my face”, “to bring glory” and “she uplifts my face” are used when a person has achieved a reputable action that reflects well on his/her family members, friends or the community (Agyekum, 2004, p. 83).

4.3.1.2 Face demeaning/threatening expressions

What has been said so far about upgrading/honoring expressions represents the positive side of the face. Face demeaning/threatening expressions use the exact opposites of the literal meanings of the upgrading/honoring expressions and are used to describe the negative side of face. The expression *wajih miδbis*, meaning “he has a dark face” is used as an exact opposite for the expression *fi wajhu nuur* “there is light on his face”. It is used to describe people who are not friendly. It is also used to describe people who are not keen on showing respect to God or who behave badly.

Two face-related expressions connected with impoliteness are *ma feeš fi wajhu dam* and *ma feeš fi wajhu hayaa?*, literally meaning “there is no blood on his face” and “there is no bashfulness on his face”, respectively. The word *dam* (blood) is very similar to polite behavior in this expression, where the absence of blood is interpreted as the absence of polite behavior. Another expression connected with impoliteness is *ĩnsaan xafiif*, meaning “he is a light person”. In Palestinian culture, if a person is described as a light person in terms of weight, he/she is perceived as impolite and inconsiderate. This is similar to Akan

culture where the same expression (light) is collocated with face as in the expression “his/her face is light”. Such an expression damages the person’s good image and also threatens one’s positive face by portraying him/her as a demeaned or undignified person in the community (Agyekum (2004, p. 85). According to Agyekum, there are also some face-related expressions that represent an insult to the person. For example, the expression “to use one’s face as a plantain” is considered as an insult to the person being addressed (p. 86).

In the same vein, in Tunisian culture, some expressions are offensive or insulting in nature. Unlike beard/mustache-related expressions, Elarbi (1997) argues that eye related expressions are not gender specific. The expression “he fell from my eye” (p. 16) is used when someone’s behavior is considered repugnant. It also shows the speaker’s anger and dissatisfaction. The expression, “his face is covered with shit, may God protect you [from having the same disgrace]” (p. 17) is used when someone’s face is tarnished because the person has committed a very serious breach of moral behavior. It is important to mention that these face-related expressions are used in accordance with the weight of the actions committed. In Palestinian culture, a similar expression to the Tunisian “he fell from my eye” is used in very similar situations.

The last two face-related expressions are closely connected with committing shameful and immoral acts. They are *sawad wajhu/wjuuhna* and *waTa raasu/ruusna*, meaning “he blackens his face/our faces” and “he lowered his head/our heads”. White is symbolic in Palestinian culture: it stands for chastity, honor and freedom from wrongdoing. In contrast, black is a color of dishonor, disgrace and signals wrong-doing. It collocates with face to describe how much damage one does to his or her face or to the face of the family. Similarly, according to Ruhi and Isik-Guler (2007), in Turkish culture white, black and red, are used metaphorically to make judgments about one’s social behavior. While “white” is associated with “pride”, “black” is associated with “disgrace”. Red is connected with “embarrassment and shame” (p. 689). The second expression *waTa raasu/ruusna* is used if a person commits a serious anti-social act such as theft or rape and, hence, commits a very serious breach of the codes of morality and politeness. In such a case the lowering of the head indicates shame and disgrace. People sometimes say “he cannot raise his or her head” because the burden of shame is unbearable.

There are other face-related expressions used to attack face. They can be used in face-to-face interaction to offend or they can be used to describe a person's face to others in his or her absence. In both cases the offensive nature of these expressions is presented. These offensive expressions are *wajhu kalqird*, meaning "he has a monkey face" and *wajhu kashayTaan*, meaning "he has a devil face". Although the monkey is considered as a pleasing intelligent animal, in Palestinian culture the word *kalqird* is used as an offensive word. Describing a person as having a monkey face is considered as an insult. In the second expression, although the devil is considered a legendary being, it has a wicked ugly face in Palestinian folk-tales. In short, using these expressions to attack a person's face is immediately connected with certain speech situations. People use such offensive expressions when they feel outraged and cannot control their behavior.

4.3.2 The concept of face in Australian culture

According to *The Collins English Dictionary* (2001), "face" refers to the "front of the head from the forehead to the lower jaw" (p. 543). Metaphorically speaking, in the Australian data, face stands for concepts such as "respect", "reputation", "social status", "pride", "embarrassment" and "shame". It is worth mentioning that in contrast to Palestinian culture, face-related expressions are not found in the Australian data.

4.4 The concept of the loss of face

Goffman (1967) argues that "in our Anglo-American society, as in some others, the phrase 'to lose face' seems to mean to be in the wrong face, to be out of face, or to be shamefaced" (p. 9). Ho (1976) argues that losing face refers to important changes that have occurred to one's face. That is to say face may be lost "when the changes constitute a departure from the quality or quantity of the individual's claim" (p. 870). Brown and Levinson's (1987) conceptualize face as consisting of two aspects: negative face and positive face. When they are talking about the concept of losing face, they are talking about threatening either aspect of face, depending on the type of the speech act performed.

In the data collected from the Supplementary Questionnaires, the notion of loss of face occurs in Australian and Palestinian cultures. However, there are slight differences in using different terms to refer to the same concept. In the Palestinian data, loss of face is connected with the feeling of being "embarrassed", "ashamed", "humiliated", "losing

reputation”, “belittled” and “losing dignity”. As one of the respondents put it “losing face means that you are embarrassed as a result of an unexpected situation. It also means that you lose your reputation or dignity when something really bad happens to you or to your family”. Losing face in Australian culture, on the other hand, is connected with expressions such as being “embarrassed”, “ashamed”, “humiliated”; losing “dignity”, “pride”, “good name”, “honor”, “respectability”, and “integrity”. One of the respondents states that “to lose face is to become embarrassed because an event or individual has taken away from your dignity in some manner. One feels that their sense of pride in themselves has been disturbed by a certain incident. Losing face always refers to situations in which another individual is present whom you are embarrassed in front of. This person is usually a person that you hold in high esteem or respect”.

4.4.1 Acts that cause loss of face

Ho (1994) argues that face may be lost as a result of one’s inability to meet social expectations and also as a result of other people’s failure to meet social expectations. The distinction between one’s failure and others’ failure to meet certain social expectations is worth considering when discussing acts that cause loss of face because it gives us information about the effect of a person’s social circle on his or her social behavior. Bearing this distinction in mind, I start by investigating acts that are connected with one’s inability to satisfy certain social expectations. It is worth mentioning that such acts, in both the Australian and Palestinian data sets, are work-related or connected with personal achievements.

In the Australian and the Palestinian data, there are examples where face is lost as a result of inability to meet certain social expectations. One Australian respondent says “in one of the classes I was teaching I was unable to answer a particular question from a student. The student challenged me about it. I felt embarrassed and that I wasn’t a good teacher. I felt as if I had lost face”. In the Palestinian data, a similar situation is mentioned. One respondent reports that “when I went to teach at a school in Melbourne. I was really excited, but the kids made me embarrassed. They started laughing at my accent and repeated my words as I pronounced them”.

The two situations described above are work-related. Both respondents have undergone face loss in the form of social embarrassment. Embarrassment is defined as an “emotional state experienced upon having a socially or professionally unacceptable act or condition witnessed by or revealed to others. Usually some amount of loss of honour or dignity is involved” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Face_negotiation_theory). Respondents feel that they have lost face because they failed to maintain their professional reputation and status. According to Ho (1976), “failure to maintain one’s social status, to function adequately in a given role, or to safeguard integrity of character in one’s general conduct will make the loss of face a likely possibility” (p. 872). As stated by Oetzel et al. (2001), since face represents the “individual’s claimed sense of positive image in the context of social interaction” (p. 235), it could be argued that the face of the respondents was lost due to the clash between two face images. First, the image the person holds for himself or herself as a competent, qualified teacher. Second, the opposed image the audience projects back to him. The loss of face in such situations emerges from the mismatch between the two face images and from the premise that teachers are supposedly to satisfy certain academic requirements by holding the students’ attention and maintaining an orderly classroom. Ho (1994) argues that the “individual has no choice but to satisfy these requirements. For failing to do so would reveal basic incongruities between the individual’s social ineptitude or unworthiness and the social recognition he claims to deserve” (p. 871).

Loss of face can also be caused by the behavior of family. According to Ho (1976) face is lost “when the individual, either through his action or that of people closely related to him, fails to meet essential requirements placed upon him by virtue of the social position he occupies” (p. 867). One Australian respondent reported that “You can also lose face when another person acts in a way that reflects badly on you – for example, if a child lacks manners in a public arena, the parent will lose face because it reflects badly on their parenting skills”. A similar story was told by a female Palestinian respondent. She mentioned a situation where her face was lost as a result of the bad behavior of her children at one of her friend’s house. She comments on the situation, “I was very embarrassed when my children started running from one room to another in a friend’s house. They refused to stop when I told them”. Although children are children in all cultures, sometimes they cause embarrassment to their parents when their behavior falls below what is thought to be acceptable and as a result parents lose face.

Goffman (1967) argues that face is “something that is diffusely located in the flow of events” (p. 7). That is to say, face is likely to be lost or enhanced while engaging with other people in normal social interactions. Morand (1995) states that face is “continuously ventured by individuals” (p. 55). In the Australian and the Palestinian data, face was reported to be lost not because of individuals’ failure to meet certain requirements but as a result of another person’s behavior. An Australian female respondent reported that “I most recently lost face when I was standing with two friends, one a close girl friend (A), and one a boy (B) who trains at my rowing club. A and B know each other. I am very good friends with both of them. I was telling a story about an interaction I had with another person (C) whom both A and B know of. After recounting what C had said in our conversation, B turned to me in a disinterested way and said rudely, ‘and was the whole conversation in such a high-pitched voice?’ referring to the fact that I had told the story in quite an excited, high tone, which of course, wouldn’t have been the same at the time of interaction. The girl made me lose face in front of B, because she undermined my story-telling. By laughing at me she indicated that she did not really engage with me or the story. She made me seem uninteresting, and indicated that she lacked respect for me”.

In the above situation, the respondent lost face because one of the audience behaved in away that was considered inconsiderate by the respondent. According to Ho (1976), “face may be lost when conduct or performance falls below the minimum level considered acceptable” (p. 871). The way in which the respondent was addressed was considered offensive because it damaged her public self-image as an interesting person. It is important to mention that in Palestinian culture such a situation would not cause face loss to the respondent, but it would definitely incur some cost for the other person. In Palestinian culture, people are not free to comment negatively on another’s performances. They are held accountable by their families for every word they utter about someone. For example, describing a story told by someone as silly would be taken as a direct insult to the person who tells the story. Therefore, facework in such a case is necessary. Apologies such as “I’m very sorry” addressed to someone after insulting him or her in a public arena cannot redeem or restore face in Palestinian society. Other forms of remedial work should take place afterwards, depending on how serious the damage to face is. Insulting a person is less serious than insulting his or her family. The age and gender of both participants are also crucially important. An insult from an old man to a young one is less serious than an

insult from a young man to an old man. An insult from a man to a woman is more serious than an insult from a woman to a man.

These issues can be tackled from a cultural perspective if we rely on “face negotiation theory”. As stated by Ting-Toomey (1999), it could be argued that cultural differences between individualistic cultures versus collectivistic cultures could be a significant reason for the different responses that might occur between Australian and Palestinian cultures. It is worth mentioning that in the work of Ting-Toomey (1999) Australian culture, like other Western cultures, can be classified as belonging to the individualistic cultures whereas Palestinian culture can be classified under the collectivistic cultures. In individualistic cultures, Ting-Toomey (1999, p. 2) argues, individuals tend to show a greater degree of self-face maintenance concerns and fewer other-face maintenance concerns. In contrast, in collectivistic cultures, individuals show a greater degree of other-face concerns and fewer self-maintenance concerns. Hence, in collectivistic cultures, an individual’s main priority is to maintain the face of the other person, whereas in individualistic cultures individuals do their best to maintain their own face.

Cultural differences are one of the major factors that cause face loss. Brown and Levinson (1987) are aware of cultural issues, arguing that “even minor differences in interpretative strategies carried over from a first to a second language can lead to misunderstanding and cross group stereotyping of interactional style” (p. 36). Problems may arise if one tries to transfer his or her politeness strategies to another culture. A Palestinian respondent reported that “One day an Australian family came to our house to have lunch. When the guests stood up to go back home, the man wanted to say Thank You to me. He moved his face towards mine to kiss me, but I moved my face away quickly. When the man approached me, I thought he was going to shake hands, but when I realized he was going to kiss me ... I was very embarrassed”. In Brown and Levinson’s (1987) terms, there are cultural differences in assessing what constitutes a face-threatening act. For many Australian speakers, kissing women on the cheek is not considered a face-threatening act, whereas it is for Palestinians. In such a situation, differences in greeting and farewelling procedures between Australians and Palestinians are obvious. In Australian culture, kissing women when entering one’s property is acceptable in some groups as a form of greeting. In contrast, in Palestinian culture, men shake hands and

women kiss each other. Failure to observe this sociopragmatic norm may result in negative stereotyping which might lead to tension or to a cultural clash.

Similarly, cultural differences were found to cause face loss for students studying in another cultural environment. According to Watson (1999), the fear of losing face stands as a barrier for many Asian students studying at Australian institutions. Watson found that students' reluctance to participate in classroom discussion was attributable to the fear of making mistakes and, hence, appearing foolish in front of class. This could affect students' self-esteem. It was also found that students refrained from asking teachers questions in order not to threaten the teacher's face. Similar results were obtained by Greenwood (1997), where three Japanese girls were reported not to participate in any classroom discussion. Greenwood argues that the reason could be attributed to the fact that "they may be afraid, not only of losing face by giving the wrong answer or using incorrect English, but also of causing the teacher to lose face" (p. 82). The girls were also found to listen and not to ask questions in order to prevent the teacher from gaining the impression that the lesson was unclear and badly presented. In accordance with Japanese tradition and culture, silence after one has finished his or her speech is considered as a sign of respect for what has been said. Spencer-Oatey (2005) argues that losing face is connected with variations found among people in their value judgments, in addition to variations connected with contexts. She points out that "many secondary school children in England feel they will lose face among their peers if they appear to be too clever and/or studious, because they value the attribute "cool" more highly than clever or hardworking" (p. 466).

Loss of face can be attributed to differences in family rules. In Palestinian culture, although smoking is considered a bad habit if it is practiced by teenagers, it is considered socially unacceptable if it is practiced in front of parents by either adults or teenagers and may cause face loss. One Palestinian respondent reported that "I have never smoked in front of my father. He doesn't even know that I smoke. One day, when he saw me smoking his expression darkened. He didn't utter a single word but when I looked at his eyes I could see many things on his eyes. I didn't know what to do that night. I was ashamed of myself". It could be argued that such a situation would never cause any face loss for speakers of Australian English because the cultures have different values in terms of family relationships. Moreover, smoking in front of the parents is not considered socially taboo in Australian culture. In Palestinian culture, on the other hand, it is considered

socially taboo if it is practiced by young and adults in front of their parents because it is considered disrespectful and a serious affront to the parents.

Related to the concept of respectability is the use of titles when addressing old people in Palestinian culture. The title *Haj/Haje* is used to address old people to show respect to them. Conversely, addressing an old man or woman without using the title will definitely indicate disrespect and cause loss of face. A Palestinian respondent reported that “on one occasion I addressed an old man by *Haj* and his first name. But the man did not hear the word *Haj* properly. He was angry at me and said “Did your parents teach you like that?” I was embarrassed to hear such a comment in front of other people”. What causes loss of face in this situation is the fact that the old man felt humiliated because he believed he had not received due respect from a younger person. The speaker has also lost face because the older man’s angry response characterizes him as inconsiderate.

However, it could be argued that in Australian culture a situation like the one above would never cause any face loss to either a speaker or hearer. It is because the habit of addressing people in the two cultures is different. People in Australian culture commonly address each other by first name only. Titles are not used if the social distance between a speaker and a hearer is low. Also, in Australian culture, the age variable is not as important as in Palestinian culture. In Palestinian culture, even though a speaker and a hearer know each other well, if their ages are significantly different, the younger should address the older with an appropriate title. Such cultural differences would cause misunderstanding and make a person lose face, especially, if a young Australian were to address an older Palestinian man with his or her first name.

Brown and Levinson (1987) classify compliments among actions that threaten the listener’s negative face because in some cultures the complimentee is put under pressure to give the object being complimented to the complimenter. However, in the case mentioned below the opposite happened, where the face of the complimenter was lost because of the overgenerosity of the complimentee. One Palestinian respondent reported that “One day while I was in a wedding party, I met an old friend of mine who was wearing a very nice necklace. I complimented her and praised the necklace. Very quickly, my friend took off the necklace and asked me to try it. When I tried it, I wanted to take it off but my friend insisted on me keeping it. I was really, really embarrassed. If I had known she would have

given it to me I wouldn't have complimented her. I was very shy. I insisted she take it back. But she refused. She made me feel as small as a bird. I did not know what to say to her. I was embarrassed to the extent that I did not even thank her for her gift”.

Face loss, in the above case, emerges because of the perceived over-generosity of the complimentee. Although compliments are very common in Palestinian culture as a way of enhancing face, it is unlikely to end up as in the case above, giving your possessions to another person. Likewise, in Jordanian culture, according to Farghal and Al-Khatib (2001), and Migdadi (2003) where generosity is highly valued, people when responding to a compliment should offer the complimented item to the complimentor. Failure to do so, for one reason or another, may jeopardize the face of the complimentee and is likely to be considered as impolite behavior. The offering is always received favorably by the complimentor who responds by words of thanking and other formulaic expressions. In the case above, what causes face loss for the complimentor is the unexpected move from the complimentee to offer the necklace and her insistence that the complimentor keep it. This is not the common social norm in Palestinian culture. However, the habit of offering the complimented item does not exist in Australian culture, and hence loss of face will not happen when people compliment each other.

In Australian English, humiliating someone or belittling him or her causes loss of face. A respondent said “When I was married to my last wife, I was at a family Christmas party. I had very little money at that time but I felt I should buy my father-in-law a present, better than nothing I thought. But all I could afford was three small chocolates. I presented them to him at a family gathering just before Christmas. He was a rude man sometimes and opened them up. He laughed and said ‘What is that[?] it’s nothing!’ And then I felt very small that I was too poor to buy him something”. The reason for losing face in this situation is not linguistic rudeness, because – similar to the situation mentioned by the Palestinian student above – the father-in-law uses no transgressive language. However, belittling the gift and mocking the respondent’s poverty are very face-threatening acts.

For the sake of comparing cultural values in Palestinian and Australian cultures, I would like to recount something that happened to me that was similar to the incident mentioned by the previous Australian respondent. When I got engaged to my wife, according to Palestinian traditions, after one week, I had to buy a good gift and pay a visit

to my fiancée. I went to a shop to buy a nice dress, but frankly speaking, I had no idea whatsoever about women's clothes, so I sought help from the salesman to find a fashionable dress. The man gave me a dress and said to me "This is the most fashionable dress in the market". I took it proudly to my fiancée's house and asked her to try it on. I said to her "It is the latest fashion", she said to me "Yes, it is. It is very nice. I like it very much". My mother-in-law also praised it and thanked me. Two months later, we got married. My wife and I were invited to my sister's house to have dinner. My wife asked me what she should wear. I went directly to the closet and brought out the dress I had bought. She looked at me smiling and said in a low voice "This one", I interrupted her quickly saying "Yes", and she said to me "It is outmoded". I was very embarrassed. I thought that my wife believed that I was not a generous man. The difference in the two cultures manifests in that in Palestinian culture, people do not comment on the gift in the presence of the person who brings the gift in their houses in order not to make him lose face. By the same token, we do not unwrap the gift in the presence of the giver in order to protect his or her face in case we do not like it and we could not hide our facial expression.

Differences between Australian and Palestinian cultures arise as a result of a person's social connections. In the situation mentioned above, the face of the husband is lost in front of his wife. This seems to be unlikely in Australian culture. As one Australian respondent reported "Within Australian society I have not noticed losing face amongst my friends". It is worth mentioning that, in Palestinian culture, losing face in front of people whom you know is far more serious than losing face in front of people whom you don't know. If a person commits anti-social behavior and loses face as a result, he or she belittles himself or herself in the eyes of other people. The concept of belittling one's self is crucial in Palestinian culture. It is very important in Palestinian culture not to be diminished in the eyes of the people around you in order not to suffer the consequences of being alone in a culture which is based on the group rather than the individual. The Proverb *al-maniya wala adaniya*, meaning "death is better than being belittled in the eyes of people" (<http://www.eyelash.ps/forum/showthread.php?t=25829>), shows how serious the concept of being belittled in Palestinian culture is. This is because the concept of being belittled entails loss of respectability among your people. If someone loses his or her respectability, he or she will be ostracized.

Marriage is another area of difference between the Australian and Palestinian cultures. A Palestinian respondent mentioned “marriage break-ups” as among the actions that might cause face loss to Palestinians. However, such an action was not mentioned by any Australian respondent. Marriage break-up affects the face of the male and the female, and in most cases cause face loss to the whole family. Although the reasons and the circumstances of the break-up are different, there is one invariant fact which is that the public self-image of the couple is affected. Such an action cannot be ignored if a divorced man or woman decides to get married again. People who want to engage in a new relationship with divorced people always seek information about the true reasons for their marriage break-up in order not to engage with people who commit serious anti-social acts and, consequently, may tarnish the name of the family.

It could be argued then, that, losing face for Australians is strongly connected with the notion of personal failure. In the Australian data, six out of the ten of the situations mentioned in relation to face loss are work-related situations. One respondent commented that “The place where it is most possible for me to lose face is at work where I have a professional ‘self’ or a professional ‘image’ or a professional ‘reputation’ to maintain”. In the Palestinian data, on the other hand, the workplace is referred to only twice as a likely place to lose face. Face is more likely to be lost in different public places such as, streets, markets and social situations, perhaps because people know each other well and because of social constraints on behavior in such circumstances. People control their behavior and their children’s behavior in order to project a positive public-image of the self because committing anti-social behavior cannot be easily forgiven in Palestinian society.

4.5 Face-enhancing acts

Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that “face is something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained or enhanced, and must be constantly attended in interaction”. They focus on maintaining face rather than on enhancing face, arguing that “in general, people cooperate ... in maintaining face in interaction” (p. 61). That is to say politeness theory and the different strategies associated with it are used to minimize threat to face rather than to enhance face. It is true that politeness theory includes some ways of enhancing face under the strategy of positive politeness, but these strategies are used as threat minimizers. For example, giving gifts is mentioned under the strategy of

“presuppose/raise/assert common ground” (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 117), but it is used as a softening device not as an enhancing device. Moreover, the majority of studies on politeness make use of Brown and Levinson’s theory in order to focus their discussion on the strategies used to minimize threat to face.

Brown and Levinson (1987) acknowledge the fact that the “content of face will differ in different cultures” (p. 60). They also argue that “mutual knowledge of members’ public self-image or face, and the social necessity to orient oneself to it in interaction, are universal” (pp. 61-62). Although ways of enhancing face are said to be culture-specific, in my data, Australian and Palestinian cultures utilize nearly the same general procedures. Both cultures focus on praising a person’s good deeds and achievements, for example. However, differences between the two cultures do emerge in the details. But since the respondents’ answers lack fine detail, it is hard to tell where the tiny differences lie. One clear difference in the data is connected with “paying respect” as a way of enhancing face in Palestinian culture. .

Both Australian and Palestinian cultures consider praising the other’s achievements as a way of enhancing face. One Australian respondent maintains that “There are many challenges in the job and, at times, I wonder whether I have the skills to do the job really properly. However, after one very good day, I sent off an email to a very senior person asking about opportunities to meet a visiting and internationally known and respected academic. To my surprise, I was invited to dinner with these people along with several of my colleagues. The dinner went very well. People including the leading academic, found my conversation interesting. That I was included and because the pattern of interaction was affirming, I had my face enhanced”. Through the recognition of the person’s good performance of his job, the person’s face was enhanced. Similarly, in Palestinian culture a person’s face is enhanced if he or she has done a good work irrespective of the social, educational or humanitarian nature of the work. One Palestinian respondent reported that “One day I gave a good seminar at university. A friend of mine said to me “Well done!”, I had my face enhanced”. In the examples mentioned by the respondents, face is enhanced by the acknowledgement of their good work, which in turn enhances the person’s public self-image.

Enhancing one's face can be done either directly, face-to-face, or indirectly, where the person whose face is to be enhanced is absent. In Palestinian culture, choosing one way over another is context-dependent. In some cases direct face-enhancement is preferable to and also more effective than indirect face-enhancement. However, in some situations indirect face-enhancing is preferable. Face-to-face enhancement can also be used to make a person lose face if it is used ironically, for example, thanking a person who is neither generous nor hospitable for his or her hospitality and generosity makes him or her lose face.

Another area of similarity between Australian and Palestinian cultures is manifested by the ways in which compliments are used as a face-enhancing device. As stated by one Palestinian respondent, face can be enhanced through "complimenting and congratulating others". An Australian respondent also mentioned "sincere compliments" as a way of enhancing face. Although compliments are mentioned in the two data sets, none of the respondents mentioned anything about the nature of compliments under this heading. However, some actions functioning as compliments in the two cultures are mentioned separately. One Australian respondent mentioned "giving nice gifts" to people for special occasions. Similarly, in the Palestinian data gift-giving is mentioned as a device to enhance face as well.

Children in Australian and Palestinian cultures can be an occasion of both enhancing face and of losing face. An Australian respondent comments "in a family situation, a family's reputation is enhanced if the children are well-mannered, intelligent, beautiful and hard-working". Similarly, a Palestinian respondent maintains that "I was in the school volley ball team. I was among the best players. We played that year very well and competed till the final. In the final match I did very well. I was nearly the best player. All the audience started clapping and calling out my name. When we went the next day to school, all the teachers and students praised me, I felt very proud of myself. I honored my family and my school". What is interesting in the Palestinian respondent's answer is the fact that the name of the family is mentioned before the name of the school, which could be interpreted as I belong to my family and I am indebted to it first and then to my school. In Palestinian culture the "we" language is always used instead of the "I" language because any good or honorable act is always attributed to the family, in particular to the parents. The "we" orientation is one of the attributes of collectivistic cultures. According to Al-

Zahrani and Kaplowitz (1993), “Western cultures assign priority to the goals and identity of the individual, whereas non-Western cultures place a higher value on loyalty to the extended family and the ethnic or tribal group” (p. 233).

The main differences found between Australian culture and Palestinian culture arise from the ways Australians and Palestinians pay respect to people. Although the term “respectability” is mentioned in the Australian data, it is still unclear how Australians enhance face by respectability, because no details were given. In the Palestinian data, on the other hand, paying respect to people is mentioned frequently. According to Baalbaki and Baalbaki (2003), respect can be carried out by paying a visit (p. 781). In Palestinian culture, as in many other Arab cultures, visiting someone is a way of enhancing face because it indicates that the person is highly respected among his or her people. Other ways of showing respect in Palestinian culture are very often connected with parents, old men and women. For example kissing the hands of the father and the mother, and also kissing their head if they are not happy with any act carried out by their sons or daughters. Walking in front of one’s parents or an older man is considered disrespectful. However, walking side-by-side is considered a respectful action. Also, entering the house or getting into the car before them is looked upon as disrespectful; it is respectful to follow them in.

One way of showing respect to old people is by demonstrating obedience. Disobeying them is taken as rude and disrespectful behavior. Young people, from their early days, are socialized to pay respect, listen to older people and not to interrupt them while they are speaking. Moreover, young people are taught to seek the advice of older people and consult them because of their experience, before engaging in any social activities. Respecting old people is a code of politeness engrained in the social system and in Palestinian literature. The proverb *İhtarim kapeerak bihtirmak Sağeerak*, meaning “Respect those who are older than you, and you will be respected by those who are younger than you”, summarizes the basic assumptions on which the concept of respect works (<http://www.eyelash.ps/forum/showthread.php?t=25829>). It is strongly believed that social behavior is transitive: if you respect your father or mother, you will receive the same respect from your son or daughter.

Since paying respect is considered one of the underpinnings of the Palestinian codes of politeness, children are socialized from early childhood onwards to pay respect to people. There are many proverbs in Palestinian literature that encourage parents to socialize their children according to the sanctioned norms of politeness. For example, *rabi ḥbnak waḥsin ḥadabu, maa bimut tayxlaS ḥajalu* (<http://www.eyelash.ps/forum/showthread.php?t=25829>), meaning “Teach your son good manners, and he will not die before his due date”. There is also another example found in the data taken from the plays, where the father is urging his son to pay respect to an old man, to listen to him and not to disobey him:

1. SHEIKH SHAAMEL: *Wa Abed Al-Baaqi ḥyaaka wa muxaalaf ḥmriḥ*
and Abed Al-Baaqi not disobey his order
Do not disobey Abed Al-Baaqi’s order.

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 59)

If we consider the language between the father and the son, we notice that the father makes use of his relative power and reflects it linguistically in the form of an order instead of a request. According to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory of politeness, people of high relative power can use the bald-on-record strategy when addressing people of lower power without the fear of retribution. In this example, the reason behind using the imperative form is to emphasize the content of the message. Therefore, for Sheikh Shaamel observing Grice’s (1975) maxims of conversation, doing the FTA in the most blatant, direct and unequivocal way is more important than saving the face of his son.

4.6 Summary

Differences between the two cultures were manifested in expressions pertaining to face. In Palestinian culture, proverbs and expressions related to face are prevalent in everyday interaction. Palestinian face-related expressions were classified into two groups: “face upgrading/honoring” and “face demeaning/threatening”. Generally speaking, face upgrading/honoring expressions are connected with honorable actions and used to uphold face, while face demeaning/threatening expressions are associated with disreputable actions and used to dishonor face. In the Australian data, on the other hand, face-related

expressions are not frequently mentioned. This means that face-related expressions in Australian culture are not as popular as in Palestinian culture.

Loss of face was seen to be an area of both similarity and difference between Australian and Palestinian cultures. In both cultures, face was seen to be lost as a result of someone's inability to meet certain expectations. It was also found that in the two cultures, the group of the people or family connected to the person may cause him or her to lose face. Most serious differences in losing face were attributed to cross-cultural differences, in particular, the employment of two quite different greeting and farewelling procedures.

Face-enhancing acts in Australian and Palestinian cultures were connected with praising one's achievements and one's skills irrespective of the nature of the act. It was also found that the face of the person could be enhanced by the behavior of the people around him or her.

Chapter Five

Request realization and the bald-on-record strategy

5.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the linguistic realizations of the speech act of requests and requests performed by the bald-on-record strategy in the Australian English and Palestinian Arabic data sets. Austin's (1962) speech-act theory will be briefly described to background the speech act of request.

Since requests are realized in the Australian English and Palestinian Arabic data sets by three syntactic structures – namely, interrogative clauses, imperative clauses, and declarative clauses – the chapter will investigate requests performed by each clause type. First, the structure of the interrogative clause will be briefly discussed, with special emphasis on the two types of polar interrogatives: WH-interrogatives and tag questions. Requests performed by interrogative clauses will be investigated, in particular, requests for information, because they constitute the majority of requests performed by the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy.

Second, the syntactic structure of the imperative clause in Australian English and Palestinian Arabic will be discussed. Requests performed by using the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy will be investigated. Five request types performed by the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy are identified: requests performed by in-groupers; requests carried out in favor of hearer; attention-getters; cases of urgency, and cases of extreme tension. The reasons behind the appearance of the unmitigated forms of requests in the data will be investigated. This section concludes with a general discussion on the employment of unmitigated bald-on-record requests. Third, the syntactic structure of the declarative clause in requests will be briefly investigated.

5.1 Speech act theory

Speech act theory as it was initiated by Austin in 1962 “alerted us to the fact that speaker DOES something when making an utterance” (Allan, 2001, p. 16). When people employ language communicatively, they either do things for other people or get others to do things for them. For example, they make requests, promises, predictions, apologies, offers and so on (Sifianou, 1992). When carrying out this performative function, verbs such as “sentence”, “warn”, “promise”, and “beg”, known as performatives, are utilized (Atawneh, 1991, p. 16). The performative function of language, besides many others, such as the expressive, the referential and so on, is used to categorize the functions of speech (Holmes, 1992). Speech act theory also opened the door for many other areas of research, such as politeness which has been greatly influenced by Austin’s work.

Austin (1962) also argues that in utterances such as “I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*” (p. 5), there are two elements, one is known as a saying element, “what is said” and the other is a doing one, “what is done or accomplished while performing the act of speaking”. It is not always necessary that the saying element matches the doing element in an utterance (Atawneh, 1991). In other words, the same speech act, say a request, can be performed by employing different linguistic structures. We can use a direct way or we can use an indirect, ritualized way or, if we want to express awareness of our interlocutor’s feelings, we can use non-conventional indirectness. Consider these examples:

1. Sit down.
2. Could you sit down?
3. You’d be more comfortable sitting down.

(Holmes, 1992, 290)

As far as politeness is concerned, Sifianou (1992) maintains that “speech act theory has also touched on the question of politeness” (p. 95). The work of Austin (1962) has been very influential. Later on, Searle (1979) worked on Austin’s categories, re-naming some of the items and redefining some others. He classified them into five groups. These groups have been summarized as:

- Assertives: having a descriptive function in the world e.g., asserting, boasting.
- Directives: getting the addressee to do things e.g., requests.
- Commissives: committing S to do action e.g., promising.
- Expressives: expressing feelings and attitudes.
- Declarations: bring changes in the world by using utterances e.g., sentencing.

(Searle, 1979, p. viii)

Commenting on Searle's (1979) categorization, Leech (1983) argues that "as far as Searle's categories go, negative politeness belongs pre-eminently to the DIRECTIVE class, while positive politeness is found pre-eminently in the COMMISSIVE and EXPRESSIVE classes" (p. 107)

According to speech act theory, directive speech acts require that some basic logical conditions should be met, known as felicity conditions. Searle summarizes these felicity conditions as follows:

- Preparatory condition: H is able to perform A.
- Sincerity condition: S wants H to do A.
- Propositional content condition: S predicates a future act A of H.
- Essential condition: Counts as an attempt by S to get H to do A.

