

---

| RESEARCH ARTICLE

## The Use of Politeness Strategies in the Realization of the Speech act of Disagreement by EFL Learners

Fatima Abdullah Jaafar<sup>1</sup> and Dr Nuri Ageli<sup>2</sup> ✉

<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education, Bahrain

<sup>2</sup>Department of English Language & Literature, University of Bahrain, Bahrain

**Corresponding Author:** Dr Nuri Ageli, **E-mail:** [nageli@uob.edu.bh](mailto:nageli@uob.edu.bh)

---

| ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the differences between the politeness strategies used by university EFL learners and American native speakers in making disagreements. Using Brown and Levinson's (1978) model, the study examined the variables of gender, social status, and social distance. The participants were 63 EFL learners (41 females and 22 males) and 20 native speakers (10 females and 10 males). The EFL learners who took part in this study were EFL learners who were studying in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Bahrain. They were in their fourth, fifth, or sixth year of study. The data was collected using a Discourse Completion Task adopted from a previous study done by Khoirunnisa and Hardjanto (2018) and modified by the researcher to fit the needs of this study. The results of this study showed that the reason why EFL learners seemed more or less polite was that native speakers chose to apply higher or lower percentages of politeness strategies to fit the needs of the different situations, whereas EFL learners used similar percentages of those strategies in most of the situations. This was due to EFL learners' insufficient competence in the English language. Further, EFL learners were still aware of the necessity of using different politeness strategies in different situations, and thus there were some changes in their use of them depending on the situation. Moreover, the study revealed that female EFL learners used slightly more positive politeness strategies than male EFL learners. In terms of importance, gender was shown to be more important than social status in determining the types of politeness strategies employed by EFL learners.

| KEYWORDS

Disagreement, positive politeness, negative politeness, off-record politeness, bald on-record.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

**ACCEPTED:** 28 October 2022

**PUBLISHED:** 01 November 2022

**DOI:** 10.32996/ijllt.2022.5.11.3

---

### 1. Introduction

Politeness is a concept that has been widely examined by different theorists within the field of pragmatics. In addition, one of the most common theoretical models used for politeness is that of Brown and Levinson (1967), which breaks down politeness into four different strategies. The model has been widely explored, as well as applied to various fields of research.

One of the biggest areas in which Brown and Levinson's (1967) model is used is Literature. Several literary books, plays, and films were examined using that model. Through applying it to literary works, researchers were able to either support the general ideas of those works or look for hidden messages within them, for example, messages that support feminism (e.g., Noviani, 2014, Afidha, 2015 and Eshreth and Draweesh, 2018)

Further, an important field that frequently utilizes the aforementioned model is the one that deals with foreign language learning and the differences between the language used by native speakers and that used by foreign language learners, especially English, i.e., EFL learners. In this paper, the model was employed to find out, inter alia, who used more politeness strategies, namely, EFL

learners or native speakers. Another purpose of its application was to find out whether the first language of EFL learners affected their use of politeness strategies in English (e.g., Qari, 2017 Farnia and Yazdani, 2018). This field is where the current study stands.

## **2. Literature review**

Politeness strategies have been widely investigated for different purposes. They have often been used to compare utterances/speeches produced by EFL learners and English/American/Canadian native speakers. Some examples of those studies are shown below.

To cite some examples of the studies which compared EFL learners and English native speakers in relation to politeness strategies, first, Farnia and Yazdani (2018) investigated the differences in the use of politeness strategies between Iranian EFL learners and American native speakers in reminders. They used an open-ended DCT to collect information. Their findings showed that native speakers were more indirect.

Some academic articles focused on how the utterances produced by EFL learners in English might be affected by the pragmatics of their first language. For instance, First, Lee (2011) studied the reasons behind the differences between the politeness strategies employed by Chinese EFL learners and English native speakers. His sample contained 73 Chinese EFL teenagers and 15 native English speakers. The instrument he employed was a two-part questionnaire. The findings demonstrated that the types of people that were considered of high social status were the same for both of the groups. Also, both of the groups felt the need to be extremely polite when dealing with those of higher social status and thus employed all of the four politeness strategies when addressing them. Moreover, native English speakers appeared more polite because they were less direct. Last but not least, the first language of Chinese EFL learners greatly affected their use of politeness strategies.

A number of research papers examined the specific strategies produced by EFL learners when using English without comparing them to the strategies of native English speakers. For example, first, Tabe and Warda (2018) studied the different specific politeness strategies used by Fulfulde EFL learners (learners who live in some North-West African States) in apologies, requests, and greetings. They recorded a number of conversations and used a (DCT) to gather information. Their results showed excessive use of 'please' alongside some negative politeness strategies in requests. In relation to an apology, there was the frequent use of 'sorry.' Last but not least, the greetings produced were greatly affected by the EFL learners' first language.

A plethora of studies investigated the politeness strategies used in languages other than English. Al-Sobh (2013) studied the politeness strategies used by Jordanian university students in apologies. The tool he employed was a DCT. His results highlighted different strategies, such as offering explanations or repairs and showing responsibility and/or regret.