(Searle, 1979, p. 44)

By preparatory condition, Searle (1979) means that for a request to be valid, S should ask H to do things that he or she can do, otherwise the request is considered infelicitous if H, under normal circumstances, cannot carry out the act. Sincerity conditions refer to S's true intention that he or she wants H to do an act A. A propositional content condition indicates that S expects H to do the act in the future, not in the past. The essential condition has to do with S's attempt to get H to carry out the act.

5.2 The linguistic realizations of the speech act of request

Byon (2004) defines the speech act of request as a "directive that embodies an effort on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to do something, generally for a speaker's goal" (p. 1674). Since requests are carried out to satisfy a speaker's interests, they are

considered by politeness theorists and researchers (Fukushima, 2003; Haumann, Kock & Sornig 2005; Sifianou, 1992) to encode a great deal of imposition. Brown and Levinson (1987), for example, argue that requests are intrinsically face-threatening acts because they limit the freedom of the hearer and carry an element of coerciveness that might jeopardize hearer's negative face. Likewise, Leech (1983) maintains that requests are inherently impolite speech acts and, therefore, negative politeness is essential to minimize the cost of the speech act. Along similar lines, most recently, Held (2005) maintains "in treating requests, I deal with an easily identifiable field of face threatening acts" (p. 296).

However, some researchers have raised many serious questions regarding the validity of such claims. Meier (1995), for example, states that "although requests are considered to be FTAs, one could well imagine a context in which they could be a sign of solidarity" (p. 385). Similarly, Sifianou (1992) argues that "how far, however, is it a valid assumption that requests always threaten the addressee's negative face and, therefore, to what extent is negative politeness important?" (p. 99). In Greek culture, Sifianou (1992) argues, requests can be used to indicate closeness and show intimacy, rather than threatening one's face. Moreover, not all request types imply an element of imposition, such as requests addressed to shop assistants. In the same vein, Gu (1990) maintains that, contrary to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model, in Chinese culture, directive expressions such as "excuse me, forgive me, pardon me and accept my thanks" are intrinsically polite speech acts (p. 241).

Directive speech acts then, vary linguistically and cross-culturally (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Byon, 2004; Sifianou, 1992). Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) attribute the differences to different perceptions of various social factors. They also maintain that the social meaning attached to similar linguistic choices may be perceived differently. Atawneh (1991) points out that differences in politeness strategies between American English and Palestinian Arabic can be ascribed to differences in the linguistic systems of the two languages.

Sifianou and Antonopoulou (2005) argue that the speech act of request can be performed by employing various linguistic constructions. Sifianou (1992) states that every language affords its speakers various grammatical means to perform the speech act of request. Speakers can choose from the linguistic continuum: imperatives, interrogatives,

declaratives and even elliptical forms. Holmes also (1992) maintains that “speech acts which express directive force vary in strength. We can attempt to get people to sit down, for instance, by suggesting or inviting them to do so, or by ordering or commanding them to sit down” (p. 290). Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) found that the choice of one request type over another is governed by the degree of social distance between speaker and hearer and the relative power of the hearer over the speaker which interact with other situational factors. What makes the choice of one request construction over another rather difficult is the fact that not only is the absence of polite markers considered impolite, but over-politeness is considered insulting as well (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Holmes, 1992; Orecchioni, 2005).

Some researchers, (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989; Fukushima, 2003; Sifianou, 1992) interested in the speech act of requests discuss in further detail the syntactic structure of requests. They distinguish between what is named as a “head act” and “peripheral elements”. In discussing the syntactic structure of requests, this study will build mainly on the work of Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper (1989). For clarification purposes, consider the following example:

4. Judith, I missed class yesterday, do you think I could borrow your notes? I promise to return them by tomorrow.

(Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989, p. 17)

Discussing the request sequence of this example, Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989, p. 17) segment it into:

- A- Alerters: words that are used to draw the attention of the hearer. The attention-getter “Judith”, in this context, has a similar function to other verbal means, such as “look” and “listen”. There are many other forms in the language that function as attention-getters, for example, “darling”, “honey”, “sweety” and so on.
- B- Supportive moves: acts that precede or follow the head act of the request. They may function as downgraders to check on the possibility of submitting to the request; they also may be used to get a precommitment for carrying out what is required, or they are used to give a reason for the request. In Example 1, there are

two supportive moves: one precedes the head act “I missed class yesterday” and the other follows the head act “I promise to return it tomorrow”.

- C- Head acts: the smallest unit by which a directive speech act is realized. They can stand alone and usually contain the propositional content of the request. In the above example, the clause “Do you think I could borrow your notes” is the head act of the request.

Following Allan’s (2006) and Borjars and Burridges’ (2001) classification of the clause-type, three main categories have been identified: declaratives, interrogatives and imperatives. Each clause-type, according to Allan (2006), “has a unique **Primary illocution (PI)** which provides an initial clue to the pragmatically determined illocutionary point of the utterance containing the clause” (p. 2). Thus, we can say that declaratives have the illocutionary force of statements, interrogatives of a question and imperatives of a directive. However, sometimes a syntactic mood-type is used to carry out illocutionary acts other than the one typically associated with it. For example, requests can be performed by using any of the three main clause-types.

5.3 Request strategy in Palestinian Arabic and Australian English

According to Atawneh (1991, p. 92), Arabic speech can be classified under two categories: *al-xabar*, meaning “reporting”, and *al-ʔnšaaʔ* meaning “initiating”. *Al-xabar* can be judged true or false in relation to the reality of the world, whereas, *al-ʔnšaaʔ* cannot. *Al-Talab*, meaning “directive”, which is a subcategory of *al-ʔnšaaʔ* can be subcategorized into: *al-ʔamr* “positive command” which directs the hearer to do something and *al-nahiy* “negative command” which directs the hearer not to do something. Atawneh (1991) argues that *al-Talab*, in standard Arabic, is used to issue directives by a person of higher status to a person of lower status. However, there are other cases where the meaning of the directive is contextualized. There are also other determining factors that contribute to identifying the meaning of the utterance, such as the relative power of speaker over hearer and the nature of the topic. Consider the following examples:

5. ZANNAD: *ḡud li-rušdik .. ʔihriS ḡalaa maalika wa nafsik.*
 Go back to mind your.. take care of wealth your and self your
 Go back to your reason; take care of your wealth and your self.

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 102)

6. AL-DICTUUR: *laa taḡtaji ʔanti.*
 not protest you
 Don't protest.

(Edwan, 1988, p. 37)

In Example 5, the clause can be classified under *al-ʔamr*, where the verb *ḡud* “go back” is used in the imperative form to address the hearer. In Example 6, the clause “*laa taḡtaji*” can be classified under *al-naḡiy*, where the hearer is asked to refrain from the act of protesting.

The speech act of request in Palestinian Arabic and Australian English can be realized by various linguistic constructions: interrogatives, imperatives and declaratives. However, not all these request strategies have the same force; therefore, we have witnessed the preference of one construction over another, depending on several sociological and situational variables.

5.3.1 Interrogative clauses

According to Allan (1986) the “interrogative frames questions and requestives, the two sub-classes of directives not covered by the imperative. Both are really kinds of requests: in a requestive S asks H to do A ...; and in a question S asks H to tell something” (207). Interrogatives can be, structurally, classified into: polar, alternative, and non-polar (Borjars & Burridge, 2001; Downing & Locke, 2002; Quirk et al., 1985). In the language data, only two interrogative clause-types have been found when carrying out requests. They are polar interrogatives and non-polar interrogatives. Both interrogatives have some basic characteristics which are shared by Australian English and Palestinian Arabic. These are the insertion of the interrogative word at the beginning of the clause and the question mark at the end of the clause in the written medium. Since the data of the study depends on written texts, the discussion of the request structure will be confined to the written medium. Also the discussion will focus exclusively on those polar and non-polar interrogative types found in the data.

Polar interrogatives, in Australian English, have the basic structure Finite + Subject + Residue. The finite is always realized by an “operator, or by *have* or *be* fused with the main verb (*has, had, is, are, was, were*)” (Downing & Locke, 2002, p. 186). The subject is realized by either nominal or pronominal elements such as *people, that man in the corner, you, and everybody*. Finally, the residue consists of three functional elements: predicator, complement and adjunct (Halliday, 1985). Consider the following example taken from Rayson’s *Hotel Sorrento* (1990, p. 75):

7. Troy: Were you having an affair with him?

Were	you	having	an affair	with him
Finite	Subject	Predicator	Complement	Adjunct
Mood		Residue		

What is important in forming interrogatives by inversion, in Australian English, is the process of subject-operator inversion, which is a necessary step to form interrogatives and the main difference between statements and interrogatives.

However, in Palestinian Arabic, polar interrogatives are realized by inserting the interrogative words such as *hal* or *?alif*, meaning “what, will, are” at the front position of the declarative clause. They stand for all the finites used to form polar interrogatives in Australian English (*am, is, are, was, were, shall, will, etc.*). Although these interrogative words have the same syntactic function, there are some restrictions imposed on *?alif* as an interrogative marker. It is used only with verbal clauses. No single case has been found in the data where *?alif* was appended to nominal clauses. In contrast, *hal* goes with both clause-types. Since *hal* and *?alif* are not finites, but interrogative words, they will be referred to as “question words” in the examples taken from the Palestinian data. This will clear up any confusion and make clear the difference between the two language-systems. Consider the following examples:

8. EISA: *hal yanfaḍani haaḍa al-ʔitiSaal?*

Question word benefit me this call
Will this call benefit me?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 115)

9. RAMZI: *hal ʔanta libnaany?*

Question word you Lebanese
Are you Lebanese?

(Ali-Jabir, 1998, 20)

10. RAMZI: *ʔataḍtaqid ḍaalik?*

Question word think you so
Do you think so?

(Ali-Jabir, 1998, 20)

It is important to point out that, in Palestinian Arabic, polar interrogatives require no subject-operator inversion. The structure of the interrogatives follows the structure of the declarative clause. Also, unlike Australian English, auxiliary verbs are not necessary when forming questions. It is quite normal to find verbless interrogative clauses. In such cases, no verb ellipsis has taken place, in contrast, the structure of the interrogative clause requires no verbal group, for example:

11. EISA: *kayfa al-ʔahwaal yaa ʔustaaḍ Sayaah?*

how things oh teacher Sayaah
How are things Mr Sayaah?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 75)

The second major category of polar interrogatives to be considered is tag questions. Downing and Locke (2002) point out that “Tag questions are structurally polar interrogatives; however, they are not interrogative clauses, but only an interrogative signal appended to one of the other types of clause” (p. 202). They also argue that since tags have a different mood from the clause preceding them, they give speaker an opportunity to alter the mood of the clause from, say, declarative or imperative to interrogative, hence, modifying the illocutionary force of the utterance. For Halliday (1985), tags serve to “signal explicitly that a response is required, and what kind of response it is expected to

be” (p. 69). Brown and Levinson (1987) classify tags under positive and negative politeness strategies, because, on the one hand, they are seen as important means of pushing the conversation forward, on the other hand, they are used as mitigating devices to minimize the cost of FTAs.

Syntactically, tags in Australian English consist of two clauses: the main clause and the tag clause. The main clause is usually one of three alternatives: declarative, imperative or exclamative. The tag clause is always used in the interrogative form. With relation to the tag clause, there are two “types of declarative mood tag, distinguished by polarity sequence” (Downing & Locke, 2002, p. 202). The first type has a reverse polarity; that is to say, if the main clause is positive the tag that follows it should be negative. In contrast, the second type has “a constant polarity tag” (Allan, 2006, p. 13), that is to say, the tag has the same polarity as that of the preceding clause. Agreement in number, tense and gender between the tag clause and the main clause is necessary. Consider the following examples:

12. FREDDY: He takes his illness pretty seriously, doesn't he?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 44)

13. MARGE: I suppose this happens to you all the time, does it?

(Rayson, 1990, p. 44)

14. HOPE: You went to the toilet again, didn't you?

(Ayres, 2003, p. 13)

Similarly, in Palestinian Arabic, tags attach to declarative clauses. However, the structure of the tag clause differs from its counterpart in Australian English. In Australian English, the tag clause has the structure Finite + Subject, whereas, the tag clause in Palestinian Arabic has neither finites nor subjects. Moreover, in Palestinian Arabic, there is no agreement, whether in number, gender or tense, between the tag clause and the main clause. In all tag forms, the tag clause is kept unchanged. The formula *ʔalaysa kaḏaalik* stands for all the tag clauses in Australian English. Consider the following example:

15. ZANAAD: *al-ʔum ... wa baðÐ al-jeeraan sayahÐruun.. ʔalaysa kaðaalik?*
 the mother... and some the neighbors will come .. is that
 The mother... and some of the neighbors will come, won't they?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 82)

Turning now to the pragmatic dimension of language, tags have two different functions, depending on the type of the preceding clause. When tag clauses attach to declarative clauses, they are used to get confirmation for the piece of information mentioned in the declarative clause; usually a positive answer is expected (Borjars & Burridge, 2001). Tags attached to imperative clauses are often used to downtone the effect of the speech act. In Australian English, both tag-types have been used in the data. In Palestinian Arabic, in contrast, all tag clauses associate with declarative clauses. No single case has been found of a tag with imperative clauses. Consider the following examples:

16. TREVOR: You have got someone here, haven't you?

(Ayres, 2003, p. 2)

17. SIHAAM: *wa hilwa .. ʔalaysa kaðaalik?*
 and beautiful.. is that
 And I am beautiful, aren't I?

(Shihada, 1978, p. 78)

18. HIL: Here. Put some butter on that, will you. Shit. This doesn't look like that!

(Rayson, 1990, p. 65)

The prime function of the tag clause in Examples 16 and 17 is to get confirmation for the piece of information provided in the main clause. Both languages seem to share this usage. However, the function of the tag in Example 18 is to minimize the cost of the FTA. Therefore, it can be categorized under negative politeness strategies. Tags functioning as redressive devices are only found in the Australian data. Since tags in Australian English have two pragmatic functions compared to one function in Palestinian data, we expect the occurrence of more tags in Australian English than in Palestinian Arabic.

Non-polar interrogatives, “WH-interrogatives” in Australian English, are formed by placing WH-words “what, who, whom, which, whose, where, when, why, how” at the initial position of the clause after carrying out the process of subject-operator inversion. In this case, the WH-word is always a constituent of the clause structure and its presence is necessary to differentiate this interrogative type from polar interrogatives. For example:

19. DAVE: What does Sue-Anne think of this plan?
(Oswald, 1996, p. 72)

Structural differences have been found in the data, depending on which part of the clause is to be questioned. If the focus is on the identity of the subject, we notice that the structure of the interrogative clause has the same structure as the declarative clause, hence resembling the non-polar interrogative structure of Palestinian Arabic. For example:

20. PIP: What actually happened?
(Rayson, 1990, p. 17)

Similarly, in Palestinian Arabic, the general rule for forming non-polar interrogatives is carried out by inserting interrogative words (*mata*, *ʔayna*, *ʔay*, *kam*, *maa*, *maaḏa*, *limaaḏa*, *lima*, *man*, *kayfa*) at the initial position of the declarative clause. No subject-operator inversion is needed. Also, no structural change in the order of the clause constituents, according to the point being questioned, is required. In other words, the clause retains its word order, whether raising questions about the subject, the object or any other part of the clause. Consider the following examples:

21. YAGMUUR: *maaḏa satunaaqiṣ al-ʔaan* ?
What will discuss now
What are you going to discuss now?
(Edwan, 1988, p. 39)

22. FAARIS: *limaaḏa ḡaadarti al-bayt*?
why left you the house
Why did you leave the house?
(Kanafani, 1978, p. 271)

In the above examples, the structure of the interrogative follows the structure of the declarative sentence “WH-word + Verb + Subject + Complement”. It is noteworthy that, unlike Australian English, in Palestinian Arabic, when forming WH-interrogatives, auxiliaries are not needed as part of the structure of the interrogative. It is worth mentioning that the great majority of interrogative clauses are used in Australian and Palestinian data to form requests for information.

5.3.1.1 Requests for information

The great majority of requests performed by the bald-on-record strategy are used to obtain information. This request type is carried out among in-groupers, where there is symmetrical power relation between speaker and hearer; also, where the social distance is low. Typical examples of in-groupers are family members and friends. Getting information, in general, is one of the multiple functions that language can perform (Holmes, 1992). It seems to be that a great deal of our talk is information-oriented. That is to say, it falls under the referential function of language. Since seeking information, especially, among in-groupers, encodes very little threat to face, it is carried out by using the bald-on-record strategy. Consider the following examples:

23. FRANCES: Are you there by yourself?

FREDDY: Yeah. Ever since I lost the wife eight years ago.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 20)

24. FREDDY: Is one of your brothers running the property now?

FRANCES: We lost it in the Depression.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 43)

Considering the linguistic behavior of Frances and Freddy in Examples 23 and 24, we notice that the dialogue is carried out by employing the bald-on-record strategy. Not a single marker of politeness has been used. This does not mean that the interlocutors have ignored politeness which is expected in any dialogue. But, rather, due to the low value of the social distance between interlocutors and the low cost of the request, both interlocutors have agreed implicitly that by employing this strategy their faces will not be threatened. Consequently, markers of politeness are not needed. This can be accounted for in terms of Brown and Levinson's (1987, p. 76) formula as follows:

$$W_x = D(S,H) + P(H,S) + R_x$$

The W_x is the numerical value that measures the cost of the FTA. Its value can be calculated by assigning the value of D (Distance), P (Power) and R_x (Imposition). In the above speech situation, the value of the D variable is low because the interlocutors are neighbors and know each other well. The variable P does not favor any of them. Finally, the cost of the request is not high because neither of the interlocutors' requests are requests for goods, but both requests can be classified as requests for information that fall under the usual conditions for everyday chat. Given all the facts about the value of the social variables, we would expect unmitigated requests to be numerous in the data.

The same seems to be true for Palestinian Arabic, where requests for information are used baldly without any marker of politeness among in-groupers. Consider the following examples:

25. SUBHI: *wa maa haaðihi al-lafaaʔif hawla raʔsik?*
 and what these the dressing around head your
 What are these dressings on your head?
 JAMEEL: *laqad ʔðtadaa ðalaya baðDuhum.*
 ... attacked me some of them
 Some of them attacked me.

(Shihada, 1978, pp. 154-155)

Here in Example 25, Subhi addresses his friend Jameel by using the bald-on-record strategy. We witness no markers of politeness. It would seem ridiculous if Subhi were to address Jameel saying: "Excuse me, what are these dressings on your head?" Such politeness markers, in Palestinian language, are used only if the social distance between interlocutors is high. Since the social distance between Subhi and Jameel is low, and the cost of the request is also rather low, it is quite usual to use an unmitigated request. This is in line with Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory.

Requests for information are realized by using elliptical constructions in both Australian and Palestinian data sets. Traditionally, elliptical constructions are part of declarative, interrogative and imperative clauses. Ellipsis is a lexicogrammatical

phenomenon in that the missing part can be recovered from the context (Halliday, 1985; Long, 1957; Quirk, et al., 1985). In other words, the previous clause functions as a key element in providing the missing part. In the language data, ellipsis is found to occur in various illocutionary acts such as apology, offer, and advice. Since the main concern of the study is requests, ellipsis carried out in illocutionary acts other than requests will not be considered.

Sifianou (1992) defines elliptical constructions as “cases in which a part of the request is not explicitly stated but is understood either from the linguistic or the extra-linguistic context of the ongoing encounter, or from the knowledge participants share” (p. 152). Halliday (1985) identifies three contexts where ellipsis takes place. These are: ellipsis of the whole clause, ellipsis of the verbal group and ellipsis of the nominal group. In the language data of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic, ellipsis seems to occur only in the first two contexts when carrying out requests.

Elliptical constructions occur in the data sets of both Australian English and Palestinian Arabic. The most common ellipsis type is clausal ellipsis. Two clausal ellipsis types are found in the data. Both are related to the question-answer process across an encounter. Neither of them occurs in isolation or out of context, and they are based on shared knowledge between speaker and hearer. While the first type is related to the answers of the polar interrogatives, the second one occurs in the WH-clause. Since the first type occurs in the answer which has nothing to do with requests, it is not considered in the discussion. With regard to the second type, it is found that omission of the whole clause except the WH-element is found in the two languages. Consider the following examples:

26. SAUL: Not a very popular time to be a Communist, I imagine.
FRANK: No it wasn't, and I paid for it.
SAUL: How?
FRANK: In cash. The construction firm I worked for sacked me at fifty-nine and I only got a fraction of my superannuation entitlements.

(Williamson, 1980, 25)

In Example 26, the entire clause is omitted. The elliptical clause is recoverable from the previous clause which might be *How did you pay for it?* Syntactically, the major function of this type of ellipsis is to avoid repetition (Quirk, *et al.*, 1985). However, the pragmatic function of ellipsis touches on the issue of politeness. It is considered one of the positive politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Similarly, In Palestinian Arabic, ellipsis of the whole clause takes place in contexts where it is easily recoverable. For example:

27. RAJA: *wa laakin haaða yaðTi mazeedan min al-ʔamal.*
 and but this give more of the hope
 But this gives more hope.

FAARIS: *kayf?*
 How?

(Kanafani, 1978, p. 297)

Here the ellipted clause, *this gives more hope*, can be recovered from the linguistic context. The presence of the demonstrative pronoun *this* in the first part of the dialogue indicates that previous discussion has already taken place on a certain topic. This topic becomes clear if we trace the sequence of events in the play. This shared piece of information reveals that both the speaker and the hearer have the same concerns. It is noteworthy that ellipsis of the whole clause, in both languages, most often occurs in requests for information, where the social distance and cost of the speech act are rather low.

The second ellipsis type is concerned with the omission of the verbal group. This type of requests is found only in the Australian data and not in the Palestinian data. It is found that ellipsis under this category most commonly involves omission of both the finite and the predicator. Consider the following example:

28. FRANK: I had pneumonia in Melbourne last year and ever since I
 often get short of breath.

SAUL: After exercise?

(Williamson, 1980, p. (p. 25)

Here in Example 28, the finite and predicator are ellipted. The request is classified under the category of request for information. The missing part is recoverable from the preceding dialogue which takes place between Saul and Frank. The request can be reconstituted as *Do you often get short of breath after exercise?*

It has been seen that speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic make use of elliptical constructions to carry out requests, in particular requests for information, where the social distance between S and H is low. Speakers from both language groups also behaved similarly when carrying out requests. Most ellipsis, in the data of the two languages, occurs in requests for information, where the cost of the FTA is low. It is notable that politeness markers were not found with requests for information performed by elliptical constructions.

5.3.2 Imperative clauses

In the data, imperative clauses are used to perform different illocutionary acts, depending on the intended message to be conveyed. They are used to issue commands, make requests, offers and give advice. Since the same utterance can have more than one illocutionary force, it is not easy to tell the difference between commands, requests, offers and advice as there is no clear-cut formal marking. Downing and Locke (2002) state that there are many factors that should be taken into consideration when differentiating commands from other directives: the relative power of speaker over hearer, who benefits from the directive, and politeness. They also maintain that, in the case of requests, the hearer has the option to comply or not to comply with what is requested, whereas in commands the hearer has no option but to comply. In this study, the key elements of determining whether an illocutionary act falls under the category of commands or requests, when it is not clearly stated, are the relative power of the speaker over the hearer and the element of politeness. If the speaker has power over the hearer and the request is carried out without mitigation, then, it is interpreted as a command. If the speaker and hearer have equal power then the imperative is interpreted as a request. Finally, if there is a marker of politeness in an utterance, then it is interpreted as a request. Since this part is dealing with unmitigated bald-on-record strategies, requests mitigated with politeness markers will not be discussed. They will be discussed under positive and negative politeness strategies.

In Palestinian Arabic, imperative requests can range from simple to elaborate imperative constructions. In simple forms, a lexical verb alone, sometimes followed by an object, is used. It is important to point out that, unlike Australian English, the lexical verb in its imperative form differs from the base form of the verb in Palestinian Arabic. Generally, the imperative is formed by inserting a question word at the beginning of the base form of the verb. However, this rule cannot be applied to all verbs in Palestinian Arabic. There are other rules for forming imperatives which cannot be explained in this study as there is not enough space to go into great detail. Consider these examples:

29. RAJA: *ʔiftaḥ yaa Faris ʔiftaḥ .. ʔana Raja.*
 open oh Faris open .. I Raja.
 Open Faris open .. it's Raja.

(Kanafani, 1978, p. 270)

30. SIHAAM: *ʔuxruj ʔilaa al-ḥadeeqa qaleelan.*
 go to the garden a while
 Go out to the garden for a while.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 124)

The second imperative type is formed by using the verb *yajib*, meaning “have to”, which is in the imperative form followed by the main verb. The function of the verb *yajib*, in this context, is to downgrade the force of the imperative in order to be seen as less coercive. For example:

31. RAJA: *yajib ḍalayka an tafḍal šayʔan.*
 have to on you -- do something
 You have to do something.

(Kanafani, 1978, 302)

Here the speaker uses the structure Subject + have to + Verb+ Object to direct the addressee to do something. The preference for this form over the other form Verb+ Object reflects the speaker's desire not to exert too much pressure on the addressee to do what is required, because he either does not want to or he does not have enough power to impose on the hearer.

In the Australian data, imperative constructions are used to form requests. They range from simple imperative constructions, where the lexical verb is used without being preceded, or followed by, any word that would mitigate or aggravate its force, to more complex structures, where modals and other polite formula such as “please”, “excuse” and so on are used. The prime reason for using these markers of politeness is to minimize the effect of the imperative. Consider the following examples:

32. FREDDY: Sit down. (p. 69)

(Williamson, 1980, p. 38)

33. DOUG: This is really important to me: please, just look at the photo.

(Sewell, 1997, p. 46)

34. CHRISTINE: Just wait a minute, Sue-Anne. (p. 74)

(Oswald, 1996, p. 74)

In Example 32, the structure of the sentence is more likely to be interpreted as a command than a request, simply because of the absence of any polite formula. But, once the speech situation is disclosed, it becomes clear that it is a request because of the symmetrical power relation. Freddy asks his friend Frank to sit down to feel more comfortable. The speaker has no power to impose on the hearer to comply with what is requested, which is a key element in issuing commands. In Examples 33 and 34, there is no doubt that the imperative constructions have the force of requests rather than commands because of the presence of markers of politeness.

Unmitigated direct imperative forms used to form requests are found in both the Australian and Palestinian data sets. They are used in different circumstances and settings. Depending on Brown and Levinson’s (1987) coding schema, the study will discuss those cases where threat to face is low and cases where the need to do the face-threatening act is more important than preserving face wants. Under the first category, we classified requests performed among members of the same groups, and requests performed in favor of hearer. Under the second category, we identified cases of attention-getters, real urgency, metaphorical urgency and extreme tension.

5.3.2.1 Requests for goods

People belonging to a certain group share the same linguistic milieu. They have their own style and their own special vocabulary, which seem to be unique. One characteristic of the linguistic performance of in-groupers is the frequent employment of the bald-on-record strategy in the form of unmitigated imperative clause to form requests. It is important to point out that such types of requests are carried out where the social variable P value is symmetrical and the social distance between the speaker and hearer is low.

35. SOPHIE: Come and stay with us for a while.

FRANCES: Frank's very keen to get moving again and he really isn't very well.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 57)

In Example 35, the request is carried out by using the bald-on-record strategy. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness, the request is considered face threatening because it does not employ any politeness marker and it imposes on H. The cost of the request is also high because it is not a request for information. However, the mother has no feeling of being offended and the dialogue continues without hindrance. This is possible because the social distance between S and H is low. Since Sophie addresses her mother, it would appear strange if she used a sequence of politeness markers such as "Please, could you come and stay with us for a while?" Holmes (1992) comments on the language of in-groupers, arguing that "people who are close friends or intimates use more imperatives" (p. 290).

Similarly, in the Palestinian data, the imperative form is used among in-groupers, where unmitigated requests are used. For example:

36. SHEIKH ABED AL-BAAQI: *daδhu wa linamDi li-Salaat.*
leave him and go we to pray
Leave him and let's go to pray.

(Al-Mubayed, 1978, p. 153)

In Example 36, the imperative form *daδhu* “leave him” is used baldly without mitigation. The cost of the request is high because it coerces H, restricting his liberty of action. But, since the social distance between S and H is rather low, H’s face is not threatened. It could be argued that the social distance variable is considered a major determining factor of the cost of the request in both Australian and Palestinian cultures. This is in line with Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory of politeness.

Similarly, Lee-Wong (1996) found that the social dimensions of power, social distance and imposition play a significant role in determining the linguistic behavior of speakers of Chinese in Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Taiwan. She also found a positive correlation between direct requests and the relative power of the speaker over the hearer. That is to say, speakers of greater power were found to show preference for direct requests, whereas speakers of lower power showed preference for indirect requests. There was also a correlation between social distance and indirectness. The greater the social distance between speaker and hearer is, the greater the use of indirect strategies and vice versa. Ranking of imposition was found to decrease the level of directness. Speakers were found to use more direct strategies with non-impositive speech acts and vice versa.

Although the social distance variable plays a major role in the linguistic behavior of speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic, it does not have an equal weight within the two cultures. That is to say, the degree of sensitivity to the social distance varies in the two cultures. Speakers of Australian English are more sensitive than speakers of Palestinian Arabic to social distance. This is clear in the data where negative politeness is used to address new neighbors by speakers of Australian English. Consider the following examples:

37. FREDDY: Anyone at home? G’day there. Am I intruding?

FRANK: No. I, er, don’t believe we’ve met?

FREDDY: Freddy Wicks, your neighbour. I saw you’d arrived so I came across to see if I could lend a hand.

FRANK: That’s very kind of you. I’m Frank and this is Frances.

FRANCES: I didn’t realize we had a neighbour, Mr Wicks.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 20)

In Example 37, Frances addresses the new neighbor with the term of address *Mr* to pay deference to the addressee. It is worth mentioning that the term of address *Mr*, in Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness schema, belongs to the redressive devices listed under negative politeness strategies. However, in Palestinian culture, it is very unlikely to introduce new neighbors by using terms of deference or any negative politeness markers. As soon as a new neighbor enters his or her new property, he or she is welcomed and treated as an in-group member. For example, in a similar situation to the one in Example 37, the name of the person is used if he is unmarried, but if he is married he or she will be introduced by his or her son's name, e.g., *Abu Ali*. If the person has no son, the name of his father is used or any other name the person chooses to be addressed by.

Bearing in mind differences in conceptualizing what constitutes in-group members and out-group members between speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic, we expect tension and sociopragmatic failure if the two groups come in contact with each other. This is because speakers of Palestinian Arabic will address speakers of Australian English as in-group members if they are neighbors. Similarly, speakers of Palestinian Arabic will not be happy if they are addressed formally by terms of address such as *Mr* because such a term is unfamiliar, sounds unfriendly and widens the gap between a speaker and a hearer.

The employment of negative politeness markers in Example 37 raises a question about Brown and Levinson's (1987) claim that politeness is communicated when there is a direct threat to face and the principle function of polite behavior is to minimize such threat. However, in the light of Example 37, we notice that the politeness marker *Mr* is used when there is +D and where there is no threat to face. This finding is clear evidence that the main reason for using polite behaviour is not always to counteract threat to face, but rather that people want to be more considerate.

5.3.2.2 Requests carried out in favor of H

Brown and Levinson (1987) point out that the bald-on-record strategy is used in situations where the speech act is carried out in favor of H when S wants H's wants to be taken into consideration. In other words, by employing the bald-on-record strategy neither S's face nor H's face is likely to be threatened. Moreover, in such a situation the idea of coerciveness is inapplicable because H is the main beneficiary from performing the

request, not S. In the Australian and Palestinian data sets, some requests are performed for the well-being of H rather than S. Consider the following example:

38. GARY: Have a cheese sandwich. You haven't had one
serve of calcium today.

(Oswald, 1996, p. 9)

In Example 38, Gary asks his wife to eat a cheese sandwich because she is supposedly pregnant and needs some calcium. The request is carried out baldly because the hearer is going to be benefit from eating the sandwich not the speaker; therefore, no redressive devices are needed. Such usage is in line with Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness.

Similarly, in the Palestinian data there are requests performed by using the bald-on-record strategy which are directed toward H's interest. By claiming that H's positive face is being cared for and, hence, that the need for redressive material is unnecessary, S can perform the act of requesting without the least fear of threatening H's face. For example:

39. SHEIKH ABED AL-BAAQI: *fakir ...fakir jayidan fi al-ʔamr.*
think...think good in the matter
Think...think seriously about the matter.

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 90)

In the example above, Sheikh Abed Al-baaqi used the bald-on-record strategy to encourage his friend to think seriously of traveling abroad for treatment. No redressive devices are required because the request is carried out in H's interest. In such a situation, S shows concern for H's face wants. It is worth mentioning that the social distance between S and H in the requests performed in favor of H is always low in the language data of the two cultures.

5.3.2.3 Attention-getters

Sifianou (1992) defines attention-getters as “devices used to attract the addressee's attention, literally or figuratively, before the actual request is launched” (p. 181). Brown

and Levinson (1987) argue that attention-getters are used “where S speaks *as if* maximum efficiency were very important, he provides metaphorical urgency for emphasis” (p. 96). Sifianou (1992) categorizes attention-getters into three main categories: “formulaic entreaties”, “formulaic greetings” and “imperative constructions” (p. 181). She defines formulaic entreaties as attempts made by the S to attract the attention of the H and to simultaneously apologize for his or her intrusion. Imperative expressions such as *Excuse me*, *Pardon me* and so on are examples of this type. According to Sifianou, formulaic greetings are words such as *Hello* used before the actual request. Imperative constructions consist of “verbs of perception which do not retain their literal meaning” such as “*listen*”, “*hear*” and “*look*”, usually used figuratively (Sifianou, 1992, p. 182).

As far as the linguistic realization is concerned, Australian English utilizes two types of attention-getters: the verbal form and forms of address. In the verbal form, the two verbs *listen* and *look* are used. In the forms of address, personal names such as Meg and Saul are used to draw the attention of the hearer to the message following the attention-getter. For example:

40. TROY: Meg. [Pause.] What happened the night my father died?

(Rayson, 1990, p. 74)

41. FRANK : Listen Saul, I’m the one who’s going to die of this condition, not you, so if you don’t mind I’ll decide what I need to know and what I don’t.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 31)

42. SAUL: Look, you could drop dead tomorrow.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 26)

Similarly, in the Palestinian data, the verb *ʾismaḍ*, meaning “listen”, is used as an attention-getter to draw the attention of the addressee to what is coming. Consider the following example:

43. RAJA: *ʔismaḍ yaa baba, ʔana lastu Saḡeera....*
 listen --- dad I not young...
 Listen dad, I am not young

(Kanafani, 1978, p. 258)

The main difference between Australian English and Palestinian Arabic appears to be in the number of attention-getters. In the Australian data the verb *listen*, *look* and *terms of address* are used. In contrast, in the Palestinian data, only the imperative verb *ʔismaḍ* is used. The verb *ʔundur*, meaning “imperative look”, is used as a lexical verb in the examples found in the data, rather than as an attention-getter. Terms of address are not used in the Palestinian Arabic data as attention-getters. It is important to mention that the social distance between S and H is low in all the cases where attention-getters are used. No significant pragmatic differences are found between the data of the two languages.

5.3.2.4 Cases of extreme tension

Non-redressive imperative constructions are also found in cases of extreme tension. In such cases, maintaining face is either irrelevant or less important (Sifianou, 1992). The mood of the speaker seems to be a determining factor of the speaker’s linguistic production. When S is loaded with negative emotions, the sociological variables Power, Distance and Ranking of imposition seem to be inapplicable as determining factors of the cost of the threat to face. It is also found that speakers modify their language from polite to less polite or even to impolite according to their mood. Consider the following examples:

44. TREVOR: I need the house to myself for a while. Do you mind going out?

(Ayres, 2003, p. 31)

45. TREVOR: Shut up you nasty cow.

(Ayres, 2003, p. 37)

To discuss the above examples, it is necessary to contextualize the speech situations of the two examples. Trevor, Hope’s son, is addressing his mother in the two examples. In the first, Trevor seems to be in a good mood. So he uses a polite request. However, in the

second example, Trevor uses a completely different language to address his mother because he is in a bad mood.

Similarly, in the Palestinian plays, the mood of the person controls his or her linguistic behavior. Consider the following examples spoken by the same speaker to the same addressee where the speaker is in completely different moods.

46. SIHAAM: *ʔarjuuk ʔn taħðif kalimat sayidati fi ħadiiθina.*
please omit word Mrs in talk our
Please, omit the word Mrs when you talk to me.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 64)

47. SIHAAM: *ʔuxruj ... min hunaa, ʔuğrub ðan wajhi.*
get out from here, get out of face my
Get out... of here, get out of my sight.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 130)

In Example 46, Sihaam, the employer, wants to make love to Jameel, the employee. Sihaam wants him to talk to her without the form of address *Mrs* which functions as a distancing marker, widening the gap between the speaker and the addressee. She uses two linguistic devices: her tone of voice, which contributes significantly in convincing people in Palestinian culture, and the conventional polite word *ʔarjuuk*. However, after Jameel's refusal to respond to her, Sihaam suffers negative emotions, gets angry and starts shouting, using a different tone of voice and a different style. Although the cost of the FTA in Example 47 is very high, as dismissing someone from someone else's place, in Palestinian culture, damages his or her face, it has been carried out baldly without mitigation because protecting H's face in this situation is not a priority for S. Interestingly, the relative power between S and H in cases of extreme tensions is rather unimportant. That is to say the relative power of H over S is not a determining factor of the linguistic behavior of S.

5.3.2.5 Cases of urgency

Brown and Levinson (1987) state that in cases of real or metaphorical urgency the bald-on-record strategy is used because, in such situations, satisfying face wants seems to be less important than conveying the intended message efficiently. Sifianou (1992) also

argues that the bald-on-record strategy is required in cases of “real or metaphorical urgency, of sympathetic advice, of warnings, wishes” where “other needs override face concerns” (p. 128). In both the Australian and Palestinian data sets, non-minimized imperative constructions are found in cases of urgency. Following Brown and Levinson’s (1987) classification, cases of urgency can be classified into cases of metaphorical urgency and cases of real urgency.

First, the unmitigated imperative form is found in cases of formulaic entreaties in the data of the two languages. Brown and Levinson (1987) maintain that such constructions are used in “many languages with the same superficial syntax” (p. 96). Surprisingly, the relative power of S over H deviates from its usual norm, where the person of lower power uses the language that is normally used by persons of higher power. Consider this example:

48. TREVOR: I beg your pardon?

(Ayres, 2003, p. 8)

Similarly in Palestinian Arabic, formulaic entreaties, such as religious invocations, are used by employing the unmitigated imperative form to address God when the person is in desperate need for help. For example:

49. DALAAL: *ʔustur yaa rab.*
protect O Lord
Protect us Lord.

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 138)

In Examples 48 and 49, the employment of the imperative form to perform unmitigated requests is dictated by the situation. In Example 48, Trevor acknowledges that he has done something wrong, and as a result H’s face has been threatened. The expression *I beg your pardon* is taken as an acknowledgement of debt. The speaker in this situation debases himself and asks for forgiveness. In Example 49, the use of the imperative form to address God is dictated by the urgency of the situation.

Second, speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic are found to use the imperative form to carry out requests in cases of real urgency. No markers of politeness are used to minimize the threat to H's face. This is in line with what is stated by Brown and Levinson (1987) that in cases of real urgency, performing the request efficiently overrides face concerns. Consider the following example:

50. HOPE: Help, help! Blind lady in distress! (p. 69)

(Ayres, 2003, p. 69)

In the situation above, Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that employing redressive devices “would actually decrease the communicated urgency” (p. 96). It is more efficient and more effective to use the imperative form *help* instead of any other forms of politeness such as *Would you mind helping me?* as satisfying face wants comes second on the continuum of necessity.

Similarly, in Palestinian Arabic, asking for help can be realized by using either a nominal or a verbal form. Verbs such as *saaḍiduni*, *ʔilḥaquuni* “help me” and the noun *annajda* “help” are used. However, unmitigated imperative constructions are found to be more common in the data because the noun *ʔannajda* is considered as a standard term and is familiar to educated people only. Consider the following example:

51. NAJMA: *ʔannajda ... ʔilḥaquuni... liSuus*.
help ... help me thieves
Help, help me. Thieves.

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 138)

Interestingly, there are no pragmatic differences between the linguistic behavior of speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic in situations of real urgency. What is interesting in the data taken from the two languages is that in cases of real urgency the social variables are ignored and people use the imperative form to address people of varying social distance and of varying power relations.

5.3.2.6 General discussion on requests performed by imperatives

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), choosing the bald-on-record strategy means that S chooses the most straightforward, unambiguous and blunt way to express his or her intention in order to achieve the utmost degree of communicative efficacy. By going baldly on-record, the speaker is said to behave in accordance with Grice's (1975) maxims of conversation. However, for many researchers working on politeness, the bald-on-record strategy is considered to be the most face-threatening and, hence, the least polite strategy. According to Watts, Ide and Ehlich (1992), if someone chooses to carry out an action baldly on-record "s/he would very quickly threaten the addressee's face" (pp. 7-8). Fraser (2005) points out that "in fact, the bald on-record strategy isn't really a politeness strategy at all in the Brown and Levinson model, since it lacks any linguistic form which could implicate politeness" (p. 71). For Leech (1983) utilizing imperatives is the least polite construction to perform directives. Other forms, such as declaratives and interrogatives are considered more polite and less coercive because "an imperative impositive is tactless in that it risks disobedience, which is a fairly grave type of conflict situation" (p. 119). Holmes (1992) argues that interrogatives and declaratives are more polite than imperatives. Along similar lines, Searle (1975) maintains that

ordinary conversational requirements of politeness normally make it awkward to issue flat imperative sentences (e.g., *Leave the room*) or explicit performatives (e.g., *I order you to leave the room*), and we therefore seek to find indirect means to our illocutionary ends (e.g., *I wonder if you would mind leaving the room*). (p. 64)

However, there are some other researchers who question this notion of intrinsic impoliteness. Culpeper (1996), for example, conducted a study to further investigate Leech's notion of intrinsic impolite illocutionary acts. He points out that only a few speech acts can be described as intrinsically impolite: namely, those which are considered as offensive by the speaker and the hearer such as a threat. Also, Sifianou (1992) raises questions on the universal validity of such a claim. She argues "These views are of course valid to a certain extent, as far as the English norms of politeness or rather formality are concerned, but they are not and cannot be universal principles of polite linguistic realizations" (p. 126). She also states that imperatives, in Greek, besides expressing command are used to express desire and wish. Similarly, Germans, according to House

(2005) cannot be described as impolite or unable to behave politely because they perform requests by using the raw imperative. What this linguistic behavior means to House is that “directness cannot be (mis)interpreted as impoliteness: it is just a culture- and language-specific convention” (p. 22).

It could be argued that pre-judging linguistic utterances as intrinsically polite or impolite out of their context seems to be untenable and lacks convincing evidence. Using imperatives to request for goods or actions, among in-groupers, seems to be sociopragmatically more acceptable than declaratives or interrogatives. It is found in the data that the unmitigated imperative is the prevailing norm of interaction among family members and friends. Moreover, in some specific speech situations, issuing any form other than a flat imperative appears to be not only socially unacceptable, but also it is taken as a sign of insincerity. In Palestinian culture, for example, offers are often carried out by using imperatives. Other forms, such as interrogatives or declaratives, are interpreted as encoding insincere offers and, in many cases, lead to someone declining the offer. This is clear in the Palestinian data, where Sheikh Shaamel used the verb *xuḍha*, meaning “take it”, in the imperative form when offering his friend some money (Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 58).

Since using the imperative clause to form requests does not cause any threat to the hearer’s face, it seems difficult to support the line adopted by some researchers that a raw imperative is less polite than an interrogative and a declarative. What is obvious in the data is the significant role played by the social distance variable in determining the cost of the speech act. Although sensitivity to the distance variable is not the same in Australian and Palestinian cultures, in particular, the concept of in-groupers and out-groupers, the importance of social distance should not be played down. Since H does not perceive the imperative form to be face-threatening and the encounter continues smoothly, it is best not to consider requests performed by imperative clauses as face-threatening unless H feels offended.

5.3.3 Declarative clauses

Although declaratives are the “most frequent and least marked of all clause-types” (Allan, 2006, p. 9), they are the least common clause-type by which requests are realized in the Australian English and Palestinian data. They fall into two main groups: “need statements” and “hints” (Fukushima, 2003, p. 75). While the intended message of the

request is clearly stated in the first type, it does not seem so for hints. Sometimes a great deal of effort is needed by the hearer to figure out the actual intention of the speaker (Sifianou, 1992). It is worth mentioning that requests carried out by using hints will not be addressed in this study for reasons of space.

Following Searle's (1975) classification of indirect speech acts, requests performed by using "want statements" and "need statements" will be classified as indirect speech acts and will be discussed in chapter seven under negative politeness, in particular when S has no power to impose on H. However, when S has enough power to impose on H, the utterance will be interpreted as an order or command which is beyond the scope of this study because this study aims to investigate only requests. Hence, this section will briefly discuss the syntactic structure of declarative clauses in Australian English and Palestinian Arabic.

Declaratives in Australian English typically have the structure Subject + Verb + Object. The object is needed if the verb is transitive. But if the verb is intransitive it can be left out. Consider the following examples:

52. JAMES: I need to talk in private.

(Ayres, 2003, p. 32)

53. FRANK: I'd like to know a bit more about these tablets I'm taking, Saul.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 30)

In Palestinian Arabic, however, declarative clauses have two different structures. One where the verb group occupies the first position in the clause structure. The second is where the noun group or a pronoun takes the first position.

54. EISA: *ʔureed an tuxaliSnee minhu.*
 want I -- - get rid you from him
 I want you to help me to get rid of him.

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 148)

As we have seen from the discussion, declarative clauses are the least preferred means of carrying out requests in the two languages. In Australian English three linguistic structures (*want, need, would like*) are employed to form requests using the declarative clause. In contrast, in Palestinian Arabic, only the verb *ʔureed* is found in the data to form requests using the declarative clause.

5.4 Summary

The bald-on-record strategy is used by both speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic in different speech situations. It is found that this strategy is used in cases where face concerns are not considered a priority. In such cases a hearer's face wants are completely neglected because the speaker performs the request baldly with the intention to send a strong and straightforward message to the hearer to comply with what is requested. The unmitigated bald-on-record strategy is used when the request is carried out in favor of H because H is going to benefit from the request rather than S. Requests used as attention-getters are also performed baldly by speakers of the two languages under investigation. Requests performed in cases of urgency are performed baldly because the urgency of the situation necessitates conveying the message with maximum efficacy and clarity.

Chapter Six

Positive politeness strategies

6.0 Introduction

This chapter explores requests performed by using positive politeness devices in the data obtained from Australian and Palestinian plays. Special emphasis will be put on the various mitigating devices used to play down the negative effects of face-threatening acts (FTAs) when carrying out requests, highlighting the cross-cultural syntactic and pragmatic differences.

According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) face-saving model, six positive politeness strategies are identified under two broad super-strategies. First, under the super-strategy of claiming common ground with H, the following strategies will be discussed: use of in-group identity markers; presupposing, raising, asserting common ground with H; avoiding disagreement; taking notice of H's interests; and intensify interest to H. Second, under the super-strategy of indicating that S and H are cooperators, only the strategy of including both S and H in the activity will be discussed.

As regards the strategy of using of in-group identity markers, two techniques will be addressed: address terms encoding positive politeness e.g., first name (FN) and endearment terms, and in addition taboo words used to express intimacy rather than to convey insult. The chapter will also focus on the linguistic means used to take notice of H's interests, wants and goods. In relation to the strategy of intensify interest to H, the focus will be on the different ways used in the data to foster H's contribution in the conversation. With regard to the strategy of avoiding disagreement, the fake agreement technique and its consequences for politeness will be explored. As for the strategy of presupposing and asserting common ground, two techniques will be discussed: initiating small talk and using negative questions. Under the strategy of including both S and H in the activity, two expressions will be discussed: the first one is propositive *let's* and the second is the inclusive *we*.

The chapter concludes with a general discussion of the findings, in which areas of similarity and difference between the two languages in the data are highlighted. The

findings of other cross-cultural studies are also introduced to elaborate on and give more insights into the issues being discussed.

6.1 Positive politeness strategies used to perform requests

Brown and Levinson (1987) in their face model make the striking claim that the most commonplace everyday actions that are negotiated with words carry a considerable element of risk to one's face. These actions include not only speech acts that constitute damage to face or limit the freedom of an interlocutor such as insults, criticisms, commands, curses and so on, but also speech acts that are seen as positive, such as offers, compliments, thanks giving and invitations (Magnusson, 1999). To minimize threat to face, people can employ either negative or positive politeness (Placencia, 1992). If the potential face damage is likely to be high, we expect the employment of negative politeness. However, if the face-threat is rather low, speakers make resort to positive politeness to minimize the threat (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Leech, 1983; Lim, 1988).

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), "positive politeness is redress directed to the addressee's positive face, his perennial desire that his wants (or the actions/acquisitions/values resulting from them) should be thought of as desirable" (p. 101). In other words, positive politeness has the power to facilitate ongoing encounters. It suggests that solidarity between interlocutors is achieved when they adopt a strategy that reinforces H's positive face-wants. S may state implicitly or explicitly that he wants H's face wants to be satisfied. Viewing positive politeness as a way of re-establishing the ritual balance between S and H, Orecchioni (2005) and Watts (2003), for example, use the term "Face-Flattering Acts" (p. 31) to refer to those positive politeness strategies that function as enhancing devices for H's positive face.

By going on-record with positive politeness, S can satisfy a wide range of H's perennial desires (Brown & Levinson, 1987), hence differing from negative politeness, which satisfies some desires, especially the desire of freedom of action and freedom from imposition. For Fukushima (2003), by adopting positive politeness, S can reduce face-threat by assuring the addressee that what is desirable for H is desirable for S too. Claims to in-group membership are also strengthened by these strategies.

Positive politeness strategies are placed in the politeness continuum, identified by Brown and Levinson (1987), before negative politeness. This is simply because they have a more general redressive effect than negative politeness. While positive politeness, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), is widened to the sphere of appreciation of alter's desires or to the conformity between ego's and alter's desires, negative politeness is restricted to redressing a particular FTA. In this respect the authors argue that both positive politeness and intimate everyday communication are similar in that shared wants and shared knowledge are regularly reciprocated.

Brown and Levinson (1987) classify positive politeness strategies under three broad mechanisms: first, "claiming common ground with H", second, "conveying cooperation with H" and, finally, "fulfilling H's wants" (pp. 103-129). A number of more specific strategies have been identified under these broad strategies. In this section, the speech act of requests, employing positive politeness strategies, is classified accordingly.

6.1.1 Use of in-group identity markers

Under the heading of using in-group identity markers, Brown and Levinson (1987) list several techniques used to implicitly claim common ground between S and H. These comprise the employment of "address forms", in-group "language or dialect", "jargon or slang" and "ellipsis" (p. 107).

6.1.1.1 Address forms

The process of arriving at a form of address that satisfies H's face wants seems to be problematic in some speech situations. Johns (1985) argues that the choice of a particular term of address is governed by certain determining factors such as the relationship between self and the other and the environment in which the conversation takes place. In the same vein, Little and Gelles (1975) maintain that choosing a suitable form of address becomes more problematic in settings where etiquette is not institutionalized and S has to take into account the variables of self, other and the situation. Therefore, people from the very beginning of a conversation should carry out an assessment of the variables to come to a suitable form of address in accordance with the addressee's relative status.

In many languages, forms of address are used to convey both negative and positive politeness. Forms such as *Mr*, *Mrs*, *Sir* are used to distance S from H and keep the social distance high; they encode negative politeness. On the other hand, forms of address like *John*, *love*, *mate*, used to minimize the social distance or bring S and H closer together are said to encode positive politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987). That is to say, forms of address encoding negative politeness are characterized by formality, whereas those encoding positive politeness are characterized by informality. In this section, the focus will be on forms of address used to convey positive politeness, namely first name (FN) and endearment terms. Other forms of address encoding negative politeness will be discussed in the next chapter under negative politeness strategies.

According to Allan and Burridge (2006), “one’s name is an inalienable part of one’s identity; it is the essence of self and it is a means by which one is known to one’s fellows” (p. 125). So, using one’s first name (FN) is very significant in presenting S’s identity and in determining the interpersonal relationship between S and H. In many cases, it is taken as a clear way of encoding solidarity. This shows that the social distance is rather low and that the relationship between S and H is reasonably intimate. Many researchers underscore the strong connection between FN and the expression of solidarity. For example, Bargiela et al. (2002) point out that employing one’s first name is a plain indication of creating rapport. Sifianou (1992) argues that address forms can perform the same function as T/V pronouns in languages where such a pronominal distinction is unavailable. In English, for example, the form of address FN performs a parallel function to the T pronominal forms, whereas title + last name (TLN) achieves what is usually carried out by V pronouns. Moreover, she points out that FN is a very intimate form of address. Likewise, Brown and Levinson (1987) underscore T forms as a means of establishing solidarity.

Although FN terms of address are available in almost every language, there are considerable cross-cultural pragmatic differences in handling them. Therefore, according to Bowe and Martin (2007), the term should be used with much care as the “inappropriate use of first names can cause harm and offense” (p. 104). While in some cultures people reciprocate FN as a sign of expressing solidarity, in others, in certain speech situations, people avoid using FN to avert its unfavorable consequences. In some cultures, as Allan and Burridge (2006) have reported, “personal names are (or have been) taboo among some

peoples on all the inhabited continents, and on many of the islands between them. The taboo on names is a fear-based taboo” (p. 125). Similarly, according to Elarbi (1997), in accordance with the traditional politeness norms in Tunisia, women are not “supposed to call their husbands by name, particularly in the presence of young and or unmarried women”. The phrases “owner of my house” or the “father of my children” are used instead (p. 75). By the same token, men do not use their wives’ FN, but the term *daar* (house) is used instead. Similar restrictions on using FN might occur in other cultures but for different reasons. For example, in Palestinian culture, young people avoid using an old person’s FN without title as addressing old people by FN is considered highly disrespectful.

There are further cross-cultural differences in the usage of FN. Some peoples move as quickly as possible towards using FNs during an encounter to express closeness and encode solidarity while others, on the other hand, prefer to be addressed formally (title+last name). Bargiela et al. (2002) provide an interesting example of a cross-cultural clash over using FN. In a hospital in Moscow, a Georgian female patient wanted to move from formality to informality in order to express friendliness towards a female Russian doctor, so she asked her for permission to call her by her FN.

1. A: *mèzna j’vas budu nazivat’ galicka ?*

May I call you "Galichka"? (The informal short form for "Galina")

B: *net, pèzalutsta*

No, please, don’t.

(Bargiela et al., 2002, p. 5)

What is interesting in this example is the fact that it reflects two different cultural perspectives in terms of politeness, in particular, the notion of perceived politeness. For the Georgians, according to Bargiela et al. (2002), FN is used to encode friendliness, whereas for the Russian doctor it indicates insufficient deference. That is to say the use of FN, in this situation, reveals two contradictory notions of politeness. They are quite difficult to resolve, because for a Georgian the use of FN represents positive politeness and for the Russian it represents impoliteness. Bargiela et al. (2002) attribute the refusal to accept FN in such a case to “clashes in the apprehension of the cultural value of these strategies within other cultures” (p. 6). However, given the same situation in Palestinian culture, it

would be demeaning to call a doctor by his/her FN. The professional titles of doctors and teachers become part of the proper address form. They are always used in the presence and the absence of the addressee.

In the Australian English data, FN is used frequently to encode informality and intimacy. People reciprocate FNs in various speech situations. Let us consider this example:

2. JULIE: Why are you saying that now, Joe?

(Sewell, 1997, p. 27)

In Example 2, the only politeness marker used is the FN. It functions as a mitigating device, reducing the negative effect associated with the FTA. The social distance between S and H is rather low, so S feels close enough to call H by his FN. It is important to point out that in all instances in the Australian English and the Palestinian Arabic data, FN is used by individuals who know each other well. There is no single case where FN is employed during a first-time contact. In this very specific area, we can argue that the conditions on using FN in the two languages are similar.

In the data taken from the Palestinian plays, using FN in some speech situations might also be used as a softening device, in particular, when it is used in the vocative form. It is usually used without other mitigating devices to reduce the impact of low face-threatening acts. Consider the following example:

3. SUBHI: *Xabirnee yaa Jameel dan ʔayaamak fee Bayruut wa Al-qaahira*
tell me oh Jameel about days your in Beirut and Cairo.
Tell me, Jameel, about your experience in Beirut and Cairo.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 44)

Following Brown and Levinson's (1987) analysis of positive politeness, the primary function of FN in Example 3 is to act as a mitigating device. It softens the impact of the request which sounds like an order due to the absence of any other politeness markers. What is interesting in this request-type is the position of FN; it follows the verb, and the

use of the vocative form *yaa* before FN makes it look like an appeal, attributing higher status to H.

Interestingly, Subhi, in other speech situations, uses different mitigating strategies on the basis of the cost of the speech act performed. Let us consider the following example which takes place between Subhi and the same H.

4. SUBHI: *aah ĥadiðnaa qaleelan ðan annissaa'*
oh tell us little about women
Oh, tell us a little bit about women.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 50)

Although the social distance between S and H is rather low as they are close friends, and the relative power favors neither S nor H, we notice the employment of different politeness strategies. In Example 3, S wants H to talk about his experiences in Beirut and Cairo, leaving H the freedom to choose the particular topic. Therefore, S uses positive politeness to minimize the imposition due to the low cost of the speech act. In Example 4, on the other hand, S wants H to talk about women which is an imposition and a face-threatening act in Palestinian culture and might tarnish S's reputation. Consequently, S uses negative politeness with costly speech acts. Thus, it might be argued that the degree of imposition is a major determining factor in the linguistic politeness used in this speech situation. However, due to cultural and religious differences, the degree of imposition associated with the same speech act may vary. For example, talking about women is less face-threatening and demands fewer shifts in the politeness strategies employed in Australian culture.

Although the use of first names abounds in the Australian English and Palestinian Arabic data, differences do arise in terms of power and age. In the data taken from the Australian plays, the FN is reciprocally used among interlocutors who are characterized by both + power and - power. Consider the following example:

5. FRANK: Listen, Saul, I'm the one who's going to die of this condition, not you, so if you don't mind I'll decide what I need to know and what I don't.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 31)

6. SAUL: Frank, you are nearly seventy-six, you have a weak heart, you have, I suspect, had more than your fair share of erotic satisfaction in life, so for heaven's sake grow old gracefully.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 46-47)

In these encounters, both Frank (the patient) and Saul (the doctor) use FN without title. However, in such a situation in Palestinian culture, both Ss would use titles to address each other. Frank would use the professional title *doctoor* + FN and Saul would use the term *Haj* when addressing Frank because he is an old man. That is to say, people of lower power cannot use FN to address people of higher power and people of higher power cannot overgeneralize the term to all age groups. For instance, a doctor can use the FN to address his patients only if they are children or teenagers. However, if the patient is an old man or woman, FN is, in most cases, preceded by the title *Haj* or *Haje*. Addressing old people using FN, albeit by a person of higher power, is still perceived as an impolite behavior and might cause unease and embarrassment for both S and H.

Unlike in Australian culture, in Palestinian culture professional titles, in particular, doctors and teachers are often integrated in the persons' FN to such an extent that they almost form a compound noun. However, other professions such as nurses, engineers, lawyers, carpenters are not treated this way. There is no clear explanation for this sociopragmatic phenomenon, but it seems that there are sometimes arbitrary socio-cultural norms adopted by people. Let us consider the following example:

7. Al-WAALID: *doktoor Saeed hal tastaTeeð ?an ta?tee fawran ilaa al-bayt*
doctor Saeed can you come immediately to the house
Doctor Saeed, can you come to the house immediately?

(Kanafani, 1978, 206)

Although the social distance variable between S and H is rather low as they are close friends and the power variable is neutral because H is a doctor and S is a businessman, the professional title doctor is used by S to show respect to H. It is worth noting that the professional title *doktoor* is used inside as well as outside professional institutions. Asking for permission to omit the title altogether, as the case in Example 1, or omitting the title, as

in Example 5, will be considered impolite behavior in Palestinian culture. That is to say, addressing a doctor, in Palestinian culture, using FN without title is unacceptable under all circumstances as it encodes disrespect. However, people working in the same profession can reciprocate FN without a title.

In Palestinian culture, people sometimes can choose from FN or *ʔabu/ʔum* + son's name to encode respect. In most cases, addressing people using *ʔabu/ʔum* + son's name will satisfy people's positive face, as people like to be called by their son's name. Moreover, sometimes people choose the names of their sons before they get married. A good example to be mentioned here is the late Palestinian president Yasser Arafat, who was usually referred to as *ʔabu Amaar* which literally means "the father of Amaar", even though he was not married and even after he got married, he had no sons. In the data taken from the Palestinian plays, there are examples where people can make the choice between FN and *ʔabu/ʔum* + son's name. The choice is not without constraints, because it is governed by factors such as the social distance between speaker and hearer and the degree of intimacy and the age of both the speaker and the hearer. Let us consider the following example:

8. SHEIKH SHAAMEL: *jahizee haqibatee yaa ʔum Eisa ...*
 prepare bag me oh mother Eisa...
 Prepare my bag, Mother of Eisa...

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 56)

Sheikh Shaamel addresses his wife using the term *ʔum Eisa* instead of FN (Kunuuz). Although a husband and a wife communicate with each other by using either term, Shaamel wants to express politeness towards his wife, paying her respect. Throughout the play he never uses his wife's FN. It is worth noting that in Australian English this type of address form is not available. Instead, husbands and wives address each other using FN, nicknames or endearment terms.

Another way of claiming in-group solidarity can be approached by using diminutives and endearments. However, according to Sifianou (1992), "languages differ as to the entities they utilize to express intimacy and endearment, and as such these forms are

extremely language-specific” (p. 69). Similarly, Mendoza (2005) argues that politeness can be approached by employing different means across languages. Furthermore, she underscores the role diminutives played in encoding positive politeness. Halupka-Resetar and Radic (2003) point out that, in Serbian, people use certain animal names vocatively to address people affectionately. In Greek, Sifianou (1992) states that vital body parts such as the eyes and the soul are used as endearments. Australian English and Palestinian Arabic both use endearments and diminutives to encode positive politeness. However, remarkable differences do appear in terms of the types of endearments and their pragmatic function. What sounds familiar to the Palestinian speaker seems otherwise to the Australian speaker. Let us consider these examples:

9. SARHAAN: *yaa sadiqee yaa Eisa yaa habeebi yaa Eisa ismaδ...*
 oh friend oh Eisa oh love my oh Eisa listen ...
 Listen to me my friend and love Eisa...

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 68)

10. HOPE: Oh... I feel completely drained. I did six readings today.
 [rubbing her hip] My sciatica's all flared up. Rub my
 arse, will you, love?

(Ayres, 2003, p. 14)

In Example 9, both the word *friend* and *love* are used to express intimacy and endearment among close friends in Palestinian Arabic. However, in the Australian English data although the two terms exist, only *love* is used to express endearment. Moreover, there are some pragmatic differences associated with the term *love*. In the Palestinian Arabic data the term is freely reciprocated among male-male, adult-young interlocutors. In the Australian English data, on the other hand, the term is not used between heterosexual males to express endearment. It is only used by a mother to address her son and by a husband to address his wife or vice versa. It is worth noting here that the term *love* has nothing to do with sex, rather it is reciprocated frequently by people to satisfy H's positive face by treating them as in-groupers. In Example 10, Hope addresses her son using *love*. By doing so, she considers the relative power between herself and her son to be rather low, thus, minimizing her request, which is carried out by the imperative form of the verb.

What is interesting about the term *love* is its widespread usage. The term has a magic effect as a softening device in Palestinian culture. People of different ages, in

particular close friends, use it reciprocally to soften requests and criticism. But the term appears frequently in young/adult encounters. It is not restricted to one's own children, but can be used to address any child in the street to request him/her to do or not to do things. For example, we can ask a child who is fighting another in the street, *Why are you fighting each other, love?* However, in the Australian data, the term seems to be used among people who know each other well and it is limited to male-female or vice versa. No single case has been found in the data where the term is used between male interlocutors.

Another term used in Palestinian Arabic to express endearment is the term *ḍaruusa*, meaning “bride”. It is very often used to address young girls. In some cases it is also used by old people to address adolescent girls. Consider the following example:

11. SHEIKH SHAAMEL: *wa ʔanti yaa Najma yaa ḍaruusatina al-ḥilwa maa ʔaxbaarik*
and you oh Najma oh bride our the beautiful how you
How are you Najma, our beautiful bride?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 54)

Whether it is addressed to young or adult girls, the term is extended beyond its literal meaning. It keeps its pragmatic function as a term of endearment, making the addressee feel happy. It is worth noting that this extension of the term *bride* is exclusive to the Palestinian culture, and has no equivalent in Australian English.

Another endearment term found in the Palestinian Arabic data is the term *rajul*, meaning “man”. It is sometimes used as a substitution for FN among close friends to encode intimacy. Let us consider the following example:

12. EISA: *(li-Zanaad) maa ʔaxbaarak yaa rajul*
(to Zanaad) what news your oh man
How are you going, man?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 122)

However, although the term *man* is found in one example in the data taken from the Australian plays, it is used to express impatience rather than encoding positive politeness.

It is worth pointing out that the term *man* is not commonly used in Australian English. It is more American. Let us consider the following example:

13. FRANK: Come on, man. The train goes in twenty minutes.
Can't we take the pictures outside?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 81)

Pragmatically speaking, we can argue that *rajul* and *man* do not have a similar function in the data taken from the Australian English and Palestinian Arabic plays. However, according to the *Al-Mawrid English-Arabic Dictionary* (2003), the literal meaning of *rajul* is "man", so it has to some extent the same pragmatic function as *mate* in Australian English.

Mate is a term of familiarity used in Australian English. It is often used in everyday interaction. I have been addressed as *mate* several times by people I do not know (for example, on the bus). Let us consider the following example:

14. FREDDY: Come on, mate. That's no way to talk. Do you want
me to get you a mug of Promite?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 73)

According to *Al-Mawrid English-Arabic Dictionary* (2003), the closest meaning to the term *mate* is *rafeeq*. However, in Palestinian Arabic, the term *rafeeq* is not used in everyday interaction. The closest pragmatic term to *mate* is *ʔax*, meaning "brother", but there are some differences between *ʔax* and *mate*. While *mate* is used only as a term of address, *ʔax* is used as a term of address and as a title. Age is also another area of difference between the two languages. In the Australian data, age is not a determining factor in the use of *mate*; people of very different ages can use the term to each other. In Palestinian Arabic, on the other hand, age is a key factor. *ʔax* is used exclusively to address a certain age-group, in particular, adults. Very old people are not included in this age-bracket, as they are correctly addressed with a specific term which is *Haj/Haje*. However, in some areas, old people can be addressed with the term *ʔax* by people of nearly the same age, but not by young people. However, regional differences exist in using *ʔax* in Palestine.

What is common in the Palestinian data is the employment of the terms *waladi/ibni*, meaning “my son”, *binti*, meaning “my daughter” and *waalidi*, meaning “my father”, to express closeness and intimacy. In this sense, the terms’ meanings are expanded beyond their literal reference to blood relatives, to the realm of expressing strong social bonds between S and H who are not family members. Mostly, they are used in the possessive form (my son/daughter) as it is a very polite form in Palestinian Arabic. This clearly reflects the orientation of the society towards collectivism instead of individualism. The all collective image of the society makes it not only acceptable, but also desirable, to address old people as fathers and uncles. This is part of the process of socializing children both to accept and conform to the polite codes sanctioned within the community. Let us consider some examples:

15. SHEIKH SHAAMEL: *kayf haalikum yaa ?awlaadi?*
How things oh sons
How are you sons?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 52)

16. NAJMA: *bixayr yaa waalidi ?δmal mumariDa*
alright oh father work nurse
I am alright, father. I work as a nurse.

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 54)

In the examples above, S and H are not family members, they are only neighbors. Sheikh Shaamel uses the term *?awlaadi*, “my sons”, to address Najma and her brother, and in return he receives the term *waalidi*, “my father”. What does this mean in Palestinian culture? Generally speaking, expanding family terms to members outside the family expresses S’s sincere wish to maintain closeness and boost solidarity with the addressee. This in turn affects the notion of imposition, which plays a central role in linguistic politeness, allowing S to use a variety of politeness strategies. For example, S can use a bald-on-record strategy or positive politeness instead of negative politeness. In other words, there will be a shift from formality to informality. It is worth pointing out that in Example 15 above, although the request is classified as a request for information, the employment of the term *?awlaadi* has nothing to do with the notion of mitigation, as no face-threatening act has been performed. Rather, such a type of request satisfies H’s

positive face, giving H the impression that S is interested in and cares about H. What would really make H feel unhappy would be ignoring or not asking about his/her situation and family in general. Not asking a person whom you know well about his/her health, life and family would leave them wondering “What is wrong in terms of social relationships between me and this person?” People like to share their experiences in good and hard times. Concern for privacy, as it is practiced in Western societies, is thought to be threatening to the group’s solidarity and it would constitute an unhealthy obsession in a Palestinian context.

Another in-group term used by Palestinian Arabic is the term *ḍazeezi* which functions similarly to the Australian English “dear”. In the Australian English data, *dear* is used to encode positive politeness. It is widely used by different people in a variety of speech situations. Consider the following examples:

17. FRANK: No, it’s just Malcolm Sargent making a mess of Beethoven as usual. How are you my dear? You’re looking well.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 53)

18. FRANCES: Hello dear, How are you today?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 61)

19. MARGE: What dear? What?

(Rayson, 1990, p. 46)

20. FRANK: Two heaped teaspoons, my dear?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 70)

Considering the above examples, *dear* is used by Frank, the father, to address Joan, the daughter, Frank and Frances, husband and wife, and, finally, Marge uses it to address an acquaintance. In all the above examples, we can agree on the fact that *dear* is used to express affection. In the first two examples (17, 18), we can argue that *dear* is used to express affection rather than mitigating FTAs as it accompanies everyday greetings. In the third example (19), *dear* is used to express astonishment. Finally, *dear* in the last example (20) is used to express affection as well, rather than mitigating the imposition that emerges

as a result of the request because Frank uses the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy in situations which are more face-threatening than this one when addressing the same H.

It could be argued then that the notion of imposition is not the sole reason for using positive politeness strategies. Expressing affection is also another possible reason. Since the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy is the prevailing mode of communication among interlocutors, using positive politeness devices which encode affection such as *dear* in one or two speech situations is unlikely to be interpreted as a mitigating device. For example, Frank and Frances address each other using the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy in nearly all of the speech situations throughout the play, even in cases of face-threatening acts. Therefore, using *dear* as a mitigating device in Example 18 is unlikely, as it contradicts the main direction of the conversation. Thus, it might be argued that positive politeness strategies are frequently used to express affection besides their functions as mitigating devices.

Similarly, in Palestinian culture the endearment term *ḍazeezi* is used to express affection rather than to mitigate the imposition associated with a certain speech act. Consider the following example:

21. DALAAL: *wa taxuS man yaa ḍazeezi?*
and mean who oh dear my
Who are you talking about my dear?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 91)

Looking at all the exchanges which take place between Dalaal and Eisa throughout the play, we notice the employment of the bald-on-record strategy in most of the speech situations, even in cases of FTAs. Therefore, using *ḍazeezi* in this situation as a mitigating device can be ruled out. It is worth pointing that *ḍazeezi* is not used among family members; it is only used among friends and lovers. Neither the mother nor the father uses *ḍazeezi* to address their children. In short, we can argue that the only difference between *ḍazeezi* and *dear* is that while *ḍazeezi*, in Palestinian Arabic, is confined to friends, *dear*, in Australian English, is widely used by family members and friends.

Another term of endearment used in the Australian English data is the term *sweetheart*. Consider the following example

22. JOE: Let's not talk about it, sweetheart... Come over here.

(Sewell, 1997, p. 25)

In Example 22, S and H are husband and wife. S uses two positive politeness strategies to mitigate the request: the inclusive *let's* and the endearment term *sweetheart*. Since requesting someone to stop talking about a certain topic might be perceived by H as face-threatening, S resorts to positive politeness strategies to mitigate the imposition as the social distance between S and H is low. The cost of the request seems to be high, which demands the employment of more than one strategy. This is in accordance with Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, where costly speech acts necessitate an increase in the politeness strategies employed.

6.1.1.2 Swear words

Related to in-group identity markers is the use of certain terminologies that characterize the linguistic performance of a specific group of people. Such terminologies may belong to a special language variety or may be categorized under what is termed as slang, swearing or taboo. Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that "By referring to an object with a slang term, S may evoke all the shared associations and attitudes that he and H both have toward that object; this then may be used as FTA redress" (p. 111). In the data taken from the Australian plays, terms such as *shit* and *fuck* are used to show support. Let us consider these examples:

23. GARY: No, sure, I'll grant you that. The last foster parents
– they were Salvos – they were nice. But by then I was a little
shithead. Acting up. Ended up in Juvenile detention. Four years.

DAVE: Four years! Shit...

(Oswald, 1996, p. 18)

In Example 23, Dave uses two positive politeness strategies to express solidarity with Gary. First, Dave uses “repetition” as a technique to stress interest and surprise in Gary’s talk. Second, he uses a slang term, *shit*, to show solidarity with Gary.

24. JAMES: One thing I learned. Guys like the way I look. I’m giving this guy a backrub and he tells me how good it feels and he says, ‘Men would pay for that, you know’. Turns out he’s a masseur. Makes a thousand bucks a week. So I think, what a fuck? Why not?

(Ayres, 2003, p. 48)

Although the word *fuck* is classified by *Collins Cobuild Dictionary for Advanced Learners* (2001) as “a rude and offensive word” (p. 635) and considered by Allan and Burridge (2006) as impolite or taboo word, for James, it represents something different. It expresses equal status between S and H, and stresses the sense of in-group membership. It also gives clues on the interpersonal relationship between S and H.

The point to be raised here is related to the definition of the word *fuck* presented by *Collins Cobuild Dictionary* (2001). Xie, He and Lin (2005) argue that language in itself cannot be described as polite or impolite, but rather, both S and H agree on what counts as polite and what counts as impolite. Johnson (2007) points out that “the face threat of a message depends on the interaction context, including participants’ goals and perception of the message” (p. 197). Allan and Burridge (2006) go into further detail when describing the possible factors that might significantly affect whether a language behavior is perceived as polite or impolite. These factors include “the relationship between speakers, their audience, and anyone within earshot; the subject matter; the situation (setting); and whether a spoken or written medium is used” (p. 31). Since all these factors should be taken into account when describing language behavior, it would be erroneous or misleading to judge or treat words as independent units of meaning, neglecting such determining factors.

Moreover, there has been a great deal of debate over the definition of impoliteness as well as what counts as impolite behavior. Watts (2003) maintains that “(im)politeness is a term that is struggled over at present, has been struggled over in the past and will, in all probability, continue to be struggled over in the future” (p. 9). As far as impoliteness is

concerned, while some researchers such as Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983) hold up the notion of inherent impoliteness, others such as Mills (2003) argues that “In contrast to a great deal of research in this area, I believe that impoliteness has to be seen as an assessment of someone’s behaviour rather than a quality intrinsic to an utterance” (p. 122). Culpeper (1996) also investigates Leech’s notion of inherent impoliteness and concludes that impoliteness should be inferred in only those acts which are seen as offensive in themselves. However, Mills (2003) challenges this viewpoint and argues that even the most offensive acts can be used to indicate camaraderie among close friends.

Furthermore, empirical research investigating the function of impolite words such as *fuck* reveals that such words are highly sophisticated, conveying a range of socio-pragmatic functions. Daly, Holmes, Newton and Stubbe (2004) point out that *fuck* was frequently used by a group of workers in a New Zealand soap factory to encode positive politeness. It is strongly connected with expressions expressing solidarity, such as forms of address and other speech acts serving as positive politeness devices to ease tension and create and uphold rapport among in-groupers. What is remarkable in this study is the fact that these uses of *fuck* were confined to a certain group of workers. They were not found in the speech of other groups of workers. Likewise, in the Australian data, *fuck* as it is frequently used by a certain age-group (in particular youth) performs a number of pragmatic functions.

In a similar vein, in a study investigating impoliteness phenomena in the Spanish media, Lorenzo-Dus (2007) argues that “impoliteness is not an inherent quality of utterances, because even insults – to use perhaps the most extreme example – function in certain contexts as effective solidarity-building devices” (p. 145). Allan and Burridge (2006) use the term “ritual insults” to refer to insults which are “uttered without animosity, which can be reciprocated without animus and which typically indicate a bond of friendship” (p. 87). Consequently, evaluating any utterance as being polite or impolite should be based on whether a certain speech act is perceived as a face-threatening act or as a face-supporting act within a certain speech community. It is true that, even among the same group, people vary in their judgment of what counts as polite and what counts as impolite. Allan and Burridge (2006) argue that “What counts as courteous behaviour varies between human groups.... Consequently, the way Ed and Jo address one another may strike them as polite but Sally as impolite” (p. 29). An individual, in particular an

addressee, can assess whether an act threatens or supports face. Mills (2003) comments on what might be perceived as impolite behavior arguing that any behavior that intends to “threaten the hearer’s face or social identity, or as transgressing the hypothesized community of practice’s norms of appropriacy” (p. 135) should be construed as impolite.

In short, since *fuck* has started to lose its offensive nature and is penetrating everyday interaction as a word conveying positive politeness, albeit by certain groups of people, we can argue that the social meaning of words is not intrinsic and unchangeable. Similarly, linguistic politeness is not fixed and unchangeable either. What counted as appropriately courteous behavior in previous times may not seem so in contemporary society. According to Allan and Burridge (2006) “The manners regarded as polite in previous centuries sometimes seem ridiculously pedantic today and, if practiced in the twenty-first century, would be inappropriate” (p. 30). This seems to be true in Palestinian culture, too. For example, in previous times, kissing parents’ hands was very common as a way of showing respect, but nowadays the practice has diminished and in some areas it has completely disappeared. Similarly, we can argue that what is regarded as offensive in a certain time or place, such as the word *fuck*, may be regarded otherwise in another context, or group.

6.1.2 Presupposing, raising, or asserting common ground with H

Brown and Levinson (1987) identify several techniques under the strategy of presupposing/raising/asserting common ground with H, by which S can redress FTAs. First S can stress friendship and show interest in H by gossiping or initiating small talk about unrelated topics. This in turn may redress FTAs by indicating that S has not merely come to do the FTA. Second, S can adopt what Brown and Levinson call “point of view operation” (p. 118). In this case, S gives H the position of S or S equates his/her knowledge with H. A good example in English is the utilization of tags and expressions such as *you know*.

Another technique related to this positive politeness strategy, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), is “time switch”, where S switches from the past to the present. The use of the vivid present in English increases the immediacy in order to increase a story’s interest. S can also make a “place switch”, employing proximal demonstratives (here, this)

instead of distal demonstratives (there, that). The basic function of such techniques in terms of politeness is to communicate “increased involvement or empathy” (pp. 120-121). The utilization of verbs such as *come* and *go* in English is also related to place switch, where the verb *go* encodes the notion of distance, whereas *come* conveys participation and engagement.

FTAs might also be redressed by presupposing that S has shared knowledge about H’s wants and attitude. Brown and Levinson (1987) identify “Negative questions, which presume ‘yes’ as an answer” (p. 122) as an affective device. S can also presuppose familiarity and knowledge with H.

Although Brown and Levinson (1987) identify several techniques to assert a common ground with H, only two techniques are found in the data. In the data taken from the Australian plays, negative questions are the most frequent technique used to stress common ground with H. Consider the following example:

25. PIP: Don’t you want to hear this? This is good.

(Rayson, 1990, p. 21)

In Example 25, by using a negative interrogative construction, Pip presupposes knowledge of H’s tastes and expects a “yes” answer for the request. However, using positive questions such as “Do you want to hear this?” would indicate that S knows nothing about H’s wants and tastes, since it functions as a request for information instead of a supporting device.

However, in Palestinian culture, initiating talk before performing a request can be very effective. Employing negative questions is not popular at all. Only one case has been found in the data, and it is also preceded by small talk. Let us consider the following example:

26. ABED AL-BAAQI: *ḍalaa yadaya haatayn rabaytak...ḥamaltak ... dalaltak ..*
on hands my these brought up you carried you cherished you
faftah lee Sadrak wa qalbak.
open to me chest your and heart your
I brought you up, carried you and cherished you; tell me about your
problem.

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 57)

In Example 26, S prefaces his speech with introductory talk, reminding H of his childhood and how kind he was towards him. This is very significant and effective in Palestinian culture, where children are socialized to pay deep respect to the people who bring them up and to those who take care of them. Pragmatically speaking, this technique functions as a communication facilitator, giving H confidence that S is not seeking advantage from the request and curiosity is not a likely reason for issuing the request, but the undoubted desire from S to help H. Considering the words chosen for performing the request, it becomes obvious that the request is face-threatening as it imposes on H, threatening his privacy. Consequently, instead of requesting H using the formula “Tell me about your trouble”, S chooses a more sincere formula, “open your chest and heart”, which is used frequently in Palestinian culture to stress intimacy.

Similarly, initiating talk before performing a request is a technique found in the data taken from the Australian plays, where the speaker resorts to such a technique to minimize the threat to the addressee’s face. Consider the following example:

27. PIP: You know when we were kids and you and Meg wagged
school and caught the bus up to Frankston?
HIL: Mmm
PIP: And you nicked some stuff from Coles?
HIL: Yeah.
PIL: What actually happened?

(Rayson, 1990, p. 17)

Although the request in Example 27 is void of any lexical politeness marker, H shows no sign of being offended or uncooperative. However, S uses introductory talk to do the FTA. It would be more economical from the perspective of the principles of conversation if Pip observes the maxim of quantity (do not say more than is required), performing the request directly without this introduction, saying “What happened when you nicked some stuff from Coles when you were a child?” But Pip uses several politeness techniques when performing the request. Since the cost of the speech act is rather high as it has to do with the addressee’s misdemeanor, S chooses the words carefully in this introductory dialogue. Instead of talking about the addressee alone, S uses the inclusive pronoun *we*, including herself and H in the period of childhood which is characterized by childish behavior. This in turn may function as a mitigating device, eliminating or reducing embarrassment which

might be caused by reminding H of some wrong-doing. S also does not mention the act of stealing in the first part of the dialogue to avoid any negative response which might bring the conversation to an end.

6.1.3 Avoiding disagreement

According to Brown and Levinson (1987) FTAs can be redressed by expressing the desire to agree with H or avoid disagreement. S can pretend to agree with H or make disagreement less obvious by avoiding the blatant direct negative answer. Therefore, S can twist utterances using expressions such as “Yes, but...”. S can also use fake agreement “then” and “so” and hedging expressions such as “sort of” and “kind of” (pp. 112-116). S can also resort to white lies if s/he is asked to state his/her opinion in order to avoid damaging H’s positive face.

Although S can avoid disagreement by employing different techniques; in the data collected from the Australian and Palestinian plays only one technique (*yes, but ...*) is used to perform requests. Consider the following example:

28. FRANK: She’s been very happy down here. There’s no doubt about that, and she’s become very, very fond of all your children. How is young Tarquin, by the way?
HELEN: Tarquin is one of Sophie’s children.
FRANK: Of course, how stupid of me. Yours is, er...
HELEN: I’ve got three.
FRANK: Yes but, er, isn’t there one with a name like Tarquin?
HELEN: No, nothing like Tarquin. In my opinion Tarquin is a pretentious, dated and rather stupid name, but that’s Sophie’s business. The child you’re probably referring to is called Tobias.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 17)

In the above dialogue, we notice that Frank makes use of the strategy of avoiding disagreement twice (*of course...* and *yes but...*). The question to be raised here is what is the pragmatic function of employing such a strategy in this speech situation? Before discussing the pragmatic function, we should consider the relationship between the addressor, the addressee and the other characters presented in the dialogue. Helen is one of Frances’s daughters. Frances is in love with Frank. Both Frank and Frances intend to live with each other without getting married because Frank strongly opposes the idea of

marriage. Helen strongly objects to the plan because she thinks that Frank, an old man with heart problems, is exploiting her mother for his own benefit.

Turning now to the pragmatic function of employing the strategy of avoiding disagreement, it might be argued that Frank uses this strategy for three purposes. First, to avoid confrontation, rather than to satisfy the addressee's positive face. Since Frank outspokenly discloses his fears of introducing Helen to his daughter Joan, saying "She is coming to blast me for spiriting off her mother, and quite frankly I'm terrified" (Williamson, 1980, p. 16), he is doing his best to defuse any potential confrontation. Second, it functions as a communicative facilitator. Frank agrees with Helen in order to inhibit any potential break-down of the conversation that might be caused by demonstrating blunt disagreement. Finally, the strategy of avoiding disagreement has something to do with the notion of self-politeness where "speakers typically attend to their own and their partner's face needs during interaction" (Johnson, 2007, p. 197). Since an inability to perform the requested task threatens S's positive face, Frank feels embarrassed after an unsuccessful attempt to maintain the conversation as a result of his inability to remember the name of Helen's child. He shows agreement with Helen, though it is superficial, and at the same time delivers the message to Helen that he shares with her some knowledge about her family, hoping to create common ground on the one hand and to distract her from the core issue on the other. By pretending that he has forgotten the name, Frank's move intends to minimize the loss of face caused by his failure to maintain the conversation. It is worth noting that Frank is not an easy-going person and does not admit easily any wrong-doing. This can be clearly seen in various speech situations in the play. For instance:

29. FREDDY: Still haven't heard from Frances?

FRANK: No.

FREDDY: Why don't you phone her?

FRANK: No.

FREDDY: Or send a letter.

FRANK: I won't beg. I've never done it in my life and I won't start now.

FREDDY: I think you should swallow your pride and admit you were in the wrong.

FRANK: Hmm. Easier said than done.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 72)

It might be argued that the kind of politeness used by Frank in Example 28 is not genuine as it lacks sincerity. This is considered a cardinal matter in terms of politeness. Xie, He and Lin (2005) argue that Brown and Levinson's (1987) face model is based on, although not explicitly manifested in, the presupposition that politeness is regarded as something good, sincere and devoid of hypocrisy. This is also taken for granted by many researchers working in this domain. For example, Bharuthram (2003) points out that "being polite should be a natural part of one's overall good character. There should be no intent behind one's polite behaviour, meaning one should not be polite to achieve personal goals" (p. 1532). From this perspective, should we consider Frank's linguistic behavior as impolite?

This invites the question "what counts as polite and what counts as impolite?" We do not want to be as pessimistic as Xie, He and Lin (2005) and hold the view that being sincerely and naturally polite is fantasy and, at the same time, we do not want to be as idealistic as Bharuthram (2003), believing that words and phrases that express hypocrisy, insincerity, and telling lies do not coexist with politeness in the real world. We all sometimes utter polite words insincerely. For example, when we make some sort of inadvertent body contact with other people on the bus or somewhere else, we quickly say "sorry". But, do we really feel sorry in the true sense of the word? Most probably not. We all sometimes tell lies to other people or to ourselves. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), who present the most prominent pragmatic politeness theory, telling lies may be used as a strategy to avoid disagreement with H. However, they do not include all types of lies. They only talk about what are known as "white lies". Do we need a distinction between white lies and black lies? All types of lies are lies. Moreover, what is termed and envisaged as a white lie in one culture is considered taboo in another. Under Islamic laws and in Islamic communities, all types of lies are religious taboos and people practicing them are ostracized. Still, we have not answered our question. From a linguistic point of view, a new problematic matter emerges. How can we discern between sincere and insincere politeness, especially when we are dealing with people we have met for the first time? Some people, in particular politicians, for example, are very skillful deceivers. They have highly developed abilities to manipulate people. They often break their promises shortly after the elections. Can we describe them as impolite? Of course we cannot, especially if we and the president or the prime minister belong to the same political party. We will do our best to create and search for logical and convincing excuses. To conclude this discussion, we cannot embrace Bharuthram's (2003) idealistic view and equate

insincerity with impoliteness, and at the same time we cannot be so pessimistic, believing in the non-existence of sincere politeness. Therefore, we can argue that sincerity is not a requisite of politeness and politeness can survive without sincerity.

The strategy of avoiding disagreement is also found in the data taken from the Palestinian plays, where S shows agreement with H to minimize the cost of disagreement. Let us consider the following example:

30. KHAALID: *ḍaDeem, ḍaDeem wa laakin...halsataSrakh haakaḍaa yaa ?ustaaḍ?*
 great, great but will shout like this oh teacher
 Great, great, but are you going to shout like this?

31. JAMEEL: *kalaa yaa Saahibee...*
 No oh friend my...
 No my friend....

(Shihada, 1978, p. 166)

In this example, Khaalid seems to be dissatisfied with the way his friend (Jameel) is going to give his speech. He first shows his admiration by using the word *ḍaDeem* (great) and then questions the way Jameel is addressing his audience. The token agreement used in this example functions as a mitigating device for the next request which seems to be face-threatening.

6.1.4 Taking notice of H's interests, wants, needs, goods

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), another way for S to claim common ground between S and H is to take notice of H's interests, wants, needs, goods. S should be a very sensitive and keen observer of H. S should notice things that H would like S to notice. In so doing, S satisfies H's positive face by indicating that both S and H share specific wants.

In the data taken from the Australian and Palestinian plays, although taking notice of H's interests is a common strategy, very few examples are associated with requests. Let us consider the following examples:

32. FREDDY: Frances, you look fantastic. Can I kiss the bride?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 81)

33. ZANAAD: *wa makaatib faxma. layuhumaa maktabak?*
and offices great which office your
Great offices, which one is yours?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 62)

Considering the above examples, it is clear that the parts which precede the requests function as face-supporting devices. In Example 32, the clause “you look fantastic” satisfies Frances’ positive face wants. It also functions, according to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness model, as a mitigating device for the coming requests which is expected to be face-threatening as it encroaches on H’s autonomy.

However, given different cultural and religious values, it would be socially unacceptable, and therefore impolite and a religious taboo, for a male neighbor to kiss a woman in Palestinian culture. But this does not apply to members of the same family, in particular brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and nieces. It might be argued here that what is perceived as positive politeness in one culture is perceived as impolite behavior in another. Bearing in mind such differences, we find no reason to disagree with Allan and Burridge (2006) that “Nothing is taboo for all people, under all circumstances, for all time” (p. 9).

In Example 33, the phrase “great offices” supports H’s face as Zanaad pays a compliment. Although requests for information are classified by Brown and Levinson (1987) as likely to threaten H’s negative face, the request in Example 31 is unlikely to be interpreted as a threat to H’s face because H invites S into his office to show him his achievements after he has become the manager of the library.

According to the data taken from Australian plays, taking notice of H’s interests, possessions, and wants can be achieved by employing expressions such as *goodness*, *oh*, *God*.

34. FRANCES: Goodness. Were there any repercussions?
(Williamson, 1980, p. 42)

35. DARREN: Oh, God... How did that happen?
(Ayres, 2003, p. 6)

In Examples 34, and 35, Ss use the expressions “goodness”, “oh” and “God” to attend to H’s positive face. This has been carried out by expressing S’s astonishment and emotional involvement, giving H the impression that S feels what H feels. By so doing S can carry out the request baldly without the fear of threatening H’s face because he or she will be treated as an in-group member who has shared knowledge with H. Although, Palestinian Arabic has similar expressions to the ones used in the above examples, in my data they are not associated with requests.

6.1.5 Intensify interest to H

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), S can emphasize common ground with H by engaging him/her in the conversation. This in turn gives H the impression that S shares some wants with H. This is usually done by telling a good story using the vivid present. It can also be achieved through using expressions that facilitate involving H in the dialogue such as “you know?”, “see what I mean” and tags such as “isn’t it?” (p. 107).

Another technique relevant to this strategy, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), is the element of exaggeration. S may overstate facts to increase the vividness of the conversation. This can be achieved by employing certain expressions that stress S’s good intention in the conversation. Consider the following examples

36. There were a *million* people in the Co-op tonight!

37. You *always* do the dishes! I’ll do them this time.

(Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 107)

The employment of hyperbolic words such as “million” and “always” has two different functions. First, they contribute to the conversational value of the utterances, increasing the interest of the conversation by dramatizing the situation. Second, they underscore the sincerity of S’s good intentions. This plays an important role in interpersonal relations.

Although the strategy of encouraging H’s participation in interaction exists in the data taken from the Australian and Palestinian plays, there are some differences in the techniques utilized. For example, the formula used in the Palestinian data takes the form of a question raised by S which functions as an invitation for H to join in the discourse. By raising such questions S does not anticipate any answer from H because he or she knows

for sure that H does not know the answer. Interestingly, H, in many cases, answers the question with another question as in the following example:

38. SHEIKH SHAAMEL: *ʔataδrif maaḏaa kaana yaqra ʔh xilsa ḏaalik al-xabeeθ*
do you know what was read secret that the cruel
Do you know what he was reading, that cruel [person]?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 40)

39. SHEIKH ABED-AL-BAAQI: *kitaab al-nihal wa al-milal li-shahrastanee?*
book Alnihāl and Almilāl to Shahrastanee
Was he reading Shahrastanee's book *Alnihāl and Almilāl*?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 41)

In Example 38 above, although S knows for sure that H knows nothing about the speech situation, he initiates his talk with the phrase “Do you know”. Pragmatically speaking, the employment of such an expression is to invite H to take part in the conversation.

What is interesting in Example 38 is the employment of the de-adjectival noun *al-xabeeθ*, meaning “cruel”, by the father to describe his son. Generally speaking, in Palestinian culture parents usually enhance their children's face. However, directing a pejorative towards one's child can be a strategy for protecting S's face. In the Palestinian community, the face of the father is likely to be damaged by any anti-social behavior committed by the son. Therefore, the father comments on his son's behavior in a disapproving manner and thereby dissociates himself as the father, who is the first to be blamed for failing to socialize his children to society's politeness conventions. This again reflects the orientation of Palestinian society towards the group rather than the individual. The transgression of socially sanctioned codes by one member of a Palestinian family is likely to tarnish the face of the whole family, in particular, the parents. This is less true in Australian culture.

Similarly, in the data taken from the Australian plays, S uses the expression *guess what* to engage H in the conversation. Although this expression is used in the imperative form, it is unlikely to cause any damage to H's face as it expresses closeness and intimacy. Consider the following example:

40. JAMES: ... but then guess what?
(Ayres, 2003, p. 35)

In this example, the prime purpose of the request is not to coerce H, but to draw H as a welcome participant into the activity of speaking. Pragmatically speaking, we can argue that both *ʔataḍrif* and *guess what* have a similar function, expressing positive politeness. Interestingly, their presence in the two languages is conditioned by low social distance between S and H.

Similar to these expressions is the request for advice *what do you reckon* in Australian English and the expression *maa raʔyak*, meaning *what do you think*, in Palestinian Arabic. Both phrases are used as a means of expressing positive politeness, encouraging H to become engaged in S's affairs, hence creating some sort of common ground and fostering the relationship between S and H. Let us consider

41. JAMES: What you reckon? Should I give him a call?
(Ayres, 2003, p. 55)

42. SHEIKH SHAAMEL: *maa raʔyik yaa Najma fi safaree lilxaarij ?*
what think you oh Najma in travel mine to abroad
What do you think of my traveling abroad Najma?
(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 54)

Another expression found in the Palestinian data used to encourage H's participation is *ʔataḍkur*, "do you remember". It is used as a request for information, so that H is encouraged to see himself as a welcome partner in the conversation. Such an expression indicates that both S and H belong to the same group and have some shared common ground that might serve as a starting point for the conversation. Let us consider the following example:

43. FAARIS: *ʔataḍkureen heena ʔaḥlajat qabla isbuuḍ?*
remember you when snowed before week
Do you remember when it snowed last week?
(Kanafani, 1978, p. 248)

The opening segment of conversation of any encounter is extremely important for linguistic politeness as it reveals certain assumptions about the rights and obligations of members of a certain language community that might play a significant role in carving out the whole encounter. So S from the very beginning indicates the politeness strategies that should be used. In the case of Example 43, the employment of the expression *ʔataðkureen* tells H that she is a welcome participant in the conversation, excluding any interpretation of her presence as intrusive. This in turn may affect the language and the politeness strategies used.

Exaggeration is another strategy found in the Palestinian data, where S intensifies interest to H. The element of exaggeration features prominently in everyday interaction in Palestinian culture. People exaggerate their compliments by using exaggerated numbers. Consider the following example:

44. ZANAAD: *ʔalf mabruuk..wa laakin hal tureed raʔyee bi-Saraaħa?*
 thousand congratulations and but do want view my frankly
 Congratulations. Do you want to listen to my view point?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 80)

What is interesting in this example is the employment of the word *thousand* before *mabruuk*, meaning “congratulations”. Some people may repeat thousand twice, saying *ʔalf ʔalf mabruuk*. Such a technique is used to express S’s sincere admiration and it also underscores S’s good will. It is worth pointing out that this technique occurs only among in-groupers, where the social distance is low.

Similarly, Australian English also employs some techniques that intensify interest to H. Some of these techniques are similar to the ones found in the Palestinian data, while others are exclusive to the Australian data. The most popular technique used in the data taken from Australian plays is tags. According to Cheng & Warren (2001), Hudson (1975), Holmes (1995), tags in English are often used to perform various pragmatic functions. Holmes identifies four pragmatic functions of tags. They are categorized into: “epistemic modal”, “challenging”, “facilitative” and “softening” (p. 80). She defines “epistemic modal tags” as tags that convey referential meaning, expressing S’s uncertainty. Their primary

function relates to the accuracy of information asserted in the proposition. That is to say, S very often seeks reassurance and reconfirmation from H. Epistemic modal tags are very common, compared to other tag-types, in the data taken from the Australian plays. Consider the following example:

45. MEG: He was not a fortune teller, was he?

(Rayson, 1990, p. 47)

In Example 45, it seems that Meg is not totally confident about the validity of the proposition presented, so she seeks confirmation from H. Holmes (1995) argues that since this tag-type has a referential-orientation rather than an affective-orientation, it encodes no sign of politeness. However, it might be argued that this tag-type, although it has no apparent affective-orientation, conveys positive politeness, as both S and H share some kind of knowledge. This is clear from the request's structure, where the third person singular pronoun (he) is used instead of a noun. This means that the antecedent is well-known to both S and H and there is some kind of ongoing talk between S and H.

Similarly, in the data taken from Palestinian plays, epistemic tags are used as requests for verification of information. Interestingly, epistemic tags are the only tag-type found in the Palestinian data. Consider the following example :

46. Faaris: *yabduu laki ðaalika ?amran taafihan... ?alaysa kaðaalik?*
seem to you that matter trivial ... does not it
This matter seems trivial to you, doesn't it?

(Kanafani, 1978, p. 242)

In Example 46, Faaris is not quite certain, so he seeks confirmation for his proposition. This question-type differs from other questions conveying requests for information in that S knows something concerning a certain issue and he/she seeks confirmation or rejection from H.

Challenging tags, according to Holmes (1995), are impoliteness devices; they are confrontational strategies. Their primary function is not to redress a potential face threat but to reinforce the negative force of an utterance. Most often, they are carried out where

asymmetrical power relation between S and H prevails. Interestingly, in the data taken from Australian plays and Palestinian plays, challenging tags were not found.

Facilitative tags are defined by Holmes (1995) as a kind of hedge used as a positive politeness device. The primary function of such tags is to invite the addressee to take part in the conversation.

47. FRANCES: The lung trouble is nothing serious, is it?
FRANK: No. It's just an aftermath of the pneumonia
FRANCES: If it was something more serious, you wouldn't try
to hide it from me, would you?
FRANK: Why would I try and do that, my love?
FRANCES: Because you don't want me to worry about you, and
I appreciate that, but really I'd rather know than not know.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 30)

Investigating the function of the tags used by Frances in the above dialogue, it becomes apparent that their primary function is facilitative. Frances is not an ignorant person seeking information about lung problems. Her real intention in using the tag is to draw Frank into the conversation, as she wants to know more about Frank's health problems. This undisclosed intention can be perceived if we follow Frances' speech, where she is determined to keep the conversation going, hoping that she might obtain some knowledge about Frank. The second tag *would you* supports this claim as Frances' need to have more information is still great. Frances concluding part *I'd rather know than not know* reveals her genuine goal and the reason she uses the tag rather than any other form of request. It is worth pointing that this tag-type is not found in the data taken from the Palestinian plays.

Holmes' (1995) fourth type of tags, "softening tags", will be discussed in detail in the next chapter under negative politeness, because their primary function is to minimize the negative effects caused by performing certain face-threatening speech acts and maintain H's negative face.

6.1.6 Including both S and H in the activity

According to Brown and Levinson (1987) redressing the threat to H's positive face can be achieved by including both S and H in the activity. This can be done by employing the inclusive *we/us*. In a study investigating the pragmatic function of the personal pronouns *I* and *we* in academic writing, Harwood (2005) argues that "inclusive pronouns can act as positive politeness devices" (p. 343). They are used to get the reader involved in the activity and, hence, make him/her more receptive to the writer's argument. They are also used to deliver the message that both writer and reader share common ground.

Including both S and H in the activity as a redressive device is common for both Australian English and Palestinian Arabic. In the data taken from the Australian and Palestinian plays, both the formula *let's* and the inclusive *we* are used to include S and H in the activity. Consider the following examples:

48. Joan: Let's talk about something else?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 55)

49. Marge: We won't tell anybody. Will we?

(Rayson, 1990, p. 45)

50. Subhi: *daḍuunaa min haaḍihi al-falsafaat.*
leave us from these the philosophies
Let's not talk about these things.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 53)

Although the propositive *let's* is used in the imperative form, it contains enough self-mitigation to be perceived as polite, redressing any potential damage to H's positive face. S uses *let's* to transmit the message that you and I have the same responsibilities, albeit rhetorically, towards achieving what is requested. This in turn gives S enough face immunity to perform the request without fearing any potential face threat in case H declines to cooperate.

In Example 48, Joan reveals diverse interpersonal goals, manifested in the need to change the line of the ongoing conversation and at the same time to avoid causing any

harm to her father's face. Therefore, instead of issuing a direct request for her father to stop talking about her mother, Joan takes special care to protect her father's face, using the propositive *let's*. Although Frank initiates the talk and Joan is the listener, she involves herself in the activity of speaking in order not to be seen as a coercer. She is also being polite by asking him to move to another topic instead of terminating the entire conversation.

In Example 49, Marge is seeking protection for a friend's face and in the meantime is looking forward to receiving cooperation from her partner as "refusing an intimate partner's request may hinder identity goals of appearing cooperative and supportive and, as a result, negatively affect long-term relationship development" (Johnson, 2007, p. 197). Therefore, she resorts to the inclusive *we* as a positive politeness technique to resolve this clash of interests. Also, since the weight of the speech act is rather high as it imposes on H's liberty, Marge uses further politeness strategies to counterbalance the threat. Thus she uses a redressive tag which is a negative politeness technique. This mixture of positive/negative politeness techniques is due to the low social distance between S and H and the high cost of the speech act.

In Example 50, Subhi mitigates his request by using the propositive *let's* because asking someone to stop talking or to change the topic of the talk is taken as an indication that what has been said by S is not interesting to H in Palestinian culture. Therefore, to protect H's face, S includes himself or herself in the activity.

6.2 Discussion of findings

The findings of this chapter can be summarized as follows: the performance of requests utilizing positive politeness strategies abounds in the data taken from both the Australian and the Palestinian plays. Interestingly, the two languages make use of two of the three super-strategies identified by Brown and Levinson (1987), namely, the super-strategies "claiming common ground with H" (p. 103) and "including both S and H in the activity" (p. 125). However, although the two languages utilize the same strategies to satisfy H's positive face, there are significant pragmatic differences in the linguistic devices employed.

Table 1. Distribution of positive politeness strategies

Strategy Type	Australian English	Palestinian Arabic
Use of in-group identity markers	72.5%	63.9%
Presupposing common ground with H	4.5%	3.6%
Avoiding disagreement	3.2%	2.0%
Taking notice of H's interest	2.8%	2.5%
Intensify interest to H	11.4%	9.2%
Including both S and H in the activity	5.3%	18.5 %

The data reveal that the most common positive politeness strategy used by characters in the two languages is “using in-group identity markers”. In the Australian English data, this accounts for 72.5%. In the Palestinian data, it accounts for 63.9%. That is to say, the majority of the requests in the Australian and Palestinian data are performed by using of in-group identity markers to mitigate requests. This might be accounted for by the fact that people in the play know each other well and use words or expressions that express affection and liking, stressing the interpersonal relationship between S and H.

However, although there is a similar orientation towards preferring the strategy of in-group identity marker by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic, there are crucial differences in the linguistic means employed. Using the person's first name (FN) is an area of significant difference between Australian English and Palestinian Arabic. It has been found that, due to cultural differences, employing FN, particularly in first-time encounters, appears to be problematic. In Palestinian culture, addressing people by FN is highly complex because it is governed by factors such as age, social status and marital status. Since maturity is highly revered in Palestinian culture, the use or avoidance of FN in one's encounter is dependent on the relative age of the addressee and the addressor. Old people are expected, in accordance with societal politeness norms, to receive a title (usually *Haj/Haje*) + FN. However, this rule may be suspended if the addressee holds a professional title, for example, an older male/female doctor does not receive the title *Haj/Haje*, but he/she maintains the professional title on the grounds that it is more deferential because it is the privilege of a small group of people. Marital status is very significant in whether to choose FN or another term of address. In some areas, in particular, the Gaza Strip and some parts of the West Bank, the choice between FN and

ʔabu/ʔum + son's name is strongly connected with politeness considerations. Addressing a married person by FN is perceived as impolite behavior.

Unlike Palestinian culture, using FN in Australian culture seems to be less status dependent. The social distance variable seems to be a key determining factor in using FN. FN appears to be quite regularly reciprocated by people of equal as well as of asymmetrical status; for example, a university professor might wish to be called by his/her FN. Bargiela et al. (2002) find similar behavior in other English-speaking countries, where people opt for FN because they consider informality to be a communication facilitator, while for other language groups such as Italian, Arabic and Georgian, such an involvement strategy is seen as excessively familiar and is therefore interpreted as impolite behavior.

However, Bargiela et al.'s (2002) findings might be challenged because they overgeneralize the naming strategy employed by a group of Arab subjects to all Arab countries, ignoring the existence of important differences among Arabic-speaking communities. In the Arab world, it would be misleading to overgeneralize the naming strategies employed in one culture to other cultures. During a stay in the Sudan from 1994 to 1997, I noticed significant differences between the naming strategies of Palestinian Arabic and Sudanese Arabic speakers. People in the Sudan, in particular people in metropolitan areas, irrespective of age, status and gender, commonly reciprocate FN without title. However, such a naming strategy in Palestinian Arabic is absent from daily interaction, especially from young people to old people. Moreover, in the Sudan some address forms such as *zalima*, which is used in Palestinian Arabic as a synonym to *rajul*, meaning "man" and can replace FN, is considered taboo.

In a study investigating the social psychological implications of forms of address in an American university, Little and Gelles (1975) highlighted the role of the social distance between S and H in choosing between formal and informal forms of address. This is similar to the data taken from the Australian plays, where social distance is found to be a determining factor in using FN. However, in the data taken from the Palestinian plays, social distance is not a key factor in the presence or absence of FN. It is the marital status and age that contribute the most. FN indicates disrespect if it is used as an alternative to the regular term of address *ʔabu/ʔum* + son's name for married people even in cases where the social distance is low. That is to say, employing FN in Palestinian culture to address

married people does not encode informality, as is the case in Australian English. However, in institutional settings, the interactional uses of forms of address become more complex as the terms *ʔabu/ʔum* + son's name are not used and replaced by professional titles such as doctor + FN. Power, social distance and rank are not determining factors for the presence or absence of FN. All academics receive title + FN.

Another study conducted by Rendle-Short (2007), investigating terms of address in political interviews in Australia, reveals that journalists address politicians using pre-positioned terms of address. They use title + last name (TLN) or institutional title (Prime Minister). Journalists, on the other hand, receive FN. Rendle-Short argues that politicians use FN as a “resource for taking the turn, for resolving overlapping talk, or for delaying a dispreferred response (p. 1503). That is to say, FN is not used to convey positive politeness in such situations. Similarly, Poynton (1989) argues that although Australian culture shows a preference for FN over TLN, this does not necessarily express friendliness, but rather it is attributed to the casual nature of Australian society. However, Poynton's (1989) findings might be questioned on the basis that although Australians orient towards FN, this is done very cautiously, taking into consideration the social distance and the power relation between S and H. That is to say, the employment of FN is not freely reciprocated in all circumstances by all people. In the Australian data, it is found that people use title plus family name to address people in the first encounter.

One of the main differences between Palestinian Arabic and Australian English is the extension of kinship terms to members who are not necessarily their family members. In Palestinian culture, the kinship terms *ʔabi/waalidi*, meaning “father” and *ʔami/ʔamu*, “uncle” are used to ascribe certain social attributes to the addressee. They are positive politeness devices that pervade the Palestinian society and used as alternatives to FN. In some cases, the terms *ʔami/ʔamu* are used together with the FN, but not *ʔabi/waalid*. A similar strategy involving the extension of kinship terms can be found in Tunisian society (Elarbi, 1997). However, the only difference between the two cultures seems to be in the use of the term *ʔabi* which is followed by FN. In Tunisian culture the term *ʔabi* is followed by FN, whereas in Palestinian culture it is not. It is worth mentioning that, in my data, extending kinship terms to non-kin is unfamiliar to speakers of Australian English. That is to say, this type of positive politeness appears exclusive to Palestinian Arabic.

Given all that, it might be argued that, as far as FN is concerned, there are cross-cultural pragmatic differences between Australian culture and Palestinian culture which might lead to embarrassment if observed inadequately. While Australian culture shows a “more relaxed attitude towards first name” (Rendle-Short, 2007, p. 1505), Palestinian culture orients towards *ʔabu/ʔum* + son’s name or title + FN, depending on the age and the social status of the addressee. It might also be argued that Brown and Levinson’s (1987) sociological variables (power and distance) are working only in Australian culture in the presence or appearance of FN, but not in Palestinian culture, as the presence of FN is determined by age and marital status.

Another point to be raised here under the strategy of “using in-group identity markers” is related to the use of swear words to convey positive politeness. Although the words *fuck* and *shit* are found to be used as a marker of positive politeness by certain groups of people in Australian English, taboo words are not used in the data taken from the Palestinian plays. The absence of taboo words from the Palestinian data can be attributed to two reasons: first, swear words are considered a religious taboo under Islamic rules and should be avoided, because it is believed that uttering such words may incur severe punishment for the S in the after life. Second, face-saving is likely to be a strong deterrent. In Palestinian society, people not only monitor their actions but also their speech. They are judged by their words and can be described as *ʔinssaan xaluuq/muʔadab*, meaning “a polite person”, if they choose their words wisely. Since S’s face might be tarnished in the uttering of any word that is considered impolite or taboo, S governs his/her words carefully. The Australian expression “who cares” has no equivalent in Palestinian culture. Everyone has to watch and monitor his/her behavior in the society, as showing disregard for politeness might cost a person dearly.

As far as the strategy of “including both S and H in the activity” is concerned, it has been found in both the Australian and the Palestinian data that the act of requesting someone to stop talking or change the line of the conversation is considered to be an impositive act and calls for redressive actions. That is to say, the cost of such a speech act is relatively high. This might be attributed to the fact that limiting someone’s right of speech is considered a deep affront to H’s face, which therefore requires mitigation. Interestingly, both languages use the same linguistic means (propositives) to minimize the imposition. It is worth pointing out that speakers modify their speech from the bald-on-

record strategy to using positive politeness to attend to H's face when performing a request.

Pragmatic differences also appear under the strategy of "notice, attend to H's interests". Although politeness strategies, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), are universal, differences occur in both the linguistic and the non-linguistic means used to convey positive politeness. In my data, people use various means to take notice of H's interests, possessions, needs and so on. What seems a positive politeness strategy in one culture is considered a religious taboo in another. The best example to mention here is the different perceptions in Australian and Palestinian cultures of kissing a member of the other sex on the cheek as part of a ritualized greeting. This shows that although cultures agree on the general principles of politeness, what is perceived as a polite and impolite behavior can be dramatically culture-specific. Therefore, speakers should be aware of such cross-cultural differences and do their best to avoid cultural clashes.

Another point that deserves discussion is related to the strategy of "notice, attend to H's interests", with particular regard to what is known as the "evil eye". It is strongly believed in Palestinian folk tales that envy is located in the eye, causing illness, and affecting one's possessions in a negative way. The only way to counter the malevolent force of the evil eye is to recite verses from the Koran or to pray mentioning the name of the prophet. Therefore, to avoid causing H any harm, S tries to disregard H's possessions. To use Brown and Levinson's (1987) terms, S does not take notice of H's interests, goods and so on, lest S causes H harm and discomfort. This is similar to the situations in other Arab countries. According to Elarbi (1997), concern about the evil eye is found in the Tunisian culture and can cause harm to the person, domestic animals, crops and possessions. The effects can be ameliorated by using charms, burning some herbs, and so on.

Avoiding disagreement with H is not a frequent positive politeness strategy in the data taken from the Australian and the Palestinian plays. This is simply because this strategy is mostly associated with the speech act of criticism rather than requests. In the data this strategy is found only with requests for information which are not considered to be as face-threatening as other types of requests e.g., requests for material things. In cases where the social distance between S and H is rather low, requests for information are

performed baldly without redress. The few cases found in the data have something to do with what Chen (2001) calls self-politeness, where politeness is directed towards saving S's face more than H's face. Ruhi (2007) also supports this line of argument, maintaining that while paying attention to H's face is a remarkably significant dimension to linguistic (im)politeness, there is an indispensable need to "incorporate goals within a broader perspective than the maxim and the face-management approaches envisage" (p. 117). Another obvious reason for using this strategy is to avoid confrontation with H; therefore, S makes use of token agreement to thwart any potential breakdown of the conversation.

The second point to be raised under this strategy is related to the notion of sincerity and politeness. Generally speaking, values such as sincerity, truthfulness and mutual respect are significant in all cultures. All people are looking for a sincere social interaction much as they are looking for true love. Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) highlight sincerity as an essential quality of speaking, even though they believe that some speech acts can be performed successfully despite the lack of sincerity (Bargiela et al., 2002). Grice's (1975) maxim of quality says that we should not say anything that is false and we should not say anything that lacks evidence. That is to say, Grice's (1975) maxim of quality is based on truthfulness, which seems to be essential to conversation as well.

6.3 Summary

This chapter has investigated the positive politeness strategies utilized in performing requests in the data taken from the Australian and Palestinian plays. Following Brown and Levinson's (1987) classification of positive politeness strategies, it was found that the cultures under investigation made use of six politeness strategies, namely: the strategy of use of in-group identity markers; presupposing, raising, asserting common ground with H; avoiding disagreement; taking notice of H's interests; encouraging H's participation in the interaction and the strategy of including both S and H in the activity.

The findings of the study revealed significant differences between the linguistic behavior of speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic. Most of the differences were attributed to the strategy of use of in-group identity markers, specifically the naming system. While Australian culture shows a preference for using FN, Palestinian Arabic shows preference for *ʔabu/ʔum* + son's name. This pragmatic difference is rather complex

because *ʔabu/ʔum* + son's name cannot be generalized to all speech situations. Another difference is related to endearment terms. Unlike Australian English, Palestinian Arabic used terms of address such as *bride* as a term of endearment. Another exclusive usage of kinship terms was found in Palestinian Arabic, where people extended terms such as *ʔabi/waalidi* to cover people who are not truly blood relatives to convey positive politeness. The final point is related to the using of taboo words as in-group identity markers, where words like *fuck* and *shit* were used in Australian English data only by a certain group.

Both languages made use of token agreement (*yes...but*) to agree with H. Although, such an equivocal agreement raised a difficult issue for politeness researchers, this study embraced the viewpoint that sincerity and politeness are two separate entities; they can coexist but the absence of sincerity from one's polite behavior cannot necessarily be equated with impoliteness.

Although both languages make use of the strategy of taking notice of H's interests, pragmatic differences do appear in the linguistic and non-linguistic means employed to fulfill H's face wants. While Australian men used kissing women on the cheek as a way of satisfying H's face wants in certain social situations, such a technique is considered as a religious taboo among Palestinians. Australian English used expressions such as *goodness*, *oh* and *God* to take notice of H's interests, whereas Palestinian Arabic used the expression *ʔaDeem*, meaning "great".

The data revealed that the strategy of encouraging H's participation in the interaction is utilized in both languages. Data from both languages showed similar techniques in intensifying interests to H. Expressions such as *you know*, *guess what* and *what do you reckon* were found to be common in both languages. The main difference found under this strategy is related to employing numerals hyperbolically, in particular "thousand" which is used figuratively in Palestinian Arabic to stress one's good intentions. With regard to the findings of the strategy of including both S and H in the activity, two linguistic expressions were used in Australian English: the inclusive *we/us* and the propositive *let's*. However, in Palestinian Arabic, it was found that the inclusive *we* was not used with FTAs; only the propositive *let's* was used.

Chapter Seven

Negative politeness strategies

7.0 Introduction

The main concern of this chapter is to investigate the linguistic realization of requests performed by using negative politeness strategies in the linguistic behavior of speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic. Six negative politeness strategies will be investigated, namely: be conventionally indirect, hedge, minimize the imposition, give deference, apologize, and be pessimistic.

The strategy of being conventionally indirect will be investigated based on Searle's (1979) classification of speech act formulae. The data obtained from the Australian and the Palestinian plays will be discussed under six headings: sentences concerning H's ability to perform A; sentences concerning S's wish or want that H will do A; sentences concerning H's doing A; sentences concerning H's desire or willingness to do A; sentences concerning reasons for doing A; and sentences embedding one of these elements inside another.

In relation to the strategy of give deference, the discussion will focus on the politeness marker *please*, the honorific marker *tafaDal* and terms of address used to encode negative politeness. Under the strategy of hedging, tag questions functioning as hedging devices will be investigated. Under the strategy of minimization of the imposition, four politeness markers will be discussed: *just*, *a bit*, *qaleelan* and *faqat*. Under the strategy of apologies two main redressive devices will be investigated: give reasons and hesitations. The final strategy to be investigated is the strategy of being pessimistic. Negative requests as a technique to express pessimism will be investigated. The chapter concludes with a general discussion, in which the findings of this chapter will be discussed in relation to some of the findings obtained from previous studies.

7.1 Modification with negative politeness strategies

Brown and Levinson (1987) define negative politeness as a "redressive action addressed to the addressee's negative face: his want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded" (p. 129). Leech (1983) argues that negative politeness performs the function of minimizing the cost of a particular impolite illocution.

In other words, negative politeness aims at preserving the negative face of H and guarantees H's autonomy (Yule, 1996). This can be done by distancing S from H (Placencia & Garcia, 2007), emphasizing deference and respect, and using formal devices such as different kinds of terms of address, indirect versus direct illocutions, mitigating devices like *please*, *little*, *just* and so on.

According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) face model, going on record with negative politeness, S can be acting on a number of payoff-considerations: first, S can compensate H in return for the FTA by paying him/her respect or deference, and thereby minimizing or avoiding potential future debts. Second, S can keep the social distance wide, preventing the addressee from coming closer and, hence, maintaining formality. Finally, S can offer the addressee an out, leaving him/her the choice to comply (or not) with what is requested, thereby reducing threat to face if the addressee shows reluctance to comply.

Since Brown and Levinson's (1987) face model highlights the relationship between levels of indirectness and levels of politeness, a negative politeness strategy has great significance in the politeness continuum, because it encompasses the strategy, besides many others, of conventional indirectness. This strategy is seen as the second most polite strategy because it offers a viable resolution of the conflict between the desire to be direct and the desire not to coerce H.

It has been made clear from the discussion of the request structure in the previous chapter that not all request types have the same force. Requests can be modified to redress their impact upon the addressee (Achiba, 2003). For example, choosing among imperatives, interrogatives or declaratives to carry out requests seems to contribute significantly to determining the force of the request. According to Stenius (1998), the imperative is typically concerned with the speaker's will or desire that something should be performed, whereas the interrogative "describes a feeling of uncertainty or curiosity in the speaker as to whether a certain state of affairs obtains or not" (p. 30). In addition, the type of modification employed seems to play a crucial role as well.

What governs the choice of the modification type, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), is the distribution of social power, the degree of social distance and the degree of imposition associated with every speech act. Since these three parameters

determine the politeness strategy that S should employ to address H, some researchers, for example, Aitchison (2001), Allan (2001), and Allan and Burridge (1991), argue that the linguistic structure of our utterances is determined by linguistic politeness. S may choose, say, a certain pronominal form that would match H's social status or a direct versus an indirect strategy. Once S determines the general frame-work of the strategy to be adopted, he or she can choose whether to strengthen, using intensifiers, or weaken, using softeners, the linguistic utterance employed.

Further classification of the modification of negative politeness strategies has been made by Blum-Kulka (1989) and Faerch and Kasper (1989). Those writers distinguish between internal request modification and external request modification. Internal modification is simply defined by Blum-Kulka (1989), as "internal modifier elements within the request utterance proper (linked to the Head Act), the presence of which is not essential for the utterance to be potentially understood as a request" (p. 19). They also classify further internal modifications: internal syntactic modification, such as interrogatives, aspect, tense and lexical/ phrasal modification which includes politeness markers, hedges, downtoners, etc. Following Brown and Levinson's (1987) classification, the strategies for achieving negative politeness, available in the data of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic, will be classified and discussed in the following section.

Brown and Levinson (1987) identify a number of strategies that would maintain H's negative face. In the Australian data, six strategies have been associated with requests compared to five strategies in the Palestinian data. Table 1 tabulates the relative frequency of the strategies employed. It is worth noting that since this is not a quantitative study, the relative frequency of occurrence of each strategy is provided merely to offer hints about the preferred strategies for each culture. The relative frequency of occurrence of the strategies provided is not for comparing and contrasting the findings of the two languages, because there are serious difficulties in conducting such a quantitative study. Among those are the different themes of the plays, the different types of request, which basically have an effect on the cost – for example, requests for getting information are less face-threatening than requests for getting material things – and the repetition of the same utterance by the same character for reasons having nothing to do with linguistic politeness.

Table 1. Distribution of negative politeness strategies

Strategy type	Australian English	Palestinian Arabic
Be conventionally indirect	34.6%	14.2%
Hedge	15.4%	4.7%
Minimize the imposition	7.7%	6.1%
Give deference	17.3%	46.2%
Apologize	23.7%	28.5%
Be pessimistic	1.2%	0.0%

7.2 Requests performed by negative politeness strategies

7.2.1 Be conventionally indirect

The easiest and most straightforward way to convey S's intended meaning is by adopting direct strategies which provide a direct link between S's utterance meaning and sentence meaning. However, since people most commonly attach great importance to speaking politely, they quite often avoid direct strategies, seeking refuge in indirect strategies. For many linguists and researchers (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Leech, 1983; Peccei, 2003; Searle, 1979; Wichmann, 2004), opting for indirectness touches on the issue of politeness. Leech (1983) argues that "indirect illocutions tend to be more polite (a) because they increase the degree of optionality, and (b) because the more indirect an illocution is, the more diminished and tentative its force tends to be" (p. 108). For Brown and Levinson (1987), utilizing conventional indirectness functions as a hedge on the illocutionary force of an utterance and, hence, mitigates the face-threatening nature of speech acts. The greater the imposition, the greater the need for highly redressive strategies (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2005).

However, it seems contentious to take this argument for granted without questioning its applicability to different speech situations in various settings, taking into consideration the sociological variables P, D, and R. For example, according to Peccei (2003), the social distance between S and H is a key factor in judging whether a certain linguistic behavior is socially acceptable as polite behavior or not. For instance, addressing a friend indirectly to pass the salt might be considered unfriendly behavior. In contrast, communicating baldly with people where the social distance is high seems to be socially inappropriate as well.

Building on this discussion, it might be argued that indirectness, like all other politeness strategies, cannot be judged as an intrinsically polite strategy out of context. This is similar to the view held by Carreira (2005) that “a linguistic form or phrase divorced from its context of utterance cannot in itself be considered to be polite or impolite: it is speaker and hearer who, through their utterances and verbal interaction, confer on them such significance” (p. 306). Also, there should be a balance between the degree of indirectness employed and the cost of the speech act. Skewis (2003) argues, in this regard, that using too high a level of indirectness in certain speech situations will be perceived as impolite behavior.

In order to understand what is meant by indirect speech acts, let us go back to the three major clause-types (declaratives, imperatives and interrogatives) discussed earlier. In much of the literature on the topic, it is argued that there is an easily recognized relationship between the structure of the clause and the force associated with it (Yule, 1996). It is said that a declarative clause has the force of stating; imperatives of ordering or requesting and interrogatives of questioning (Levinson, 1983). Whenever there is a direct relationship between the clause-type and its force, we have a direct speech act. In the case of indirect speech acts, on the other hand, there is an indirect relationship between the clause and its force. For example, a declarative clause making a statement is a direct speech act, while a declarative clause making a request is an indirect speech act (Yule, 1996). Consider the following example taken from the Australian drama:

1. ROB: I want Rick home. I want him home.

(Oxenburgh & Ross, 2006, p. 32)

Example 1 can have two different interpretations depending on the primary illocutionary point. First, when there is a match between the clause-type and its force, the utterance has the function of a statement, and it might be paraphrased as “I hereby tell you about my wants”. In such a case, the directive intent is absent. Second, when there is a mismatch between the clause-type and its force, the utterance has the illocutionary point of a request, and it can be paraphrased as “I hereby request of you that you bring Rick home”. In this case, the utterance has a directive illocutionary force.

What complicates the issue is the fact that the majority of sentences can be used to convey meaning indirectly (Clark, 1991). For example, the “imperative is very rarely used to issue requests in English” (Levinson, 1983, p. 264). Instead, people do the indirect illocutionary act through the performance of another one (Peccei, 2003). In the case of performing the illocutionary act of requests indirectly, people use the declarative or the interrogative clause. Consider the following set of utterances in Example 2:

- a. I want you to close the door
I'd be much obliged if you'd close the door
- b. Can you close the door?
Are you able by any chance to close the door?
- c. Would you close the door?
Won't you close the door?
- d. Would you mind closing the door?
Would you be willing to close the door?
- e. You ought to close the door
It might help to close the door
Hadn't you better close the door?
- f. May I ask you to close the door?

(Levinson, 1983, p. 264)

One similarity among all the above examples (a-f) is the fact that they are all interpreted as requests, having the same perlocutionary intention to get the door closed, even though the literal meanings do not convey this force. That is to say there is some sort of ambiguity which is limited to two different, but specific, interpretations. This ambiguity at the utterance level, according to Blum-Kulka (1989), is a unique characteristic of conventional indirectness. In all the above examples, one possible interpretation emerges when considering the literal meaning of the utterance, and another interpretation, usually indirect, when the speaker intends to convey an additional meaning to the one conveyed by the literal meaning. The first sentence in Example 1, “I want you to close the door” can be uttered simply as a statement expressing the speaker's wants, without having any directive force, or it may be uttered as a request. Also, the second sentence of the same example, “Can you close the door?” is an interrogative clause with the primary illocutionary intent of a directive or it might be a mere ability question.

Indirect conventional illocutions can be expressed, according to Ruzickova (2007), via “fixed linguistic conventions established in the speech community” (p. 219). Similarly, Clark (1991) argues that indirectness can be accounted for by language conventions which consist of conventions of means and conventions of forms. While conventions of means are concerned with a semantic device by which an indirect speech act can be carried out, conventions of forms have to do with the wording of indirect speech act. That is to say, conventions of forms are highly idiomatic. Likewise, Blum-Kulka (1989) argues that, in the case of conventional indirectness, “clear linguistic indicators can be detected which link the form of the utterance with its requestive force” (p. 40). In the same vein, Searle (1991) maintains that “certain forms will tend to become conventionally established as the standard idiomatic forms for indirect speech acts. While keeping their literal meanings, they will acquire conventional uses as, e.g., polite forms for requests” (pp. 273-274).

Searle (1979) classifies the sentences used to perform conventional indirect requests into six groups. The corpus of Palestinian Arabic and Australian English will be categorized and analyzed accordingly.

- Sentences concerning H’s ability to perform A
 - Sentences concerning S’s wish or want that H will do A
 - Sentences concerning H’s doing A
 - Sentences concerning H’s desire or willingness to do A
 - Sentences concerning reasons for doing A
 - Sentences embedding one of these elements inside another
- (Searle, 1979, pp. 36-39)

According to the data analyzed for this study, the area of conventional indirectness seems to be an area of difference between the two cultures. Although Australian English and Palestinian Arabic demonstrate nearly the same sentence-type, differences appear in preferring one sentence type over another. Atawneh (1991) attributes the differences in the requestive behavior between Palestinian Arabic and American English to differences in the linguistic systems of the two languages. Compared to Palestinian Arabic, according to Atawneh (1991), American English has an elaborate modal system which is necessary for performing requests. That is to say, since American English has a greater variety of linguistic formulas to form polite requests when compared to Palestinian Arabic, Americans linguistically have more freedom of choice than Palestinians. Brown and

Levinson (1987) also argue that negative politeness is more important in Western societies and consequently is more developed linguistically. Let us discuss one by one those formulas used to convey conventional indirectness.

Examining the preparatory conditions (H's ability), for example, to perform an act A in English, according to Searle (1979), may be carried out by one of the following expressions "Can you...?", "Could you...?", "Are you able...?", etc. (p. 36). In the data taken from Australian English, examining H's ability to perform A is realized by the modal verbs *can* and *could*. These forms are considered as examples par excellence of conventional indirectness. According to Blum-Kulka (1989) these forms of requests, by making use of the interrogative mood, keep a balance between the literal and the requestive interpretations. However, using *could* instead of *can* constrains the interpretation to the requestive force only. Searle (1979) argues that employing the politeness marker *please* with expressions such as *can*, *could* and *be able to* indicates explicitly and literally the directive illocutionary point of the utterance. Let us consider the following examples:

3. MEG: Could you leave us alone please?

(Rayson, 1990, p. 80)

4. JAMES: Can I talk to you?

(Ayres, 2003, 32)

As can be seen from the above examples, in Australian English there are two forms used to question H's ability to perform A: *can* and *could*. The modal *can* appears much more frequently in the data than *could*. This result seems to be in line with other studies investigating conventional indirectness across cultures. Blum-Kulka (1989), for example, found that *can* is the most frequent expression used by Australian subjects to realize conventional indirectness.

However, in Palestinian Arabic, *tasstaTeeδ/ btiqdar* or its phonetic variant *bti?dar* can be translated literally as "can" and "could". These expressions, although they are linguistically synonyms of *can*, do not have the same pragmatic function, giving H an option to comply or not when performing indirect requests. They function as requests for information. In the Australian English data, the modal *can* is frequently used to perform

conventional indirect requests. On the contrary, in the Palestinian Arabic data, *btiʔdar* and *tasstaTeeḍ* are not commonly used this way (Atawneh, 1991). Instead, the conventional forms *mumkin* “possible” and *law samaħt* “if you allowed” are frequently used. Interestingly, the verb *samaħt*, although used with the conditional *if* is used in the past tense. It has nothing to do with increasing the degree of politeness as the present tense of the verb *tasmaħ* is not used to convey politeness. Consider the following examples:

5. RAMZI: *mumkin taḍTeenī musakin lilʔalam ?*
possible give me killer pain
Is it possible to give me a pain killer?

(Ali-Jabir, 1998, p. 41)

6. SHEIKH ABED AL-BAAQI: *lee suʔaal in samaħti .*
me question if allow you
Is it possible to ask you a question?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 111)

Syntactically, there are two significant differences between the two sentences. Firstly, it has been found that the expression *mumkin* is always associated with the interrogative mood. In contrast, the expression *law/in samaħt* is associated with the declarative mood. Secondly, the expression *mumkin* always occurs clause-initially, whereas *law/in samaħt* occurs both clause-initially and clause-finally. Although neither of these expressions can be interpreted as encoding the notion of questioning H’s ability as *can* does in Australian English, they give H the element of optionality whether to accept or reject the request politely.

Since requests are face-threatening acts and call for redressive actions, they are carried out indirectly in the above examples. In Example 5, the form *mumkin* is used to perform a conventional indirect request. Ramzi uses the strategy of conventional indirectness as a mitigating device to play down the imposition because the power of the addressee is higher than the power of the speaker. In Example 6, the request seems to be a request for permission to ask another question. In Palestinian culture, if a person seeks permission to ask a question, this means that either there is an asymmetrical power relation between S and H, usually in favor of H, or the cost of the request is very high. People use

this strategy for two reasons: firstly, the request for permission functions as a mitigating device for the second request, which is usually more face-threatening. Secondly, it gives H the absolute right to accept or reject the idea of encroachment on his/her territory. In conversation analytic terms, the strategy employed in Example 6 is called a “prerequisite”. The basic function of prerequisites is to “check feasibility of compliance” (Blum-Kulka and House, 1989, p. 131). S uses prerequisites, especially, with imposing requests to save his/her face if H shows no readiness to cooperate because in such a case no actual request will be made.

There are three points of difference between the data taken from Australian English and Palestinian Arabic. The first one is concerned with the syntactic behavior of the utterances, the second and third with the pragmatic behavior. Firstly, in English, the forms *can* and *could* occupy initial position in sentence structure, whereas, *law/in samaht* can occur either clause-initially or clause-finally. Further, the forms *can* and *could* belong to the category of modal verbs, whereas the form *mumkin* is classified as a question word and the form *law/in samaht* is classified as a conditional phrase. Consequently, shifting from the present to the past to increase the degree of politeness, as the case with the English *can* and *could*, is unlikely in Palestinian Arabic.

The second point to be addressed concerns the pragmatic behavior. What is interesting in the data taken from the Australian plays is the association between the modal verb *could* and the politeness marker *please*. On the other hand, very few cases have been found in the data, where *please* co-occurs with the modal verb *can*. It appears that when the cost of the speech act is high, the modal *could* is used together with the politeness marker *please*. In contrast, if the FTA is low, *can* is used. This is compatible with Brown and Levinson’s (1987) face model, where costly FTAs necessitate an increase in the politeness strategies employed. In contrast, in the data taken from the Palestinian plays, the expressions *mumkin* and *law/in samaht* are not associated with the politeness marker *please*, irrespective of the cost of the FTA.

The third point concerns the level of conventionality or, to follow Clark’s (1991) terminology, “idiomaticity” (p. 201). In English, according to Clark, the forms *Can you* and *Could you* are highly conventional idiomatic forms. In contrast, the forms *Are you able*

and *Is it possible* are less idiomatic. However, in Palestinian Arabic, the highly conventional forms are *mumkin* and *law/in samaht*. The other forms *btiqdar/btiʔdar* and *tasstaTeeḍ*, which are synonyms of *can* are not conventional forms of indirectness. Hence, it can be argued that the linguistic means used to encode conventional indirectness are syntactically different in the two languages. Blum-Kulka (1989) argues that we should look at conventional indirectness as a matter of “shared pragmatic properties, rather than as a matter of cross-linguistic equivalence in form and usage” (p. 37).

The second category of conventional indirectness identified by Searle (1979) to carry out conventional indirect requests is concerned with S’s wish or want that H will do A. The expressions used to carry out this strategy are “I would like you...”, “I want you...”, “I hope you...” and “I wish you...” etc (p. 37). In the data collected from the Australian plays, three formulas are identified: *I would like*, *I want* and *I need*. The most common form is *I want*, followed by *I would like* and the rarest one is *I need*. However, in the data taken from the Palestinian plays, three forms are utilized *ʔarjuu* “I hope” *laytaka* “I wish” and *ʔureed* “I want”. The formula *ʔarjuu* is by far the most frequent. Consider the following examples:

7. FRANK: The first thing I want you to do if I die is to
break open a magnum of champagne and share it
with Saul.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 36)

8. JAMES: I need to talk in private.

(Ayres, 2003, 32)

9. SHARHAAN: *ʔarjuu ʔan taluuḍee bi-Samt yaa fataatee...*
hope I -- keep with silence oh girl my
I hope you will keep silent my dear girl.

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 94)

10. EISA : *ʔureed ʔan tuxaliSanee minhu.*
want I -- get rid from him
I want you to help me get rid of him.

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 148)

As can be seen from the examples, the procedure of referring to S's wish or want that H will do A is manifested by a variety of expressions. In the Australian corpus, the preferred formula is *I want*. This differs from the results of a study conducted by Blum-Kulka (1989) where the formula *I would like* is ranked first. What is clear in the data is that the formula *I would like* is used with more face-threatening acts, whereas, *I want* is used with less face-threatening acts and in cases where the social distance between S and H is rather low and also in cases where asymmetrical power relations prevail. Consider the following example:

11. FRANK: I can't manage to do something I've always managed to do and it's giving me a bloody inferiority complex. I'd like you to prescribe a stimulant.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 46)

If we consider the formulas used to realize the strategy of conventional indirectness in Example 7 and Example 11, we notice that the formula *I want* is used in Example 7, while the formula *I'd like* is used in Example 11. The reason behind this variation in form, although the two examples are uttered by the same speaker (Frank), can be accounted for if we consider the sociological variables P, D, and R. In Example 7, there is symmetrical power relation between Frank and his wife, Frances; the social distance is low; and the cost of the FTA is rather low, too. On the contrary, in Example 11, there is asymmetrical power relation which is in favor of H (Dr Saul), and the cost of the FTA seems to be high as well. Being a recent bridegroom unable to make love with his wife, Frank felt inferior and was embarrassed to talk about his sexual shortcomings. It would be, of course, much less face-threatening to talk about a headache or a stomachache. Also, Saul may decline Frank's request, because for Frank to have sex when his health is deteriorating may have bad consequences for him.

On the contrary, in the Palestinian corpus, the preferred formula is *ʔarjuu*, meaning "I hope". This formula differs from *ʔureed*, meaning "I want", in two respects. Firstly, it assigns H a high status over S. It also widens the social distance between S and H. This in turn offers H the required authority to accept or reject the request without threatening face. *ʔureed*, on the other hand, encodes the notion of intimacy between S and H. Secondly, the employment of these formulas is governed by different social factors. It has been found

that *ʔarjuu* is used instead of *ʔureed* where the social distance is high and in cases where the cost of the FTA is rather high, too.

The third sentence-type of conventional indirectness to be discussed here is concerned with H's doing an act A. This type includes formulas such as "Will you...?", "Would you...?", "Aren't you...?" and "Won't you...?" (Searle, 1979, p. 37). In the corpus of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic, there are very few references to H's doing an act A in the future. In the Australian data two forms are used: *Will you* and *Would you*, whereas in the Palestinian data the formulas *Will you* and *Aren't you* are used. Consider the following examples:

12. WOMAN: Will you let go of my arm?

(Ayres, 2003, p. 26)

13. SHARHAAN: *lahDit Samt min faDlikum*
moment silence please
Will you be quiet for a moment, please?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 47)

Although the sentence in Example 13 is verbless, it takes some ingenuity to imagine a situation in which the utterance would be interpreted other than a request. This is a conventionalized formula in Palestinian Arabic used to request people to be silent. The presence of the politeness marker *min faDlikum*, meaning "please", is a matter of convention. It has nothing to do with the notion of imposition which calls for extra politeness markers to minimize the cost of the request. In this example, Sharhaan addresses close friends at a party.

It is worth mentioning here that we should look at the similarity between the two languages in terms of convention of usage rather than convention of form, as it is difficult to find in the Arabic language an idiomatic translation for the English modal verbs. Moreover, what belongs to the category of verb in English belongs to other categories in Arabic. For example, the English modal *will* has two counterparts in Arabic, *sawfa* and *sa*, but neither of them belongs to the category of verbs. While *sawfa* is categorized as a free morpheme, indicating future, *sa* is a bound morpheme that performs the same function.

Questioning H's desire or willingness to perform an action A might be realized by employing one of the following formulas: "Would you be willing...?", "Do you want to...?", "Would you mind...?" and "Would it be convenient for you to...?", etc. (Searle, 1979, p. 37). This sentence-type of conventional indirectness is more frequent in the Australian English data than in the Palestinian Arabic. Only one case, consisting of a question word such as *al-hamza* attached to the verb, of this type has been found in the Palestinian data which can be best translated into "Would you like". Let us consider the following examples taken from the two languages:

14. MEG: The London Book Council. We're organizing a
forum on women and autobiography. Would you give
the opening address?

(Rayson, 1990, p. 7)

15. TREVOR: I need the house to myself for a while. Do you mind
going out?

(Ayres, 2003, p. 31)

16. SAYAAH: (*li-Eisa*) *?atašrab?*
(To Eias) like you drink
Would you like a drink?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 78)

Questioning H's desire to have a drink may take a variety of forms in Palestinian Arabic. The verbs *yarğab* "desire" and *yureed* "want" are used. However, sometimes, the question word is attached directly to the verb which is in the present simple tense. In the case of Example 16, a reduced form of *alhamza*, a question word, is attached to the verb *tašrab* to form the interrogative. The object of the sentence is clear from the speech situation. This formula is used only among in-groupers, where the social distance is rather low. Other forms like *Would you mind* or *Would it be convenient* are not found in the data.

Questioning the reason for doing an act A is classified by Searle (1979), Blum-Kulka, (1989) and Brown and Levinson (1987) as an indirect way of requesting. This strategy can be realized by employing the following formulas: "You ought to...", "Why

not...?", "Why don't you...?", "How about...?" (Searle, 1979, pp. 37-38). Examining the universality of conventional indirectness, Blum-Kulka (1989) points out that the formulas used to question reasons serve as a request only in three (English, Spanish, Hebrew) out of the five languages under investigation. Moreover, there is also no complete agreement on all the formulas used to question the reason for doing an act A between Spanish and English. For example, the formula *How about*, according to Blum-Kulka's (1989) findings, is used as a request by Australian English subjects only. It was not used by Spanish subjects. She concludes that these formulas are not universally used to realize requests.

In Australian English, sentences concerning reasons for doing an act A have different forms: *Why don't you*, *Why can't you* and finally *How about*. In the Palestinian Arabic data, on the other hand, only the formula *maa raʔyak* has been found which can be roughly translated as "How about". Consider these examples:

17. FREDDY: Why don't you phone her?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 72)

18. SHEIKH SHAAMEL: *maa raʔyak yaa sayed Kaamel law alqayt*

what opinion oh mr Kaamel if have you

naDra ḍalaa al-maktaba?

look on the library

How about having a look at the library, Mr Kaamel?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, P. 46)

In Example 17, although the social distance between Freddy and Frank is low, Freddy addresses Frank, his neighbor and friend, using the conventional indirect formula *Why don't you*. Since interfering in Frank's personal life seems to be a highly face-threatening act, Freddy chooses a highly redressive strategy to minimize his intrusion. In Example 18, since the social distance between S and H is high because H is a stranger, Sheikh Shaamel uses the formula *How about* for two reasons. First, he wants to deal formally with H, keeping the social distance wide. Second, since Kaamel is seeking to buy some books from the bookshop which belongs to Sheikh Shaamel, Sheikh Shaamel uses the formula to give the customer freedom of choice if he is interested in buying some books and hence not to be seen as a coercer.

The final case concerned with conventional indirectness is a combination of the above sentence-types. According to Searle (1979), the combined formulas used to convey conventional indirect requests are “Would you mind awfully if I...”, “I hope you won’t mind if...”, “I would appreciate it if you...”, etc (pp. 38-39). Such formulas are exclusive to the data collected from Australian plays. In the data collected from the Palestinian plays, this sentence-type is completely absent. Let us consider the following example:

19. JAMES: Do you mind if I take my jacket off?

(Ayres, 2003, p. 34)

Interestingly, since the cost of the speech act is rather low, the employment of these combined formulas is unlikely to be attributed to the heavy weight of the FTA which calls for extra mitigating devices to smooth out the imposition on H. In the above example, the social distance between S and H is low as James and Trevor are close friends; the relative power status is symmetrical and the cost of the FTA is not high; James wants to take off his jacket because he is going to massage Trevor. The only possible interpretation that might justify James’ employment of this formula is the fact that since James is in Trevor’s home, he feels the need to be considerate and asks for permission to take his jacket off.

7.2.2 Give deference

By studying the linguistic expressions that encode politeness cross-culturally, we can identify the formulas used in each culture and the way they are used. In regard to this, House (1989) argues that “despite the existence of a certain archetypal human structure of knowledge, there do exist a variety of conventionalized and routinized tokens and formulas which are used in particular ways in each culture and language community” (p. 96). For Carreira (2005), these tokens and formulas are encoded within the linguistic system of language. Therefore, when we think of the manifestations of linguistic politeness, we should think of the language system, because politeness is encoded within the linguistic system. Likewise, Nekvapil and Neustupny (2005) point out that politeness is conveyed through grammatical competence. Similarly, in Australian English and Palestinian Arabic, we cannot separate linguistic politeness from the linguistic system of the language. For example, resting on the linguistic system, we can perform different goals related to linguistic politeness. We can give deference by using various politeness markers such as

please/min faDlik/ʔarjuuk, tafaDI etc., hedging our utterance with *perhaps*, apologizing with *excuse me* and so on.

Giving someone deference, according to Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983), can be realized either by humbling and abasing one's self or by raising H, through paying him/her positive face of a particular kind that satisfies his desires to be treated as superior. By adopting either of these cases, S creates a differential social status, most often in favor of H, which serves to smooth out any potential FTAs, giving H the impression that S is not in a position to impose on her/him. A good example of deference can be seen in the systems of honorific languages, where the two sides of deference can be noticed (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In what follows, we will discuss all the different linguistic means available in the corpus which give deference. Since *please* is a polite word used to give H an option to do or not to do an action, hence treating him/her as superior, it will be discussed under the strategy of "Give deference".

7.2.2.1 *Please*, a marker of politeness

Since the word *please* occupies a great deal of space in the field of lexical internal modification, in this study, it also receives considerable focus as it occurs frequently in conveying linguistic politeness to which it seems crucial. Faerch and Kasper (1989), in their study of request realizations of Danes and Germans learning English, argue that *please* as a marker of politeness encodes explicitness, transparency and distinctness in comparison to other downgraders such as "hedges" or "understaters", which encode implicitness, "opaqueness and ambiguity" (p. 233).

Syntactically speaking, *please* is classified by the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1991) under the category of interjections, which are described by Quirk et al. (1985) as emotive words having no referential content. It behaves, according to Wichmann (2004), in a similar way to sentence adverbs in that it occupies different positions: initial, medial or final. But it does not share with them the feature of being modified. That is to say, it is impossible to find in the language phrases such as *very please* or *extremely please*. Also, unlike other adverbs, it is uniquely used repetitively in succession in an utterance:

20. FRANCES: Could we have a catalogue, please?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 84)

21. TREVOR: please, please... save James.

(Ayres, 2003, p 62)

22. SIHAAM: *ʔarjuuk ... qul lee bi-Saraaha.*

please ... tell me frankly
Please, tell me frankly.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 72)

23. JAMEEL: *ʔarjuuki ... laa tusmiḏeeni haaḏa al-ʔism ʔarjuuki.*

please... not hear me you this the name please
Please, don't mention this name please.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 190)

As can be seen from the examples, *please* enjoys a great deal of distributional freedom in the sentence structure in the corpus of the two languages. However, the position of *please* is dependent on the requestive strategy employed. It is found that, in the Australian corpus, initial *please* is rare with conventionally indirect utterances. It usually occurs either in medial or final position. This is similar to Wichmann's (2004) findings, where *please* rarely occupies initial position in public as well as in private speech. Similar results have also been reached by House (1989), where the marker *please* is associated with the imperative mood in the Germans' linguistic performance and with the interrogative mood with British English speakers' linguistic performance.

Furthermore, in the Australian data, within the category of conventional indirectness, *please* collocates with the formula *could you* rather than *can you*. In cases of imperatives, *please* in Australian English occupies initial, medial and final position. However, in Palestinian Arabic, *ʔarjuuk* most commonly occurs clause-initially. Very few cases have been found in the data where *ʔarjuuk* occurs clause-finally. But no single case is found where *please* occupies medial position.

As far as the pragmatic behavior of *please* is concerned, there are some constraints which make it exclusive to certain utterances. For example, according to Wichmann

(2004), *please* most often occurs with requests. It typically occurs in situations where the cost of the FTA is rather low; but in situations where the imposition is high, *please* does not occur. Searle (1991) argues that when *please* is added to a sentence such as “Could you please lend me a dollar?” (p. 269), it spells out unambiguously the illocutionary point of the utterance as a directive, ruling out other interpretations such as a question. Similarly, Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that *please* has a unique function in that it changes the illocutionary force of an utterance from command into request. Likewise, *please* in Finland, according to Yli-Vakkuri (2005), is used as a mitigating device. But, it can be omitted altogether from the sentence if politeness is encoded by means of grammatical devices such as mood.

In Palestinian Arabic, *please*, according to *Al-Mawrid English-Arabic Dictionary* (2003), has two equivalents: *min faDlik* and *ʔarjuuk*. However, these words have some pragmatic differences. While *min faDlik* appears to be used with less face threatening acts, *ʔarjuuk* is used with high face-threatening acts, and in cases where the relative power is in favor of H. In contrast, *please*, in the Australian data, shows no pragmatic constraints in terms of S-H relative power or the degree of imposition. That is to say, people reciprocate *please* in cases of low face-threatening acts as well as high face-threatening acts. Let us consider the pragmatic behavior of *please* in the Australian corpus.

24. SAUL: Frank, will you please go?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 32)

25. HIL: No. Ask him please.

(Rayson, 1990, 55)

In Example 24, *please* is used by a person of higher power, doctor Saul, to a person of lower power, Frank the patient. Although the differential power status between S and H entitles S the authority to use the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy without the least fear of retribution, Saul uses both syntactic and lexical mitigating devices to mitigate his request. First, the overall structure of the utterance takes the form of interrogative rather than imperative which is more tentative and less coercive. Second, the politeness marker *please* is used to tone down and turn the force of the utterance from command into request.

The employment of these modification types might be accounted for by the fact that Saul wants to dismiss Frank, who behaves rudely, from his office and at the same time maintains Frank's negative face to avoid aggravating Frank's severe heart problems. In Example 25, the marker *please* is used where the social distance between S and H is rather low; the relative power is neither in favor of S nor H; and the cost of the request is not high. Although Hil and Edwin are close friends, Hil minimizes her request by adding *please* to be more considerate and soften the impact of the imperative.

As I have just pointed out, in the Palestinian corpus, a distinction should be drawn between *min faDlik* and *ʔarjuuk*. While *min faDlik* is used with less face threatening acts, *ʔarjuuk* is used where the cost of the request is high and in cases where the relative power is in favor of H. Consider the following examples:

26. QAASID: *bidi ʔlis δala al-kursi min faDlik*.
 Want sit on the chair please
 Please, I want to sit on the chair.

(Ali-Jabir, 1998, 20)

27. JAMEEL: *ʔarjuuki ʔan taʔḏanee lee bil-ʔnSiraaf*.
 please ... permit me to go
 Please, let me go.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 74)

In Example 26, Qaasid asks a person whom he knows to sit on the chair. Since the relative power between S and H is symmetrical, Qaasid uses the formula *min faDlik* to soften the effect of the request. In Example 27, the formula *ʔarjuuki* is used by a person, Jameel, to address a person of superior status, his employer's wife. However, one pragmatic difficulty figures with the formula *ʔarjuuk* is that it is sometimes used by interlocutors who demonstrate symmetrical power relations. Consider the following example:

28. Jihaan: *ʔbqa hunaa ... ʔarjuuk*.
 stay here ... please
 Stay here, please.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 173)

In Example 28, *ʔarjuuk* is used by Jihaan, although the request is carried out in favor of H, to urge her friend Jameel to stay at work. Leech (1983) points that, when the addressee is going to benefit from the act, the imperative is considered as more polite than the interrogative because it maximizes the addressee's benefit. Tsuzuki et al. (2005) argue that requests carried out in favor of H involve the notion of positive politeness, by treating the addressee as an in-group member and hence, satisfying his/her positive face wants. *ʔarjuuk* in this context conveys the notion of convincing rather than minimizing the potential FTAs resultant from employing the imperative mood. It demonstrates that S cares about H's face needs.

A similar pragmatic function is found in the Australian data, where *please* encodes the notion of convincing or even appealing. S uses *please* to appeal to H as powerfully as possible to do him a favor. Consider the following example:

29. TREVOR: Please, please ... Save James.

(Ayres, 2003, p. 45)

Although the majority of the conversations between Trevor and his mother is carried out by using the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy, Trevor switches to the negative politeness strategy to mitigate his request, using the politeness marker *please*. By paying deference to his mother, Trevor tries to get his request acted upon. The repetition of *please* is used as a convincing device to persuade the mother, who claims that she is unable to help. Requesting mothers to do things for children varies across cultures. According to Kouletaki (2005), the ways English and Greek men and women ask their mothers to make coffee show different types of politeness. This variation mainly depends on S's assessments of the cost of the speech act. While female subjects prefer positive politeness strategies and hints, the majority of male subjects prefer indirect requests accompanied by expressions of appreciation and joking. It might be argued that there are individual differences in assessing the seriousness of the same speech act which has a direct effect on the politeness strategies employed.

The expression *ʔarjuuk*, not *min faDlik*, is used politely to express impatience. In the Palestinian data, Assad addresses his wife most often by using the bald-on-record

strategy. However, when they are arguing over a certain topic, Assad uses the formula *ʔarjuuki* to urge his wife to stop talking or to switch to another topic. Let us consider the following examples:

30. ASSAD: *daḍee ʔafkaarik li-nafsik*
keep idea your for yourself
Keep your ideas/opinions to yourself.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 30)

31. ASSAD: *ʔarjuuki ... daḍeenaa min haaḍa al-kalaam.*
please... leave us from this topic
Please, let's stop talking about this topic.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 23)

Shifting from the bald-on-record strategy to strategies with redress, Assad has achieved two goals. First, by using the formula *ʔarjuuki*, he demonstrates conspicuously, but politely, that he is getting sick of this topic, hence, adding extra force to the request following immediately the formula *ʔarjuuki*. Second, by using the object pronoun *naa* “us” in the plural form to redress his request, which is one of the positive politeness strategies, Assad includes himself in the activity. Using plural pronoun forms instead of singular pronoun forms, including oneself in the activity, in Palestinian culture, is a conventionalized way demonstrating the group-image of the society. This most often occurs by attaching a dual pronoun, if there are only two interlocutors, or a plural pronoun if there are more than two, to the verb in the imperative mood.

Similarly, in the Australian corpus, *please* is used by a person of higher power to address a person of lower power to convey impatience. In such a situation, *please* is used to convey an indirect warning to H rather than mitigating potential FTAs. Consider the following examples:

32. SAUL: You must not go down to Sydney.

33. SAUL: Please, for the last time...

(Willamson, 1980, p. 80)

In Example 33, *please* is used by Saul not as a mitigating device, but to show impatience. Saul uses it to tell Frank that his patience is running out and he is not going to discuss Frank's plan to go down to Sydney any more. At first, Saul uses the bald-on-record strategy, because the action is clearly carried out in favor of H. But Frank insistently overlooks Saul's warning, arguing that his heart is good enough and nothing could prevent him from going down. He says "we're going to be married and then we're going off to young Brett Whitely's exhibition and nothing is going to stop us". Saul replies: "Your heart is going to stop you" (Williamson, 1980, p. 80). Finally, Saul makes his final warning using "please", followed by the phrase "for the last time" which functions as a booster to urge him to quit the idea of going to Sydney.

From the discussion above, we can conclude that, although there are some pragmatic similarities, differential results concerning the pragmatic behavior of *please* emerge in the Australian corpus and the Palestinian one. In the Australian corpus, *please* collocates with two requestive strategies: the imperative and the interrogative. It occurs frequently with conventional indirect requests, especially with the formula *Could you* rather than *Can you*. On the other hand, in the Palestinian data, *please* is most commonly associated with the imperative mood and is never used with indirect requests.

7.2.2.2 The honorific marker *tafaDal*

Another syntactic and pragmatic difference between Australian English and Palestinian Arabic figures with the honorific marker *tafaDal*. Syntactically, *tafaDal* belongs to the category of verbs. It is used in the imperative mood. It is not found in the data as a marker of politeness in the past or in the future, e.g. *tafaDaltu* or *sawfa + ?atafaDalu*. It is sometimes accompanied with the main verb e.g., *tafaDal ?udxul* "come in" or it is used alone. For example, if you ask someone to pass you the salt, he or she will say to you, when handing it, *tafaDal*, meaning "take it".

Pragmatically, in Palestinian Arabic, *tafaDal* is used frequently in different situations where it is difficult to find an idiomatic translation in Australian English, either because Australians use another word which is considered impolite if it is translated literally into Palestinian Arabic, or because they say nothing in those situations. For example, if someone knocks at the door of an occupied office or home, the word *tafaDal* is

used to ask him or her to come in; the phrase *come in* is used in Australian English. In Palestinian Arabic, addressing a person to come in by using *ʔudxul* “come in” instead of *tafaDal* is considered disrespectful.

Since, in the Palestinian corpus, *tafaDal* is used in various speech situations without the main lexical verb which carries the action, the social meaning of *tafaDal* is highly context-dependent. It does not need a great deal of effort, as in the case of hints, to figure out the intended meaning. Let us consider some of the examples found in the data.

34. JAMEEL: *tafaDal faʔanaa muSġee laka yaa sayidee.*
please I listening you oh master me
Speak. I am listening to you Sir.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 32)

In Example 34, the Australian counterpart of *tafaDal* is “speak”. Requesting a person using *takalam* “speak” instead of *tafaDal* indicates disrespect for two reasons. Firstly, the verb *takalam* is used in the imperative mood without mitigation to address a person whose relative power is higher than S’s. Secondly, it is not the appropriate sociopragmatic choice as it runs against the polite conventions of the community, where *tafaDal* should be used either alone or together with the lexical verb which denotes the action to be carried out.

Another speech situation found in the data where *tafaDal* is used as a request to mean “come in” can be seen in the following example:

35. EISA: *tafaDal ... aanasat wa sharaft..*
please ... welcome
Come in. You are most welcome.

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 92)

In Example 35, Eisa addresses a close friend using the formula *tafaDal*. Depending on the speech situation, it becomes clear that *tafaDal*, in this example, stands for “come in” in Australian English. There is also another linguistic hint in the utterance which contributes significantly to disclosing the pragmatic meaning of *tafaDal*. The phrase *aanasat wa*

šaraft, “most welcome”, is most commonly associated with the action of permitting someone to enter one’s home.

Also, *tafaDal* is used frequently when we offer someone food or drink. It is the only conventionalized formula used in this situation. It is reciprocated by nearly the majority of the people irrespective of their age, relative power and the social distance between S and H. Consider the following example:

36. DALAAL: *tafaDal* (handing Eisa a cup of coffee)
Please [take it].

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 64)

Here in this situation Dalaal brings Eisa a cup of coffee, when handing it to him, she says *tafaDal*. Employing any other formula than *tafaDal* in this specific situation would be regarded as odd, inappropriate and impolite. In the Palestinian community, food or drink is served to show respect and pay homage to the guest. So there should be compatibility between the physical action and the linguistic expressions used to express it.

Finally, the formula *tafaDal* is used in the data for requesting someone to sit down. Consider the following example:

37. EISA: *taxuSuk ʔanta bi-ḏaat. tafaDalee.*
refer you especially please.
She is referring especially to you. Please [sit down].

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, 91)

In Example 37, Eisa asks his secretary to come into his office to discuss some issues related to work. When she comes, he invites her to sit down by saying *tafaDalee*. Although the relative power of S over H entitles S to use the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy without the fear of retribution, Eisa chooses a polite formula to address his secretary. If Eisa wants to use his relative power over his secretary, he might issue a command by saying “sit down”. Using the formula *tafaDalee*, in the above situation, changes the illocutionary force of the utterance from command into a polite request.

To conclude this part, we can argue that there are clear syntactic and pragmatic differences between Australian English and Palestinian Arabic with regard to the marker *tafaDal*. Syntactically, Australian English shows no exact equivalence to the marker *tafaDal*. According to *Al-Mawrid English-Arabic Dictionary* (2003), *tafaDal* is not listed among the different meanings conveyed by the polite marker *please*. Pragmatically, what is conveyed by the marker *tafaDal* in Palestinian Arabic is conveyed by lexical verbs in Australian English. However, in Palestinian Arabic, using lexical verbs is considered socially inappropriate. It could be argued that politeness is culture-specific, and it is conveyed by employing different linguistic means. What is conveyed by an honorific word in one language may be conveyed by a lexical verb in another.

7.2.2.3 Terms of address

Expressing deference towards others might be achieved by using the appropriate terms of address which match the person with his/her social status. For Keevallik (2005) terms of address are “a sensitive way of expressing social relations between interlocutors, as perceived by themselves” (p. 204). Ilie (2005) argues that “The shape of a system of address forms is affected by, and has its effect on, the individual speakers’ and interlocutors’ awareness and perception of interpersonal relationships” (p. 174). In nearly every language, different terms of address are used to give deference to people who are higher in social status or unfamiliar. It is true that rules vary cross-culturally, but there are, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), universal principles which govern politeness. Similar to many languages, such as Portuguese (Carreira, 2005), Luxemburgish (Kramer, 2005), Czech (Nekvapil & Neustupny, 2005), Hungarian (Bencze, 2005), Japanese (Barke & Uehara, 2005) and Norwegian (Fretheim, 2005), Australian English and Palestinian Arabic make use of terms of address to give deference.

In the data taken from the Australian plays, there are four terms of address associated with the requestive behavior used to give deference: *Mr*, *Mrs*, *Sir* and *Madam*. These terms are used in the data to address people who are either unfamiliar or have differential power status. Let’s consider the following examples:

38. ATTENDANT: Excuse me, sir, madam. Do you have an invitation?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 84)

In Example 38, the overall linguistic structure of the utterance is determined by the S-H relationship. The employment of the address terms accords interlocutors social status. It also signals that the social distance between S and H is rather high. While the term *Sir* is used to address unfamiliar male people the term *Madam* is used to address females, irrespective of their marital status. The basic pragmatic function of these terms of address in this speech situation is to give deference to the addressees and minimize the threat to their negative face so that they might look favorably on what is requested.

Interestingly, there are cross-cultural variations as regards the term *Sir*. According to *Al-Mawrid English-Arabic Dictionary* (2003), the closest translation of the English term of address *Sir* is *sayidee*. This term has no place in everyday communication in Palestinian Arabic. Similar to the linguistic system of Palestinian Arabic is the Norwegian linguistic system, where the term *Sir*, according to Fretheim (2005), has no corresponding term. Also in the Hungarian linguistic system the term *Sir* is exclusively used to refer to craftsmen like plumbers, electricians etc., but all other people receive the term *comrades* (Bencze, 2005).

As regards the term *Madam*, the closest translation of this term, according to *Al-Mawrid English-Arabic Dictionary* (2003), is *sayidah*. It is used to address unfamiliar adult females whether they are married or not. It is worth mentioning here that, unlike Australian culture, in Palestinian culture, the difference between a woman and a girl is not that of age, but of the marital status; an unmarried woman is still a girl even if she reaches the age of forty or more, and a married girl is a woman, even if she is under the age of twenty. The term *sayidah*, in Palestinian Arabic, has the same pragmatic function as *Madam* in Australian English, indicating formality and deference.

The other term associated with the requestive behavior found in the data taken from the Australian plays is *Mr*. It is used to address male people who are unfamiliar to S. Consider the following example:

39. SAUL: Mr Frank Brown?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 24)

Saul addresses his patient whom he meets for the first time by using the term Mr + first name + surname. The employment of the term here encodes formality and distance. After a long conversation between Saul and Frank, Saul switches from formal style to informal style, seeking permission from Frank to call him by his first name, hence, bridging the gap of the social distance.

40. SAUL: Can I call you Frank?

FRANK: Please do.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 26)

By using first name instead of Mr + first name + surname, Saul shifts, to use Brown and Levinson (1987) terminology, from negative to positive politeness, bridging the gap of the social distance between himself and his patient. This shift is intentional. Saul wants to come closer to Frank, treating him as in-group member, hence reducing the power difference and making him feel more confident in order to start treatment.

Similarly, in the data taken from the Palestinian plays, the term *assayid*, meaning “Mr”, is used to address people who know each other well and people who are unfamiliar to S or people who have relative power status higher than S’s. It is used to give deference to H. Consider the following examples:

41. JIHAAN: *kayfa ?anta alaan yaa sayid Jameel?*
 how you now oh Mr Jameel
 How are you now Mr Jameel?

(Shihada, 1978, 146)

42. JAMEEL: *?alaa ya?maluun ?ind assayid Assad?*
 are not work in Mr Assad
 Aren’t they working for Mr Assad?

(Shihada, 1978, 109)

Although the two languages employ similar terms of address to give deference to people who are familiar, unfamiliar or have more power than S, a pragmatic difference appears depending on the presence or absence of the addressee. In Australian English, the

term is used where the social distance between S and H is high and it is only used in the presence of the addressee, whereas in Palestinian Arabic, the term is used in the absence as well as in the presence of the addressee. In Example 42, Jameel used the term *assayid* to refer to his employer, although the employer was not in the scene.

The term *ʔustaað*, meaning literally “teacher”, is normally used by students to address school teachers. However, the term is extended beyond its literal meaning to refer to ordinary people other than those working in the education sector. It is used to give deference to people who are unfamiliar to S. In this sense, the term has the same pragmatic function as *Sir* in English. Consider the following example:

43. DALAAL: *naðam yaa ʔustaað ʔatalzam xidma?*
 yes oh teacher need a service
 Do you need any thing Sir?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 63)

Employing the term *ʔustaað* in the above example has nothing to do the profession of teaching. Since S does not know H, the basic pragmatic function of the term is to encode deference. The term *ʔustaað* is exclusive to the Palestinian culture. In the Australian linguistic system, the term *teacher* is not used, even in school settings. What is common instead is Mr + last name.

Another term of address encoding deference linked with requests found in the Palestinian data is the term *aanisa*, meaning Miss. It is used to address an unmarried adult girl. Consider the following example:

44. JAMEEL: *maa baaliki yaa aanisa Jihaan ...?*
 what wrong oh miss Jihaan...
 What is wrong with you Miss Jihaan?

(Shihada, 1978, 107)

In Example 41, Jihaan addresses Jameel using the term of address *sayid* and in Example 44, Jameel addresses Jihaan using the term *aanisa*. Although S and H know each other

well, the employment of these terms is to signal the interpersonal relationship between the two. This reciprocity is very important in Palestinian society and has one significant meaning: S and H are abiding by the endorsed social rules of the society, and their relationship is characterized by formality. According to the conventions of the society, the male-female relationship is very sensitive. People of different sexes are fully aware of this relationship. Omitting the terms of address which encode formality and distance is interpreted by S and H as a sign of getting closer towards each other, signaling the beginning of a new relationship. However, given the same situation in Australian English S and H would address each other by using first names. This cultural difference demonstrates not only different degrees of politeness but also shows cultural differences as regards interpersonal relationships.

7.2.3 Hedges

One way of giving redress to H's negative face can be via avoiding presuming or assuming that H believes in or desires everything involved in the FTA (Brown & Levinson, 1987). That is to say, S should not assume that H is willing to do the act involved in the FTA. One way of doing this is via hedging devices. Hedges, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), affect the utterance by demonstrating S's commitment towards what he is saying and, hence, modifying the illocutionary force. They also can be used to assure "cooperation, informativeness, truthfulness, relevance, and clarity, which on many occasions need to be softened for reasons of face" (p. 146). In a similar account, Leech (1983) argues that, in order to reduce the cost of impositives, which are costly to H, S can hedge his/her belief by "biasing the illocution towards a negative outcome" (p. 114). Likewise, Stewart (2005) views hedges as a key element for protecting self's face and the other's face.

Brown and Levinson (1987) define a hedge as a "particle, word, or phrase that modifies the degree of membership of a predicate or noun phrase in a set" (p. 145). They differentiate between two types of hedges: "strengtheners" which strengthen and emphasize the propositional content and the illocutionary force via employing words such as "exactly", "precisely" or "emphatically"; and "weakeners" such as "just", "merely" and "only" which soften or tentativize the part they modify (Brown & Levinson, 1987, pp. 147-48).

There are substantial differences between Australian English and Palestinian Arabic as regards hedges functioning as mitigating devices. The differences appear to be in the types of hedging devices. Since, due to cultural differences, requests have different degrees of imposition, it is predictable that we have different degrees of politeness compatible with the weight of imposition in each of the cultures under investigation. Consequently, low impositive requests need fewer mitigating devices, while in cases of high impositive requests, extra mitigating devices are employed. Compared to Australians, Palestinians do not hedge their requests because the weight of the imposition encoded in requests in each culture varies. Let us discuss the linguistic devices used to weaken interlocutors' propositions in the data.

7.2.3.1 Tag questions

Tags functioning as hedging devices have received considerable attention from many researchers across cultures. For example, Lakoff (1975) points out that tags can be used as hedging devices. Sifianou (1992) argues that tags in English are frequently used to minimize the face-threatening nature of requests by enabling speakers to be "more tentative and less committed to what they say" (p. 174). Holmes (1995) maintains that, since tags have different syntactic structures, they definitely behave differently because there is no exact correlation between form and function. She also points out that "softening tags", which function as negative politeness devices, are used to "attenuate the force of negatively affective utterances such as directives" (p. 82). Hudson (1975), commenting on tagged imperatives, states that "the main point about tagged imperatives [is] that they leave it to the hearer to decide what to do, which 'softens' them from commands to invitations, requests, or the like" (p. 29). Similarly, Wouk (2001) argues that the Indonesian particle *iya/ya*, similar to English tags, can be used as a softening device.

However, there are cross-cultural differences as regards tags functioning as mitigating devices. While in some speech communities tags are not a common mitigating device, in others, they are not used at all. For example, in Greek, according to Sifianou (1992), redressive tags are rarely used as mitigating devices. Requests are most often mitigated by other means, such as diminutives. Similarly, Cheng and Warren (2001) found differential results in using tags among native English speakers and Hong Kong Chinese. Their findings show that native speakers of English use four times as many tags as Hong

Kong Chinese. In Palestinian Arabic, since neither tag questions nor word tags are associated with the imperative mood, their basic function has nothing to do with imposition mitigation. That is to say, tags are not used at all as a mitigating device in the Palestinian data.

Unlike requests taken from the Palestinian plays, requests in the data taken from the Australian plays are frequently mitigated with tags. That is to say tags are used as hedging devices to attenuate the potential face-threat associated with the requestive speech acts. Two different tag-forms functioning as hedging devices are associated with the imperative mood in Australian English. They are tag questions such as *will you?* and the pragmatic tag *eh*. Interestingly, although the system of the English tags is highly developed and S can have a number of alternative possibilities such as *will you?* and *won't you?*, the great majority of tags found in the data employ constant polarity tags rather than diversity tags. Consider the following example:

45. WAL. What's that kettle doin. Turn it off will ya.

(Rayson, 1990, p. 10)

In Example 45, Wal, the grandfather, used the tag question when carrying out the request for two reasons. First, Wal does not want to use his power over Troy to issue a command. He tagged his request to be more polite and less authoritative. Second, since Troy is not an easy-going boy and he might easily show reluctance to comply with what is requested, Wal wants to protect his own face from any potential damage that might be caused by H's unwillingness or refusal to carry out what is requested.

Commenting on the working mechanism of tags functioning as softening devices, Hudson (1975) points out that the "tag is used to show that the speaker thinks the hearer knows at least as well as the speaker whether the proposition is true" (p. 29). If we apply the same mechanism to Example 45, we can interpret it as follows: the proposition might mean something like "you will turn the kettle off"; the imperative can be interpreted to mean "I want this proposition to be true". The interrogative part of the sentence means something like "I believe that you know at least as well as I do whether the proposition is true". The decision is left to H to make it true and hence comply with the directive or make

it not true and hence reject the directive. By giving H the final decision to believe or not the proposition presented, the request can be carried out with least imposition because H is willing to do it.

The second type of tags functioning as a redressive device, to use Holmes' (1995) terminology, is the pragmatic tag *eh*. In Holmes' view, the tag *eh* is "basically a hedging device, but it may soften a criticism ..., or it may express varying degrees of confidence in what is being asserted" (p. 97). Pragmatically, Holmes found interesting differential social distribution of the tag *eh* among New Zealand ethnic groups. It has been found that the tag *eh* is a vernacular linguistic feature, occurring more often in the speech of the Maori than in the speech of Pakeha (non-Maoris). Moreover, within the Maori ethnic group, the tag *eh* is most often used by young men, whereas it is used more frequently by Pakeha women than Pakeha men. Consequently, Holmes argues that in New Zealand, the pragmatic tag *eh* is an ethnicity marker but not a gender marker.

Similarly, pragmatic differences appear across languages as well, where the tag *eh* is exclusively found in the data taken from the Australian plays. No single case has been reported in the data taken from the Palestinian plays. Let us consider the following example:

46. WAL: Look at that eh? It is beautiful down there in the morning. Clear as crystal that water. You ought to come with us.

(Rayson, 1990, p. 2)

In Example 46, the function of the tag *eh* is clearly a face-supporting device. It expresses S's awareness of H's face wants, minimizing the negative impact of the request which is carried out by using the imperative mood.

7.2.4 Minimization of the imposition

In Brown and Levinson's (1987) face model, the degree of imposition of any speech act can be computed by simply calculating the values of the variables P, D, and R. However, since it is not easy to specifically identify which variable is the weightiest; in this strategy, we assume that the imposition of the variable R is not high, leaving the other

variables to determine the cost of the speech act. By so doing, S can protect the negative face of H by claiming that what is requested is not costly but, rather, even negligible and it constitutes no potential threat to H's face.

Minimizing the imposition can be realized differently across cultures. Brown and Levinson's (1987) main discussion is restricted to particles and nominal minimization. However, Kallen (2005) points out in Irish English, minimization can be realized by employing particles, verbs and nouns. Particles such as "just", verbs such as "pop" and nouns such as "drop" are used to "encode respect for negative face needs by ostensibly reducing the magnitude of the goods offered or requested" (p. 138). In the Australian English data, minimization can be realized by discourse particles and nouns such as *just* and a *bit*, whereas in the Palestinian Arabic data, minimization is realized by *qaleelan*, meaning "little", and *faqaT*, meaning "just". Let us consider the following examples:

47. SAMANTHA: Just tell me, Could it happen again?

(Ayres 2003, p. 21)

48. RAMZI: *ʔidmal faqaT maa itafaqnaa ḍalayh.*
do just what agreed we on it
Just do what we have agreed upon.

(Ali-Jabir, 1998, p. 25)

In Example 47 and 48, *just* and *faqaT*, besides conveying their literal meaning, are used as imposition minimizers, restricting the limits of the FTA. By so doing, they portray that what is requested is not invaluable and H can do it for S without threatening face. In the first example, Samantha asked the palmist to tell her what is going to happen to her in the future, but the palmist refused. Then, Samantha limited the scope of the request to minimize the imposition by using *just*, indicating that what is requested is not costly or unattainable. In the second example, Jassir wants H to do only what they have agreed upon. There is also another clear pragmatic function of this type of minimizer, which is a convincing device, which is used to persuade H to respond positively to what is requested because it is not weighty.

In the Australian English data the phrase *at least* is also used as an imposition minimizer to lower the cost of the FTA. Consider the following example:

49. HOPE: At least give me a foot rub?

(Ayres, 2003, p. 14)

In Example 49, Hope uses the bald-on-record strategy to carry out the request preceded by the imposition minimizer *at least*. Apparently, the basic function of *at least* is to inform H that S believes that H can do lots of things, but S will be satisfied if H does what is requested, which is not costly, hence, minimizing the imposition of what is requested and protecting H's negative face. It is worth noting that *ḍalaa al-ḥaqal*, meaning "at least", is also used in the Palestinian culture to minimize the imposition, but in my data, no such case has been found.

In the Palestinian data, the word *qaleelan*, meaning "a little bit", is used to minimize the degree of the imposition of what is requested. Thus, it functions as imposition minimizer. Consider the following example:

50. SUBHI: *uh ḥadiḏnaa qaleelan ḍan an-nisaa'*
oh tell us little about women
Oh, tell us a little bit about women.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 50)

In Example 50, S and H are close friends. The majority of their linguistic interactions throughout the play are carried out by using the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy because the social distance is low. However, in this example we witness a sudden switch from one strategy to a more redressive one. Investigating the possible reasons for this shift, we can argue that the high imposition of the request, although it is a request for information, is the most likely reason. In Palestinian culture, talking about women is disapproved of and can be classified as a taboo topic. Allan and Burridge (2006) point out that "taboos arise out of social constraints on the individual's behaviour where it can cause discomfort, harm or injury" (p. 1). Although talking about women might put one's reputation at risk, sometimes unmarried male friends chat with each other about women. But when this happens, it is done cautiously. In Example 50, although S and H are close

friends, Subhi used the word *qaleelan* to hedge his request because it is face-threatening, giving H the impression that what is requested is not costly.

7.2.5 Apologies

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), one way of minimizing the coercive impact of FTAs can be achieved by apologizing for doing the FTA. This takes different forms: S can show his or her reluctance to invade H's territory and restrain H's freedom of action. S can admit that he or she intends to impinge on H's negative face. S can seek forgiveness for doing the FTA. Finally, S can give reasons for doing the FTA. By so doing, S minimizes the threat to H's negative face.

One of the major differences between the linguistic performance of speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic lies in the use of the strategy of apologies. There are different preferences for mitigating devices. Grounders, "clauses which can either precede or follow a request and give reasons or justifications for the act requested" (Sifianou, 1992, p. 185), are a common mitigating device found in the data taken from the Palestinian plays, the use of hesitators is more common in the data taken from the Australian plays. Consider the following example:

51. SHEIKH SHAAMEL: *ʔijlis. ladaya maa ʔaquuluhu lak.*
sit down. I have some I tell you
Sit down. I want to tell you something.

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 65)

In Example 51, the head act of the request is carried out baldly without mitigation. It is carried out by using the imperative mood. It sounds like a command. However, S mitigates his request by presenting the reason for the request by means of a supportive move, hence, creating a positive atmosphere for H to be more understanding and more willing to carry out what is requested. In Blum-Kulka's (1997) view, in providing justification for an act, S gives H the right to act independently, hence, protecting H's negative face. It is worth noting that while the conventional indirect strategy is highly redressive in Australian English, the sub-strategy of giving reasons is redressive in Palestinian Arabic.

However, although requests performed by using grounders are found in the Australian data, they are not as popular as in the Palestinian data. Consider the following example:

52. HELEN: I'd appreciate it if you could keep the volume
down just a little, Frank. You've woken Janessa.

(Williamson, 1980, p. 53)

Considering Helen's requests, we notice the employment of two negative politeness strategies due to the high imposition of the request. First, the request is carried out by using conventional indirectness, which is considered a highly redressive strategy in Australian English. Second, Helen gives the reason which stands behind her request. By using a grounder, Helen claims that she has compelling reasons for impinging on H, hence, protecting, albeit partially, H's negative face.

Another redressive technique which can be used under the strategy of apologies is showing reluctance to impose on H. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), this can be realized by using different formulas such as "I hate to impose, but...", "I don't want to bother you, but ...", etc. (p. 188) and hesitation markers such as *mm*, *er* and the like. Brown and Levinson (1987) consider the existence of hesitators in one's speech a clue that the person is performing a request or doing something that he believes to be face-threatening.

Hesitators are classified by Sifianou (1992) as "fillers", which are defined as "optional lexical items or simply 'noises' produced by speakers to fill in the gaps occurring in the discourse" (p. 179). Since the prime function of hesitators is gap-filling, they do not have any semantic function. Their basic function is merely pragmatic. They are used as signals, telling H that what S intends to perform is likely to be imposing. They also indicate that S is reluctant and unwilling to impose on H, but he or she has to for one reason or another.

Employing hesitation markers to indicate reluctance for doing FTAs demonstrates varying results cross-culturally. That is to say hesitators are highly formulaic and differ across languages. For example, in Danish, according to Fredsted (2005), besides the "mm"

sound, “e:h” and “ø:h” are used as hesitation markers (p. 169). She also points out that there is a striking difference in the relative distribution of hesitation markers between Danes and Germans. Danes, according to Fredsted (2005), use nine times as many hesitators as Germans. Also, Sifianou (1992) argues that hesitation markers are more common in English compared to Greek. Likewise, in Australian English data, hesitation markers are used to indicate that a face-threatening act is likely to be performed. On the contrary, in Palestinian Arabic, hesitators are not used at all to indicate reluctance or signal impositive FTAs. Hesitation markers in Palestinian Arabic are seen as signs of insincerity. This is the most likely reason for their absence in the linguistic performance of speakers of Palestinian Arabic.

In the Australian data, hesitators are the only means used to show reluctance when performing requests. Other linguistic forms are not found. Consider this example:

53. FRANK: What about hmm, intimate areas?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 27)

Although the request is classified as a request for information which is perceived as less face-threatening compared to requests for goods, Frank, because of the nature of the topic being discussed, uses the hesitator “hmm” to tell H that what is coming will be somewhat face-threatening. On the other hand, in a similar situation in Palestinian Arabic, S will beat around the bush, using expressions such as “I do not know what to say” followed by a very short period of silence.

Begging H’s forgiveness for doing a face-threatening act is a technique found under the strategy of apologies. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), there are various linguistic realizations to achieve that such as “Excuse me”, “I’m sorry to bother you”, “I hope you’ll forgive me” (p. 189). Speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic performed requests by begging forgiveness. Let us consider the following examples:

54. ATTENDANT: Excuse me, sir, madam. Do you have an invitation?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 84)

55. KAAMEL: *ḍan iḍnikum, ʔanta ašayx Shaamel bilaa shak?*
 excuse me you Sheikh Shaamel without doubt
 Excuse me, you are Sheikh Shaamel without doubt?

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 41)

In the examples above, speakers seek acquittal for their intrusion on H's territory. In both Australian English and Palestinian Arabic the expressions *excuse me* and its counterpart *ḍan iḍnikum* behave pragmatically in a similar way. They clearly signal speakers' intention to perform a face-threatening act.

Another common way used to beg forgiveness for encroaching on H is the word *sorry* and its counterparts *aasif* and *maḍḍiratan* in Palestinian Arabic. *aasif* is more frequent and has wider pragmatic functions than *maḍḍiratan* in everyday communication. For example, when a person collides with someone, *aasif* is always used rather than *maḍḍiratan*. Also *aasif* is used to express regret for saying or doing something socially incorrect. The prime pragmatic function of *maḍḍiratan* or any word derived from it such as *iḍḍurni* is always connected with interrupting people while they are talking or while they are meeting. It can also be used to apologize for coming late. The same pragmatic function can also be expressed by *aasif*. Consider the following examples:

56. EDWN: Sorry. Am I interrupting?

(Rayson, 1990, p. 80)

57. SUBHI: *laa tayʔas yaa Sadeeqee. wa ʔarjuu ʔan taḍḍurni.*
 not despair oh friend mine and please forgive me
 Don't panic my friend and please forgive me.

(Shihada, 1978, p. 196)

Interestingly, in both languages the employment of *sorry* or its counterparts *aasif* and *maḍḍiratan* is to beg forgiveness for actions that have already happened. They differ from *excuse me* or *ḍan iḍnak* which are used to beg forgiveness for actions that are about to happen.

7.2.6 Be pessimistic

According to Brown and Levinson (1987) S can reduce the imposition by showing doubts that H could carry out what is requested. By so doing, S gives H an out to respond negatively without losing face, because S assumes that H cannot cooperate and it is now left to H to prove the opposite if he or she wants to. The strategy of be pessimistic is limited to the Australian data. No single case occurs in the Palestinian data. Let us consider the following example:

58. EDWIN: Well, I don't suppose you know where Troy is, do you?

(Rayson, 1990, p.54)

59. DAVE: You haven't got any money to make me an offer.

(Oswald, 1996, p. 72)

In Example 58, by expressing doubt about H's knowledge of the whereabouts of Troy, S checks H's readiness to cooperate. It would be much more economical if S goes directly by asking the question "Where is Troy?" But for reasons which have to do with protecting face, S behaves cautiously, lest H shows reluctance to cooperate. In Example 59, although the social distance between S and H is low, S carried out the request by employing the negative rather than the positive form of the request. This is because the cost of the request is high as Dave wants to borrow some money. By employing the negative form of the request rather than the positive form, S reduces the imposition by indicating that H cannot perform the request, leaving the choice to H to agree with S and refrain from carrying out the requested act or disagreeing with S and performing the request. It is worth noting that, although negative requests are used in Palestinian Arabic to express pessimism, no single example is found in the data taken from the Palestinian plays.

7.3 Discussion of findings

The findings of this chapter can be summarized as follows: Requests utilizing negative politeness as mitigating devices vary cross-culturally. According to the data taken from the Australian plays, the predominant strategy is conventional indirectness (34.6%). This is similar to the results obtained by Blum-Kulka and House (1989), where the strategy

of conventional indirectness is rated first in the linguistic behavior of all speakers under investigation (Australian English, Argentinean Spanish, Hebrew, Canadian French, Germans). Australian English speakers' linguistic behavior, compared to the other speakers', is the least direct. It has been found that 80% of their requests are phrased as conventionally indirect, that is to say, the preferred strategy for speakers of Australian English is the strategy of conventional indirectness. Many other studies demonstrate similar orientations towards the preference of conventional indirectness. Ruzickova (2007), points out that, in Cuban Spanish, conventionally indirect strategies are the most preferred mitigating device linked with requests. Kallia (2005) maintains that British English speakers prefer indirect strategies over direct strategies when making requests or suggestions, whereas Greek speakers prefer direct strategies for both requests and suggestions. Similarly, Fukushima (1996) argues that British subjects are more indirect compared to Japanese subjects.

The high relative frequency of occurrence of conventional indirectness in the linguistic behavior of Australian English speakers, according to Blum-Kulka and House (1989), is attributed to both cultural and situational factors which interact with each other. All subject-groups vary their requests by situation, but different specific choices appear within each situation. That is to say, there is cross-cultural variation in calculating the weight of speech acts. Australian English speakers find requests in many more situations to be imposing, compared to other subjects. Consequently, they opt for conventional indirectness as a highly redressive strategy. In Brown and Levinson's (1987) terminology, Australian English speakers show preference for an avoidance-based strategy (negative politeness) over an approach-based strategy (positive politeness).

However, the Palestinian data demonstrates different results from those in the Australian data. It has been found that conventional indirectness (14.2%) comes third. That is to say, speakers of Palestinian Arabic show preference for directness over indirectness. They consider indirectness as a formal strategy that should be used only in formal situations, whereas directness is taken as a sign of solidarity which stresses in-groupers' identity. Unlike Australian culture, in Palestinian culture, using indirect strategies such as conventional indirectness among friends may distance S from H and leaves the door wide open for speculations and interpretations as regards the intimate relationship between S and H. For Fukushima (1996) employing a bald-on-record strategy stresses a common ground

between S and H. Similarly, Blum-Kulka (1997) states that directness in Israeli's parents' linguistic behavior shows both power and solidarity.

Showing preference for direct strategies over indirect ones is not exclusive to Palestinian culture. There are many other cultures that show orientation towards directness. Pair (2005), like Sifianou (1992), finds that in Greek, people opt for direct requests rather than indirect requests. Identical results are also reported by Kouletaki (2005), where Greek subjects are reported to prefer direct strategies associated with diminutives as mitigating devices. Ruzickova (2007) finds intercultural differences in the requestive behavior of Cuban Spanish men and women. Cuban Spanish men appear to be more indirect than Cuban Spanish women. They use conventional indirect strategies almost twice as often as they use direct strategies, whereas women use conventionally indirect strategies only slightly more than direct ones.

As far as the Palestinian data is concerned, we can argue that the reason for the orientation towards directness over indirectness when carrying out requests seems to be culturally motivated. In Palestinian culture, requests compared to other speech acts, such as offers, in some situations, are not the most face-threatening acts. It is because reciprocity is one of the basic social values in the society. Since reciprocity is highly valued, people strongly believe that requesting other people to do things for them, irrespective of the cost of the request, is not weighty because they will be paid back. What is more face-threatening, as I have mentioned, is offers, because they are not reciprocal and people receiving the offer do not need to pay back the debt. So S should use highly mitigating devices to minimize the imposition of the offer. In the Palestinian plays, there are frequent examples of offers associated with more mitigating devices compared to requests. For the purpose of clarification, consider the following example:

60. SHEIKH SHAAMEL: *ʔanta ʔax wa Sadeeq wa qalb kabeer wa lan ʔartaah ilaa*
you brother and friend and heart big and not comfort
iḏaa kunta fee xayr wa hanaaʔ. xuḏhaa.
if were you well-being take it.
You're a brother and friend and you have a big heart and
I'll not feel happy unless you take it [the money].

(Al-Mubayed, 1985, p. 58)

Considering the number and type of the mitigating devices employed by S to save H's face, it becomes apparent that the speech act of offering is very imposing and necessitates the employment of extra mitigating devices. The imposition is mitigated through the positive politeness expressions *brother* and *friend* which stress the friendly, brotherly relationship and enhance solidarity. Then S praises H, describing him as a person of *a big heart* which indicates tolerance, understanding and cooperation. Finally, S tells H that accepting the offer will bring happiness to S. The last part is very effective in Palestinian culture, where people highly value their interpersonal relationships and do their best to maintain good relations with other people. It is also very important to notice the position of the redressive devices used. They are placed before the act of offering. This technique enhances H's face, paving the way for H to accept the offer without losing face. Looking deeply into the words used as mitigating devices, we notice that they are all used to satisfy H's positive face rather than H's negative face. The word *ḥax* "brother" is used to inform H that what S is doing is part of his social duty towards his family members rather than giving charity to a person in need. In contrast, in Australian English, very imposing speech acts are mitigated by employing negative politeness strategies.

What is the reason for the employment of all these mitigating devices? It is because offers, especially material ones like money, food, etc., have a direct effect on the dignity of the person, giving him the feeling of inferiority. It also has to do with his manhood and as a supporter of the family. Therefore, they are perceived as face-threatening acts and call for highly redressive devices. The employment of this number of mitigating devices is compatible with Brown and Levinson's (1987) face model, where costly speech-acts necessitate extra redressive devices to counter- balance the degree of imposition.

According to the most prominent theories of politeness, such as Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model, Leech's (1983) maxims of politeness, indirectness encodes politeness, whereas directness equates with impoliteness. A similar view is held by Fraser (2005), who claims that the direct strategy is impolite because it contains no signs of linguistic politeness. Does this mean that speakers who use indirect strategies are more polite than those who use direct strategies? If we take this view for granted, we have no choice but to concede to their position. However, many studies conducted cross-culturally reveal otherwise. For example, Blum-Kulka and House (1989) argue that

“politeness and directness are not necessarily related in a linear fashion” (p. 139). Contrary to Brown and Levinson’s politeness scale, conventional indirectness is rated as more polite than non-conventional indirectness (hints) by speakers of American English, Hebrew, British English and German. This result is also confirmed by Marti (2006) in a study investigating indirectness and politeness in the requestive behavior of Turkish-German bilinguals and Turkish monolinguals.

Since the relationship between indirectness and politeness has been severely challenged, it is hard to say that speakers who use indirectness over directness are more polite. It is simply because there are cross-cultural differences in conceptualizing politeness and the notion of imposition varies dramatically. Since the main aim of politeness is to maintain face, it is not easy to find a definite way that suits all cultures world-wide. While, indirectness is a highly redressive strategy in Australian English, in Palestinian Arabic, it is not the most proper and effective way to save face, especially, in cases where the social distance is rather low, because the core concept of this strategy is based on protecting one’s liberty of actions which does not appeal to Palestinians who believe in communal life and protecting one’s freedom of action is not as important as in Australian English.

The second point to be addressed concerns the apology strategy. This strategy occupies 28.5% of the Palestinian negative politeness data, compared to 23.7% of the Australian data. The part which has to do with giving overwhelming reasons (grounders) is significant. In Palestinian culture giving reasons for doing the FTA is a highly redressive device. People will be more understanding and more cooperative if the reason for doing the FTA is provided. This strategy is also widely used with the speech act of offering, where grounders are used to convince H to accept the offer without threatening face. For example, in offering someone money, one may say “we know life is becoming difficult these days and people should help each other”. By describing the situation in general, S dissociates H from the responsibility of being unable to support his family, hence protecting his dignity.

There are differences across languages as regards the employment of grounders as mitigating devices. For example, Faerch and Kasper (1989) find that German and English native speakers use an equal number of grounders (13%-45%) in their request realizations.

Danish native speakers, on the other hand, utilize grounders (30%-81%) more than German and English native speakers do. Similarly, Mulken's (1996) findings show that French subjects tend to modify their requests by means of grounders, whereas Dutch subjects modify their requests by internal modification. Byon (2004) finds interesting distributional differences of grounders between American English native speakers and Korean foreign language learners. Americans are found to use grounders after requests, whereas Koreans prefer grounders before the act of requesting. Byon's (2004) explanation for this divergence in using grounders between American subjects and Korean subjects is clearly connected with the notion of saving face. In Korean culture, according to Byon (2004), saving face is more important than the clarity of the request. Korean native speakers find it inconsiderate to use unmitigated requests before justifying the reasons for their performance. However, in the Palestinian Arabic and Australian English data, requests are always followed by grounders. There is no single case in the data of the two languages, where requests are preceded by grounders. Interestingly, in Palestinian culture, grounders most often precede offers and follow requests. It is because saving H's face is a precondition to successfully performing the act of offering.

Giving deference to people is culture-specific and takes different forms in the literature. In the data taken from the Australian and the Palestinian plays, the strategy of give deference occupies 46.2% of the Palestinian data compared to 17.3% of the Australian data. Differences between the two language data appear in the linguistic devices used to give deference, in particular, the honorific marker *tafaDal* in Palestinian culture. Such a difference reflects divergent ways of using language to convey politeness. However, in both cultures, conveying deference by using a distancing strategy takes the form of using terms of address and avoiding first name (FN). This differs from the way Swedish people give difference to each other. According to Ilie (2005), the third-person indirect address is very often used in Swedish institutional settings. It was also very common in colloquial speech in the past, but it is still used nowadays by service personnel, such as waiters. For example, instead of saying "How can I help you?", a waiter would say "How can I help the lady or the gentleman?" (p. 177).

Giving deference to people is not limited to using certain linguistic expressions, but it extends to other means, such as topic-shifting. According to Gong (2003), Mississippi Chinese (MC) use topic-shifting as a strategy to convey deference to others. Gong (2003)

argues that Mississippi Chinese use this strategy when they are the subject of conversation and complimented or praised by other speakers. They humble themselves by shifting the topic in order not to be perceived as superior to their interlocutor(s). However, the topic shifting strategy is considered as a source of discomfort to non-MC listeners.

Although Australian English and Palestinian Arabic use the strategy of hedging, there are distributional differences in using hedging devices. In the Australian English data 15.4% of hedging devices are frequently used with requests, whereas in the Palestinian Arabic data only 4.7% of requests are hedged. The reason for this variation might be accounted for if we consider the linguistic and the social dimensions. Linguistically, there are clear differences between the linguistic system of Australian English and the Palestinian Arabic. Hedging devices, such as the different types of tags, are not available in Palestinian Arabic. Since the main pragmatic function of hedges is to minimize the imposition of face-threatening acts, they are not greatly needed in Palestinian culture, because, generally speaking, the degree of imposition associated with requests is not high. In Palestinian culture asking someone, whom you know well to do something for you fosters solidarity and strengthens social bonds. People sometimes get blamed for not coming and asking for help or a favor. This is deeply rooted in the society and there are many sayings which stress it such as *al-jaar li-ljaar* which can be roughly translated as “neighbors looking forward to helping each other”.

7.4 Summary

Cross-cultural differences appeared between the linguistic behavior of speakers of Australian English and speakers of Palestinian Arabic in using negative politeness strategies to mitigate requests. It was found that the strategy of conventional indirectness was used the most by speakers of Australian English. Such a result is consistent with the results obtained by Blum-Kulka and House (1989), where speakers of Australian English used conventional indirectness in 90% of the situations. On the contrary, conventional indirectness was not the preferred strategy for speakers of Palestinian Arabic. The strategy of apologizing, in particular giving reasons for performing requests, was more preferable for speakers of Palestinian Arabic. This result is in line with Atawneh’s (1991) results, where speakers of Palestinian Arabic were found to give reason either before or after the request. The results demonstrated that speakers of Australian English were more indirect than Palestinians who preferred direct strategies when making requests.

Giving deference to people demonstrated cross-cultural differences. In the Australian data, it was found that there are two linguistic devices used to give deference: the politeness marker *please* and terms of address. In the Palestinian data, on the other hand, there are three linguistic devices: the politeness marker *ʔarjuuk/min faDlik*, the honorific word *tafaDal* and terms of address. Most of the differences between the data of the two languages were attributed to the use of the honorific marker *tafaDal*. While speakers of Palestinian Arabic used *tafaDal* frequently to perform requests, speakers of Australian English used lexical verbs in similar situations.

With regard to the strategy of hedging, differences appeared in using tags. Tags functioning as hedging devices are exclusive to Australian English. In Palestinian Arabic, since neither tag questions nor word tags are associated with the imperative mood, their basic function has nothing to do with imposition mitigation. That is to say, tags are not used at all as a mitigating device in Palestinian Arabic.

Speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic behaved linguistically nearly in the same way to minimize the imposition associated requests. In the Palestinian Arabic data, minimizing the imposition was realized by employing the discourse marker *faqaT*, and *qaleelan*. On the other hand, in the Australian data, minimization of the request was realized by using *just* and *at least*.

The strategy of apologizing demonstrated differential results between the Australian data and the Palestinian one. It was found that the sub-strategy of giving reasons is more frequent in the Palestinian data than in the Australian one. In contrast, the sub-strategy of showing reluctance to impose which is realized by hesitation was found only in the Australian data. The third sub-strategy of begging forgiveness which is realized by *Excuse me* and *ʔan iʔnak* was used by Australian English and Palestinian Arabic in nearly the same way.

The strategy of being pessimistic was found only in the Australian data, no single case was found in the Palestinian data. In the Australian English data, expressing pessimism was realized through negative constructions to show doubtfulness that H could carry out the request.

Chapter Eight

Discussion of findings and implications

8.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide a summary of the findings of this study by answering the questions raised under “Research Questions”. First, “To what extent does Brown and Levinson’s (1987) linguistic politeness theory successfully account for politeness phenomena in the Australian and Palestinian plays selected for the study?” The main focus in answering this question will be laid on the practicality of politeness theory to account for politeness phenomena in the cultures under investigation.

Second, “What are the politeness strategies and linguistic softening devices employed in Australian plays and Palestinian plays to carry out requests? What are the areas of differences between the two cultures that might cause communication breakdown and communication failure?” I shall briefly discuss the results obtained from the chapters which discussed requests performed by the bald-on-record strategy, requests performed by negative politeness strategies and requests performed by positive politeness strategies.

Finally, “How is face conceptualized by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic? What are the acts that enhance face and what are the acts that cause loss of face in Australian and Palestinian cultures?” These questions summarize the concept of face as conceptualized by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic.

The chapter will subsequently address the implications for foreign language learning and teaching. The significant role played by face and politeness in the process of learning and teaching a foreign language will be highlighted. The chapter concludes with some suggestions for further research.

8.1 The first question

The first question was motivated by the work of many researchers, namely, Nureddeen (2008), Schnurr, Marra & Holmes (2007), Vinagre (2008) and many others who made use of Brown and Levinson (1987) to explore politeness phenomena in specific

cultures. Some of those researchers (Ide, 1989; Matsumoto 1988, 1989) questioned the politeness theory and its alleged universality while others such Magnusson (1999) and Doğançay-Aktuna & Kamışlı (2001) hailed it and described it as a breakthrough in the field of linguistic pragmatics. In order to contribute to the existing literature, the study attempts to answer the following:

- To what extent does Brown and Levinson's (1987) linguistic politeness theory successfully account for politeness phenomena in the Australian and Palestinian plays selected for the study?

Evidence from my data supported the claim made by Brown and Levinson that people vary their linguistic behavior according to the degree of social distance, relative power and the degree of imposition of a certain speech act. It was found that interlocutors used different politeness strategies when addressing people of varying social distance. Speakers were also found to use more redressive devices if the cost of the speech act was high. Speakers were also found to use more redressive devices if a hearer had more power over a speaker. However, the three social variables do not have the same significance when accounting for speakers' linguistic behaviour. That is to say, the social distance between a speaker and a hearer was found to be the major determining factor of the linguistic politeness employed. It was found that when the social distance is high, the cost of the request is high and hence the number of the mitigating devices increases in order to soften the negative impact of the request. However, when the request is performed by members belonging to the same group, where the social distance is low, it is carried out by using fewer mitigating devices or by the bald-on-record strategy.

However, contrary to what is stated by Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness that people of higher power may perform speech acts by using the bald-on-record strategy without the fear of retribution. In both the Australian and Palestinian data sets, there are a number of cases where people of higher power used mitigating devices to address people of lower power. Such findings throw doubt on the claim made by Brown and Levinson that the purpose of using polite behavior is simply to save face. Since, according to politeness theory, the face of people of higher power is protected from being damaged when using the bald-on-record strategy, there is no need to employ redressive devices when performing requests. It could be argued that saving face is not the only

purpose behind polite behavior. People sometimes behave politely because they want to display “consideration for other participants” (Watts, 2003, p. 17). In a similar line, Ferguson (1976) claims that people employ politeness expressions in a ritualized communication interaction. Lim (1988) argues that there are shared obligations among people to be polite regardless of the kind of act they are performing.

Another point related to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory is the increase in the number of the softening devices where the relative power is neutral; the social distance between a speaker and a hearer and the degree of imposition are low. That is to say, contrary to what is stated by politeness theory, the increase of the mitigating devices is not due solely to asymmetrical power relations, to the increase in the degree of the social distance between interlocutors, or to the imposition of the request. In the conversation between Frank and Frances below, neither the social distance nor the relative power is high. Also, the cost of the request is not high because both interlocutors are in love with each other and the request raised by Frank is quite normal because it has to do with getting married. However, the request is carried out by using a number of negative and positive mitigating devices. It is important to point out that Frank and Frances use the bald-on-record strategy throughout the whole play. Let us consider this extract.

1. FRANK: I’m, er, hmm, sincere about what I say, Frances, so
please think it over because I really do, hmm, love you ... Are
you there?

(Williamson, 1980, p. 76)

In Example 1, the mitigating devices *er*, *hmm* and *please* are all negative politeness devices, whereas, the first name (Frances) is a positive politeness device. According to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) formula, “ $W_x = D(S,H) + P(H,S) + R_x$ ” (p. 76), the value of W_x is determined by the additive value of the three variables. If we apply this formula to Example 1, we clearly notice its limitation in accounting for the increase of the value of W_x where the value of D , P and R_x is low. Since the social distance between the speaker and the hearer is low, the relative power is neutral and the cost of the request is not high, we expect a low value of W_x . However, the value of W_x is high because there are a number of mitigating devices in this example. This runs contrary to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory of politeness.

To account for the use of so many mitigating devices in Example 1, it is important to consider the speech situation. Frank has opposed the idea of marrying Frances from the beginning of their relationship, but he wants to keep his relationship with her as a partner. They argue and Frances finally leaves the house. Frank, who rejects marrying Frances and prefers to live with her as a partner, phones Frances to tell her that he reconsiders marrying her. On the basis of this speech situation, it could be argued that this heavy use of mitigating devices is psychologically motivated. Frank wishes to express consideration for Frances and hence protect her feelings, rather than simply minimize the imposition of the request. This is in line with what is stated by Oliver (1971) that when employing politeness “feelings would be protected, dignity preserved, and harmony enhanced” (p. 143).

8.2 The second question

The second question sought to focus on the politeness strategies employed to perform requests in the Australian and Palestinian data sets, in addition to the linguistic devices used as softening devices to minimize threat to face. It also sought to explore cultural differences that might disrupt communication. The question was mainly based on the strategies posed by Brown and Levinson (1987) in their politeness theory and in Wierzbicka’s (1990) claim that people in different countries “speak in different ways – not only because they use different linguistic codes, involving different lexicons and different grammars, but also because their ways of using the codes are different” (p. 44).

- What are the politeness strategies and linguistic softening devices employed in Australian plays and Palestinian plays to carry out requests? What are the areas of differences between the two cultures that might cause communication failure and communication breakdown?

In order to address this question efficiently, it is more practical to discuss requests performed by bald-on-record strategies, negative politeness strategies and positive politeness strategies under separate entries.

8.2.1 Requests performed by the bald-on-record strategy

Brown and Levinson (1987) in their politeness theory use a scale for doing face-threatening acts, beginning with doing face-threatening acts baldly and ending with

avoiding face-threatening acts. The strategy of doing face-threatening acts baldly is considered the least polite strategy in the politeness continuum because it imposes on hearer and it lacks markers of politeness (Fraser, 2005). I would argue that those who described the bald-on-record strategy as an impolite strategy limit the scope of politeness to certain polite words or utterances. Since Brown and Levinson view politeness as a complex system for softening face-threatening acts, it is the interlocutors' responsibility to judge whether a certain speech act performed by a certain utterance is face-threatening or not. That is to say, since there is an implicit agreement between a speaker and a hearer in using the unmitigated bald-on-record strategy and since no one's face is threatened and no one has the feeling of being denigrated, we can argue against the intrinsic threat that is associated with the bald-on-record strategy.

If we accept the view that the bald-on-record strategy is not a polite strategy, then, we should concede that speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic are to varying degrees impolite because in my data the bald-on-record strategy prevails. However, since the aim of using politeness is to minimize interpersonal friction in interaction (Lakoff, 1975, p. 64), to reduce threat to face (Brown and Levinson, 1987), and to avoid conflict (Leech, 1983, 19), it could be argued that politeness is not needed if both a speaker and a hearer agree implicitly that there will be no friction, no conflict and no threat to their faces. In other words, politeness is communicated between interlocutors even without using polite linguistic expressions. This is clear from the smooth continuation of the dialogue between interlocutors. If politeness is not communicated between interlocutors when using the bald-on-record strategy, we can anticipate a communication breakdown. However, no communication breakdown has ever occurred in my data as a result of using the bald-on-record strategy.

This invites the question "When is politeness necessary?" Politeness is necessary when both a speaker and a hearer feel that they need politeness to communicate and without it communication will not be successful. This feeling is determined by both speaker and hearer, depending on their relationship and their mood. There are many cases where the imperative form is more touching than other forms, in particular, when dealing with feelings, for example, when exchanging the words that have to do with kissing and hugging between partners. In short, it is very hard to generalize the claim that imperatives are less polite than interrogatives or declaratives without taking into consideration some

determining factors such as the social distance between S and H, the cost of the speech act and the speech situations.

8.2.2 Requests performed by negative politeness strategies

Negative politeness strategies were used by both speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic to minimize threat to face. However, each cultural group showed different orientations towards preferring one politeness strategy over another. For example, as a mitigating device, the strategy of conventional indirectness is more frequently employed by speakers of Australian English, whereas the strategy of apologizing is more frequent among speakers of Palestinian Arabic. Palestinians are direct and value intimacy and closeness. They do not like “beating around the bush” when communicating with each other because it is considered an evasive and insincere way of expressing feelings or asking for something. Since indirectness is used in order to avoid directly imposing on the hearer, it has less room in the linguistic behavior of Palestinians than in the linguistic behavior of Australians because the concept of imposition is conceptualized differently. Requests are not impositive speech acts in Palestinian culture to the extent they are in Australian culture. Requests in Palestinian culture, among family members and neighbors, are performed as part of the obligation and duties of the person towards his or her family members and neighbors. These differences are not by any means haphazard, but reflect differences in the cultural values and systematic differences in the code of politeness.

Although cultural differences are responsible for preferring directness over indirectness by speakers of Palestinian Arabic, Atawneh (1991) attributed the reason to the linguistic system, arguing that the Arabic language has less elaborate modal system when compared to English. While speakers of English can choose from *can*, *could*, *will*, *would*, *may* and *might*, the Palestinian modal system is limited to the common form *mumkin*, meaning “can”, *btiqdar*, meaning “are you able” and to the conditionals “*ʔidha mumkin* and *ʔidha btiqdar*” (p. 212). Furthermore, Atawneh (1991) argues that the English past form is more polite than the present form, for example *could* is more polite than *can*. Since Arabic has no counterparts to the English past modals, Arab speakers, under the influence of their mother tongue, overgeneralized the present form *can*, which is considered less polite, over the other past forms and hence, appeared to be less polite than the Americans who preferred the past form of the modal verbs (*could* and *would* and *might*) (p. 213).

Sifianou (1992) also attributed differences in politeness strategies to differences in the linguistic system. She maintains that since politeness phenomena are reflected in language, differences in the linguistic systems of these languages will definitely result in differences in the conceptualization and manifestation of politeness. Consequently, to account for politeness phenomena, Sifianou argues, we should focus on the two aspects of politeness, the social and the linguistic. Ignoring either of these aspects will restrict our understanding of politeness.

One major difference between Palestinian Arabic and Australian English is the nature of requests. It was found that impinging on hearer and constraining his or her liberty of action necessitates an increased number of mitigating devices in Australian English. In Palestinian culture, on the other hand, imposing on hearer's liberty of action is considered less serious than giving a person the feeling that he or she is inferior or giving the feeling that H is not welcomed in S's property. In other words, for Palestinians the concept of dignity is more important than the concept of imposition and necessitates the utilization of a number of mitigating devices. In an example quoted from Al-Mubayed (1985, p. 65), Eisa used a mixture of negative and positive politeness to minimize the threat to his friend's face because he was a little bit late for an appointment. In Palestinian culture, deliberate delay of meeting the guest and opening the gate or the door for a guest is interpreted as a sort of humiliation and requires a convincing excuse from the host. Let us consider the mitigating devices used by Eisa to eliminate any feelings of belittling his friend. First, the first name (Zanaad) followed by a ritualized phrase for welcoming people *yaa ṭahlan* meaning "you are most welcome" are used. Then he used *aasif* meaning "sorry" which is one of the negative politeness strategies, followed by *ḥudḥurni* meaning "excuse me", followed by the reason for being late *ḡalabni anawm* meaning "I was dozing". It is very clear that the employment of the mitigating devices is not because of the imposition associated with the request since the request is not face-threatening as the social distance between interlocutors is low. The main reason for employing this number of mitigating devices is to save the dignity of the guest and protect his feelings, rather than reducing the cost of the request.

Moreover, differences appear in using different conventionalized forms to form conventional indirectness. Conventional indirectness, in the Australian English data is

realized by *can* and *could* which can be translated as *tasstaTeeð/ btiqdar* or its variant *btiʔdar*. In Palestinian Arabic, these expressions, although they are linguistically synonymous to *can*, are not used in performing requests and do not have the same pragmatic function, giving H an option to comply or not when performing indirect requests. This is similar to Atawneh's (1991) results: while the forms *can* and *could* were used by speakers of American English, *tasstaTeeð/ btiqdar* and *btiʔdar* were not used in forming conventional indirectness by speakers of Palestinian Arabic. Other forms such as the conditional "*law samahʔ*" "if you permitted" (p. 97) and "*ʔidah samahat*" meaning "please" (p. 151) were used.

Since speakers of Australian English rated the strategy of conventional indirectness as the most redressive, but speakers of Palestinian Arabic demonstrated less enthusiasm in using conventional indirectness, it is to be expected that communication failure will occur when the two cultural groups come in contact with each other. Speakers of Australian English will definitely choose to indirectly perform requests, whereas, speakers of Palestinian Arabic will not choose this strategy because it is not considered a proper way to reduce threat to face. Interestingly, speakers of Palestinian Arabic will not be satisfied by the way they are addressed by speakers of Australian English if they use conventional indirectness to mitigate requests. What is common to speakers of Palestinian Arabic is giving reasons for doing a request. They sometimes give personal reasons to justify the request. It is believed that by giving reasons, the addressee will be more understanding and, hence, more cooperative. Giving reasons is also considered as a move from the speaker to get the hearer closer and engage him or her in the conversation. The findings of this study are consistent with Atawneh's (1991) findings, where speakers of Palestinian Arabic "are expected to give a reason for their request either before or after making the request" (p. 114).

However, it is very unlikely for speakers of Australian English to give reasons for doing requests. They are aware of their individual autonomy and do their best to protect their personal territory. This is clear in the data where reasons or explanations for doing requests are nearly absent. This is also made clear in Béal's (1992) study where speakers of Australian English criticized speakers of French for going into detail when answering the request for information "Did you have a good week-end?" (p. 25).

Although the strategy of give deference is used by both speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic, there are cross-cultural differences in giving deference. The major difference between the two cultures lies in using the honorific marker *tafaDal*. This term is frequently used by Palestinians to pay respect and to request politely other people to do things usually for the benefit of the hearer. The repetition of the term indicates sincere welcome if it is used to ask someone to enter one's property or when asking someone to have food or drink, whereas, the absence of the term is taken as a sign of disrespect and impoliteness. Moreover, the way people utter the term is taken as an indication of the degree of respect a speaker sends to a hearer. If the word is emphasized or repeated, this indicates more respect. However, speakers of Australian English use other linguistic means to show respect, warmth and sincerity such as the lexical verb *come in* in certain contexts.

Another difference listed under the strategies of negative politeness is the employment of tags as mitigating devices. Unlike requests taken from the Palestinian plays, requests in the data taken from the Australian plays are frequently mitigated with tags. That is to say, tags are used as hedging devices to attenuate the potential face-threat associated with the requestive speech acts. Two different tag forms functioning as hedging devices are associated with the imperative mood in Australian English. They are tag questions such as *will you?* and the pragmatic tag *eh*. Interestingly, although the system of the English tags is highly developed and S can have a number of alternative possibilities such as *will you?* and *won't you?*, the great majority of tags found in the data employ constant polarity tags rather than diversity tags. The formula *will you?* is by far the most frequent. On the other hand, tags are not used as mitigating devices in Palestinian Arabic because they are not used with the imperative clause. Most tags in my data are linked to interrogative clauses and used to confirm information provided by the speaker.

8.2.3 Requests performed by positive politeness

According to my data, six positive politeness strategies were employed by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic to perform requests. They are the strategies of use of in-group identity markers, presupposing common ground with hearer (H), avoiding disagreement, taking notice of H's interests, intensifying interest to H and

including both S and H in the activity. The most prominent strategy used by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic is the strategy of use in-group identity markers.

A most important mitigating device listed under the strategy of use in-group identity markers is terms of address. The employment of terms of address in any conversation indicates the proper social status of the addressee relative to other people. Although terms of address exist in the two languages, it is very likely that misunderstanding might occur because Australian English and Palestinian Arabic employ two different address systems. In addition, the address system in Palestinian Arabic is far more complicated than its counterpart in Australian English. While among speakers of Palestinian Arabic the term of address *ʔabu/ʔum* + son's first name is the most popular, such a term is unfamiliar to speakers of Australian English who use first name (FN). Since the two languages have different systems of address, we expect significant pragmatic differences between the two languages.

The most significant area that might cause communication failure and communication breakdown is the use of a person's FN. It has been found that, due to cultural differences, employing FN, particularly in first-time encounters, appears to be problematic. In Palestinian culture, addressing people by FN is very complex because it is governed by multiple factors such as age, social status, and marital status. Since maturity is highly revered in Palestinian culture, the presence or absence of FN in one's encounter is dependent on the relative age of the addressee and the addressor. Old people are expected, in accordance with politeness norms, to receive title (usually *Haj/Haje*) + FN. Marital status is also significant in whether to choose FN or another term of address. The social distance between a speaker and a hearer plays no role at all in using FN or other terms of address.

However, in Australian English using FN seems to be less status-dependent. The social distance variable seems to be a key determining factor in using FN. FN appears to be quite regularly reciprocated by people of equal as well as of asymmetrical status, for example, a university professor can be called by his/her FN. Bargiela et al. (2002) find similar behavior in other English-speaking countries, where people opt for FN because they consider informality to be a communication facilitator, while for other language

groups such as Italian, Arabic and Georgian, such an involvement strategy is seen as excessively familiar and is therefore interpreted as impolite behavior.

Of relevance to the address system is the extension of kinship terms to members who are not necessarily their family members. In Palestinian culture, the kinship terms *ʔabi/waalidi* (father) and *ḍami* (uncle) are used to attribute certain social status to the addressee. They are positive politeness devices that pervade Palestinian society and are used as alternatives to FN. In some cases, the term *ḍami* is used together with the FN, but not *ʔabi/waalidi*. A similar strategy involving the extension of kinship terms can be found in Tunisian society (Elarbi, 1997). However, the only difference between the two cultures seems to lie in the use of the term *ʔabi* with FN in Tunisian culture, which does not occur in Palestinian culture. It is worth mentioning that, in my data, extending kinship terms is unfamiliar to speakers of Australian English. This type of positive politeness is exclusive to Palestinian Arabic.

8.3 The third question

The third question sought to explore the concept of face in Australian and Palestinian cultures. In addition, acts that cause face loss were investigated in order to deepen our understanding of cultural differences that might cause embarrassment when people from the two cultures come in contact with each other. Furthermore, the study explored acts that are used to enhance face in the two cultural groups. The question was motivated by the work of many researchers such as Ho (1976; 1994) and Goffman (1967) who emphasize the fact that face is a public image and can be lost, maintained or withdrawn, and Brown and Levinson (1987) who maintain that the aim behind polite behavior is to save face.

- How is face conceptualized by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic? What are the acts that enhance face and cause face loss in Australian and Palestinian cultures?

In Australian and Palestinian cultures, face is connected with expressions such as “respect”, “shame”, “honor”, “reputation”, and “dignity”. We can argue that both cultures have similar conceptualizations of the term “face”. However, due to cultural differences,

different acts can cause loss of face or enhance face. For clarification purposes, acts that cause face loss will be discussed first.

8.3.1 Acts that cause loss of face

In the Australian and Palestinian data, the concept of losing face is very similar where the individual has experienced loss of face in the form of social embarrassment. Most of the examples mentioned in my data are work-related or connected with personal achievements. They are related to a person's inability to satisfy certain social expectations. Respondents felt that they lost face because they failed to maintain their professional reputation and status. It could be argued that work-related loss of face occurs as a result of the clash between two face images. First, the image the person holds of himself or herself as a competent, qualified individual. Second, the image another holds of the person, which seems to be the opposite. The loss of face in such situations emerges from a mismatch between these two face images.

Cultural differences, in particular, differences in the code of politeness, are a major source of face loss in the two cultures. In my data, differences in greeting and farewelling procedures between Australian and Palestinian cultures are obvious and have caused face loss when people from these cultural groups come in contact with each other. A problem arises when an individual from one culture applies the patterns of his or her culture to members from the other culture because what seems to be an acceptable behavior in one culture does not seem so in the other culture.

A difference in the conceptualization of respectability between Australian and Palestinian cultures is considered a potential cause of loss of face. The two cultures view respectability differently because they embrace different values and traditions. In Australian culture, an individual enjoys more freedom in doing what he or she wants to do when it comes to the individual's needs and wants. In contrast, in Palestinian culture, an individual experiences more constraints compared to an Australian individual. For example, in Australian culture an adult can smoke in front of his or her parents without the fear of losing face. On the contrary, it is very unlikely for a Palestinian to do so because it is considered disrespectful and a face affront. There are also a number of social behaviors that are considered disrespectful if they are practiced by children or adults in the presence

of their parents in Palestinian culture. For example, walking in front of parents, entering any property or any office before them, and getting in a car before them are all considered as impolite behaviors. However, such social behaviors are unlikely to be considered disrespectful in Australian culture.

A major difference between Australian and Palestinian cultures lies in using terms of address such as *Haj/Haje* to address ordinary people. The omission of these terms of address may cause face loss for both a speaker and a hearer in Palestinian culture. For a hearer the loss of face emerges because he or she has the feeling of being humiliated and has not been given enough respect. On the other hand, for a speaker, face will be lost as a result of being inconsiderate and impolite to other people. It is worth mentioning that those terms of address are not formal and are not related to a special social class. They are terms of respect and used to address all older people, even fathers and mothers. In other words, those terms of address are obligatory, irrespective of social class and social distance between a speaker and a hearer. Personally speaking, I have never uttered the names of my parents in their presence. I used to address them as *Abi* and *Umi* when I was young and *Haj* and *Haje* when I grew up. On the contrary, the Australian address system is more casual and less complicated than its Palestinian counterpart. In everyday communication people reciprocate first name without titles or terms of address if the social distance is low.

8.3.2 Acts used to enhance face

In both Australian and Palestinian cultures, behaving politely towards other people is considered an essential face-supporting act. However, due to cultural differences, there is variation in the conceptualizations of what polite behavior is. For Palestinians, being polite means that you respect your parents, your family members and the people you come in contact with. The forms, ways and degree of paying respect to each group are not exactly the same. Parents always receive the most respect, followed by family members and then other people. That is to say, the degree of respect varies according to the degree of closeness, because people have certain obligations towards each other. For example, it is very disrespectful to say “no, I am sorry, I cannot do it.” to your parents or to your uncles and aunts if they ask you to do something. But it is not disrespectful to say “no, I am sorry” to other people.

Central to paying respect in Palestinian culture is the concept of elevating the person in others' eyes. That is to say, giving the person the respect he or she is due. The concept of elevating the person in the eyes of the people around him or her is very important and plays a vital role in the respect system in the Palestinian community. If a person is getting bigger in the eyes of other people, he or she will occupy a leading role in his or her family. Whenever the person speaks, people will listen to him or her and whenever the person gives an order, people will obey him or her. In contrast, in Australian culture, this sense of respect is absent because the society has a different structure and the structure of the family is different as well. In Australian society, people care most about their nuclear family. They do not pay as much attention to the extended family which is very important in Palestinian culture. That is to say, the sense of belonging to the family in the Palestinian community differs from the sense of belonging in the Australian community and hence the obligations are different.

Visiting people is one of the most important ways used to pay respect to people in Palestinian culture. There are certain societal rules and traditions that govern and regulate the visit, in particular during certain occasions like Al-Eid, the first day after the end of the month of Ramadan. For example, the first people to be visited are one's parents, then brothers and sisters. The younger brother visits the older brother and the male visits the female. The meaning of the visit extends beyond its material aspect (like people seeing and talking to each other) to non-material things like conveying the idea of loving this person and giving him or her the impression that he or she is important to the visitor. Since people only visit the people whom they love, a visit is a non-linguistic way of saying "I respect you". I have no doubt that Australian people visit each other, but the thing that needs investigation is whether or not the visit has the same meaning in the two cultures as a face-supporting act.

Compliments were mentioned by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic as acts that enhance face. Although compliments were mentioned by both groups, there are huge differences in the nature of compliments. In Palestinian culture, people compliment each other more than Australians do. There are special words for nearly every action, for example, after having a shower, after having a hair cut, wearing a new or a nice dress, meeting someone in the early morning, making a cup of coffee or tea, and making a nice meal etc. However, compliments in Australian culture are not as popular as

compliments in Palestinian culture, if too many compliments are given, an Australian hearer may feel that the compliments are not sincere.

In short, face-enhancing acts are culture-specific and vary from culture to culture. Although there are similarities in the two cultures in using compliments to enhance people's faces, differences lie in the details. Also the number of compliments a person receives and the type of compliments are not the same in the two cultures.

8.4 Implications for foreign language teaching

Evidence from this study and many others (Béal, 1992; Béal, 1990; Clyne & Ball, 1990; Cordella, 1991; Wierzbicka, 1990) conducted in the field of cross-cultural pragmatics have highlighted the fact that communication failure and communication breakdown are very likely to occur as a result of lacking adequate sociopragmatic knowledge. Acquiring sociopragmatic competence is as important as acquiring linguistic competence because when people come in contact with each other, they use both types of competence. More important is the fact that our linguistic utterances are determined to a large extent by the sociopragmatic knowledge we obtain about interlocutors in a particular speech situation. Variables such as power, social distance and the degree of imposition of a speech act are significant determining factors for our linguistic utterances and should be taken into account when teaching a foreign language.

The findings of the study have emphasized the importance of teaching cultural aspects as part of the curriculum when teaching a foreign language. Although mastering the syntactic, semantic, phonological and morphological systems of any language is crucially important to communicate in a foreign language efficiently, there are still other aspects that need to be emphasized, such as how the native speakers of a particular language use the language. As has been seen across cultures, lacking the knowledge of how the native speakers of a particular language use the code of politeness may cause communication failure. The issue of politeness becomes more sensitive in cultures where the rules of politeness are lexicalized and politeness must be observed in the presence as well as in the absence of the addressee, as is the case in Japanese language.

The findings of the study have underscored the importance of paying attention to face in the learning-teaching process because the differences between Australian and Palestinian cultures can often become the occasion of unwitting face-threatening behavior. The consequences of the fear of losing face become more dangerous in the education sector than in other sectors because it stands as a barrier, preventing students from engaging in a serious discussion in the classroom. As stated by Watson (1999) and Greenwood (1997), students' reluctance to participate in a classroom discussion was attributed to the fear of making mistakes and consequently losing face. Therefore, it is highly recommended that teachers should be made aware of the cross-cultural differences in relation to acts that cause loss of face in class because different cultures demonstrate cultural diversity in conceptualizing loss of face and acts that might cause loss of face.

The findings of this study have emphasized the importance of sensitizing students to miscommunication that may accompany interaction when they come in contact with members of another culture. A good technique that could be used to make students more aware of cultural diversity is a thorough comparison of the culture of the native language with the culture of the target language, focusing on areas that might cause tension and communication failure. In this respect, different materials such as audio recordings, videos, photos and so on can be brought to class. Such devices can help stimulate students' intellectual curiosity about the target culture. Of special relevance to this particular issue is the distinction between collectivistic and individualistic cultures used for instance made by Ting-Toomey (2005), where the needs and expectations of members of each cultural group can be deeply different.

Palestinian learners of English who do not know much about rules regulating interactions in Australian institutions may be misled by the lack of formality that often characterizes the way Australians address each other. It is quite strange to a Palestinian student studying at an Australian university to address his or her professor by first name without a title. Similarly, Australians will be struck by the formality that characterizes the way Palestinian students address doctors and professors at Palestinian universities. It would be quite odd for an Australian student to address his or her professor by using the title plus first name; on formal occasions title plus family name is the norm. By the same token a Palestinian professor will feel insulted if he or she is addressed by students by first name without a title. Things become more complicated if a student needs to address the

vice chancellor, where sometimes up to four honorific words are used to pay respect to the addressee. The difference in using professional titles in academic institutions should be given further attention because it might cause tension between students and professors, in particular in Palestinian institutions.

Since the findings of the study revealed that speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic used different codes of politeness when performing requests, learners of these languages as a foreign language should be made aware of the politeness strategies used in each culture. It should be made clear to speakers of Palestinian Arabic that the imperative form of the verb plus the traditional politeness marker *min faDlak* “please”, which is considered a polite form to address people where the social distance is high, is considered sociopragmatically inappropriate in Australian English because it imposes on hearer and does not give him or her the option to comply or not with what is requested. Therefore, it is recommended that the teaching of politeness should be integrated into the teaching of the grammar of the language.

8.5 Suggestions for future research

The data collected for this study is taken from contemporary plays written by well-known Australian and Palestinian playwrights. Although the results of this study are consistent with Atawneh’s (1991) study, where a different type of data was used, further research is needed, comparing the results obtained from this method of data collection with other methods to verify and endorse drama as a feasible technique for conducting sociopragmatic research.

According to many studies, such as Al-Migdadi (2003) and Holmes (1995), of linguistic politeness which compare the linguistic behavior of men and women, there are gender differences in the way women and men use politeness devices. It is suggested that further attention should be given to a comparison of polite behavior of women and men in Australian and Palestinian cultures, as no such studies, to the best of my knowledge, have been conducted so far.

The findings of the study revealed significant differences between the address system of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic. Since the address system of any

language has a significant role to play in encoding linguistic politeness, it is recommended that an inclusive comparison of the address system of the two languages is necessary as it is expected to contribute a great deal to deepening our understanding of the politeness phenomena in the cultures under investigation.

According to the findings of my study, compliments are considered an important speech act in enhancing face in both Palestinian and Australian cultures. Since compliments are not investigated deeply in this study because the main concern of the current study is requests, it is recommended that a cross-cultural study of the speech act of compliment is worth carrying out in the cultures under investigation.

8.6 Summary

This chapter summarizes the findings of early chapters and answers the three questions raised in the introductory chapter. We can argue that Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness has succeeded to a great extent in accounting for the politeness phenomena in Australian and Palestinian cultures. It was found that the variables of social distance between a speaker and a hearer, the relative power and the degree of imposition of a certain speech act are determining factors of speaker's linguistic politeness. However, not all these variables have the same importance. The social distance variable was found to be the most significant, and whenever the social distance between a speaker and a hearer is high, the cost of the request is always high regardless of the cost of the speech act.

Contrary to what is stated by Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness that the bald-on-record strategy is the least polite strategy because it threatens hearer's face, the current study argues against the intrinsic face-threat which is associated with this strategy. It is also argued that it is the hearer and the speaker who determine if their faces are threatened. Hence, it is difficult to accept the view that the bald-on-record strategy is not as polite as other strategies because indirectness is not always equated with politeness.

Due to differences in conceptualizing the notion of imposition by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic, the codes of politeness used to counteract any threat to face are different. While speakers of Australian English preferred conventional indirectness, speakers of Palestinian Arabic showed preference for the strategy of apologizing, where speakers give reasons and explanations for doing the request. Such

cultural differences are expected to cause communication failure and communication breakdown if members of the two cultures come in contact with each other.

Differences in using positive politeness strategies emerge in using first name (FN). In Australian culture, the employment of FN prevails among people. On the contrary, in Palestinian culture, people use *?abu/?um* + son's name to address married and old people. FN is only used to address young people. Such cultural differences are expected to cause communication breakdown if they are not taken into consideration when people from the two cultures come in contact with each other. Using FN to address old people is considered inappropriate in Palestinian culture because old people are always addressed by the term of address *Haj* or *Haje* for male and female, respectively.

Speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic have nearly the same conceptualization of face. In both cultures, face is connected with notions such as "respect" "shame", "honor", "reputation", and "dignity". However, due to cultural differences, acts that cause face loss and acts that enhance face are different. Differences in the codes of politeness between Australian culture and Palestinian culture were responsible for losing face. The main difference between the two cultures in enhancing face was attributed to differences in conceptualizing respectability.

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Appendix A

Total number of requests in the Australian data (1445)

Number of requests performed by the bald-on-record strategy in each play

Name of the play	Number of requests
Hotel Sorrento	264
Travelling North	223
Gary's House	157
Dust	158
The Fat Boy	243
Total Number	1045

Number of requests performed by negative politeness strategies in each play

Name of the play	Number of requests
Hotel Sorrento	48
Travelling North	38
Gary's House	18
Dust	8
The Fat Boy	44
Total Number	156

Distribution of negative politeness strategies

Strategy	Number	Percentage %
Be conventionally indirect	54	34.6%
Hedge	24	15.4%
Minimize the imposition	12	7.7%
Give deference	27	17.3%
Apologize	37	23.7%
Be pessimistic	2	1.2%
Total	156	99.9%

Number of requests performed by positive politeness strategies in each play

Name of the play	Number of requests
Hotel Sorrento	44
Travelling North	37
Gary's House	94
Dust	15
The Fat Boy	54
Total Number	244

Distribution of positive politeness strategies

Strategy	Number	Percentage %
Use of in-group identity markers	177	72.5%
Presupposing common ground with H	11	4.5%
Avoid disagreement	8	3.2%
Taking notice of H's interest	7	2.8%
Intensify interest to H	28	11.4%
Including both S and H in the activity	13	5.3%
Total	244	99.7%

Total number of requests in the Palestinian data (1274)

Number of requests performed by the bald-on-record strategy in each play

Name of the play	Number of requests
<i>Al-Qamar wa Al-ḍankabut</i>	271
<i>ASamt wa Azawaal</i>	307
<i>Jisir Ḫlaa Al-Ṣabad</i>	179
<i>Law Kuntu FilisTiinian</i>	86
<i>Al-Mahkama</i>	90
Total	933

Total number of requests performed by negative politeness strategies in each play

Name of the play	Number of requests
<i>Al-Qamar wa Al-ḡankabut</i>	49
<i>ASamt wa Azawaal</i>	54
<i>Jisir Ḥlaa Al-Ḥabad</i>	16
<i>Law Kuntu FilisTiinian</i>	10
<i>Al-Mahkama</i>	18
Total Number	147

Distribution of negative politeness strategies

Strategy	Number	Percentage %
Be conventionally indirect	21	14.2%
Hedge	7	4.7%
Minimize the imposition	9	6.1%
Give deference	68	46.2%
Apologize	42	28.5%
Be pessimistic	0	0%
Total	147	99.7%

Number of requests performed by positive politeness strategies in each play

Name of the play	Number of requests
<i>Al-Qamar wa Al-ḡankabut</i>	68
<i>ASamt wa Azawaal</i>	55
<i>Jisir Ālaa Al-ḡabad</i>	24
<i>Law Kuntu FilisTiinian</i>	12
<i>Al-Mahkama</i>	35
Total Number	194

Distribution of positive politeness strategies

Strategy	Number	Percentage %
Use of in-group identity markers	124	63.9%
Presupposing common ground with H	7	3.6%
Avoid disagreement	4	2%
Taking notice of H's interest	5	2.5%
Intensify interest to H	18	9.2%
Including both S and H in the activity	36	18.5%
Total	194	99.7%

Appendix B

Short Questionnaire

To the respondents:

Please fill in this questionnaire. It will not take you very long to do this, but you are welcome to write on extra sheets of paper if you need more space.

**Thank you
Said Farahat**

- 1. What do the phrases ‘to lose face’ or ‘I lost face when such and such happened’ mean to you? Can you express the idea of ‘losing face’ in your own words?**

- 2. Have you been in a situation where you felt that you lost face? Write about this experience briefly.**

- 3. Has someone close to you ever had the experience of ‘losing face’? Write about this experience briefly.**

4. How do you think you could enhance your face or someone else's face? Have you ever been in a situation where you felt that your face was enhanced. (This is the opposite of losing face). Write about this experience briefly.

5. What are the things you could do to make another person 'lose face'? Write about this experience briefly.

6. What are the easiest or best ways to enhance someone's face? Write down as many strategies (words and actions) that you can think of.

7. Can you think of any saying, expression or word that is connected with face in your culture?

استبيان قصير

الأخوة و الأخوات أفراد العينة:

الرجاء تعبئة هذا الاستبيان. انه لا يحتاج من الوقت الكثير، لكن يمكن استعمال ورقة اضافية اذا كانت هناك حاجة لذلك.
و لكم جزيل الشكر و التقدير
سعيد فرحات

السؤال الاول: ماذا تعني عبارة "يسود وجه" أو " اسود وجهي؟ ضاع ماء وجهي عندما حدث كذا وكذا" ؟ هل يمكنك أن تعبر عن فكرة ضياع ماء الوجه بكلمات من عندك؟

السؤال الثاني: هل سبق أن تعرضت لموقف شعرت فيه بفقدان ماء وجهك؟ اكتب عن ذلك الموقف باختصار.

السؤال الثالث: هل تعرض شخص من المقربين منك لموقف ضاع فيه ماء وجهه؟ اكتب عن ذلك الموقف باختصار.

السؤال الرابع: من وجهة نظرك الخاصة، كيف يمكنك أن "تبيض وجهك أو وجه شخص آخر؟ هل سبق أن تعرضت لموقف ابيض فيه وجهك؟ (هذا عكس " اسود وجه") اكتب عن ذلك الموقف باختصار.

السؤال الخامس: ما الأشياء التي يمكن أن تفعلها لجعل شخص آخر يفقد ماء وجهه؟ اكتب عن ذلك الموقف باختصار.

السؤال السادس: ما أفضل الطرق وأبسطها لتبييض وجه شخص ما؟ اكتب كل الاستراتيجيات التي يمكن أن تخطر في بالك (من أفعال وأقوال).

السؤال السابع: ما الأقوال والتعبيرات والكلمات المرتبطة بالوجه في ثقافتك؟

[illegible]