Only a few studies examined the speech act of disagreement. Most of those studies dealt with specific languages, such as Spanish or Persian. For instance, Bavarsad, Eslami-Rasekh, and Simin (2015) studied the difference between the politeness strategies used by female and male Iranian EFL learners in the speech act of disagreement. The two variables examined were gender and social status. The tool they employed was a (DCT). The results revealed that both genders used more politeness strategies when addressing someone with higher social power than them, but females used a wider variety of politeness strategies than males. Also, even though the participants were able to write appropriate disagreements in terms of grammar and vocabulary, those disagreements lacked social acceptability, for native speakers will not produce such disagreements. To cite an example, one of their participants wrote, "My spouse and I see his future rosy with this major." The researchers predicted that this was due to the teaching methods being insufficient or improper in Iran.

Only two studies that investigated the speech act of disagreement made a comparison between English native speakers and EFL learners. One of these studies was done by Yan (2016). He investigated the differences between the politeness strategies used by undergraduate Chinese EFL learners and American native speakers in disagreements. The two variables examined were social distance and social power. The method used was a (DCT). The results showed that Chinese EFL learners used various strategies based on the degree of social power and distance of the other interlocutor. On the other hand, Americans preferred positive, followed by negative politeness when dealing with all sorts of disagreement situations. In addition, the researcher concluded that cultural differences between America and China made it hard for Chinese EFL learners to form pragmatically appropriate disagreements in English, as their disagreements sounded unnatural and even inappropriate to the situations in which they were arguing. The other study was conducted by Patrawut (2014). He examined the difference in the politeness strategies used by Thai EFL learners and Canadian native speakers in multiple disagreements in class contexts. Two classrooms, one Canadian and one Thai EFL learner, were videotaped for 3 hours every week for two and a half months. Then, only multiple disagreements (the disagreements that went on for more than one turn for the students) were analysed. The results showed that both of those groups started their disagreements with bald on record but then used different politeness strategies. The researcher also found out that

the disagreements of Canadian students were longer in terms of the number of turns the students used to argue. For Example, the students talked, then were given a chance for the teacher to argue, and then they argued again, and so on, for several turns. On the other hand, Thai EFL learners used fewer turns. Furthermore, it was found that the disagreements of Thai students involved less body language compared to that of the Canadian students. The researcher concluded that those phenomena were the result of English not being the mother tongue of Thai EFL learners. He predicted that they would have used more turns and more body language in their arguments if they had disagreed in Thai.

### **2.1 What is Different About the Current Study?**

As seen above, the speech act of disagreement was hardly ever studied. Also, it has never been examined in a comparative work between English native speakers and Bahraini EFL learners. Furthermore, none of the studies that revolved around the speech act of disagreement investigated all the variables of gender, social status, and social distance. Taking into consideration the information illustrated above, the novelty of the current study centred around its concern with Bahraini EFL learners as well as its focus on all three previous variables.

The current study aims to investigate the differences between the politeness strategies used by Bahraini university EFL learners and American native speakers in the speech act of disagreement, with a view to examining the variables of gender, social power, and social distance. This aim is formulated in the following research questions: What are the politeness strategies employed by Bahraini university EFL learners in realizing the speech acts of disagreement, compared with American native speakers? This question entails the following sub-questions:

Is there a difference between the politeness strategies used by both genders in the use of speech acts of disagreement?

Is there a difference between the politeness strategies used by speakers with different social power in the realization of speech acts of disagreement?

Is there a difference between the politeness strategies used by speakers with different social distances in the realization of speech acts of disagreement?

### **3. Methodology**

The sample comprised 41 females and 22 males. All of them were major English students who were currently studying at the University of Bahrain. Their years of study ranged between the fourth year of study and above (e.g., fifth-year students, sixth-year students, or more). The reason for choosing participants who were within the confines of those years was that their level in the English language was expected to be advanced according to the learning outcomes of the course specification forms. Consequently, the EFL learners that took part in this study were expected to be capable of using the English language adequately enough to communicate in comprehensible ways and express a proper disagreement with someone in English. The group of native speakers consisted of 20 participants (10 females and 10 males) who were of different ages. The group was treated as a semi-controlled group, whose answers were considered the standard and to which the EFL learners' answers were compared. The tool used to gather responses was a Discourse

Completion Task (DCT). The task was adopted from an academic article done by Khoirunnisa and Hardjanto (2018). However, some modifications were made by the researcher to fit the needs of this research work. The task contained 12 different situations to which the participants needed to respond. Those situations were similar to open-ended questions in that they allowed the participants to write whatever they wanted. Thus, this DCT was more practical and useful than other DCTs that confined the participants to limited choices, such as a multiple-choice DCT. Moreover, the task had two versions. One was made for EFL learners and another for native English speakers. The two versions were identical, except for the names, which were nativized to make them familiar to the Bahraini culture. For example, in one of the situations, a waitress was called 'Amal' in the version of EFL learners and 'Antonia' in the version of the native speakers. The reason for having different names in each version was that native speakers might not be familiar with Arabic names and their gender. Thus, those names were replaced with English ones. Furthermore, the validity of the task was assessed by two English Language professors in the Master's program at the University of Bahrain. Also, its reliability was confirmed through a small pilot study in which three Bahraini EFL learners and two American native speakers took part.

### **4. Results and Discussion**

Even though all of the situations were required to be answered, some of the participants refrained from disagreeing in particular situations, saying things like 'I won't disagree with him. It's none of my business.' Table '1' below shows the number of responses to each situation.

**Table (1): The Percentage of Participants Who Responded to Each Situation**

Situation Number	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
1	96%	100%	100%	100%
2	100%	100%	100%	100%
3	98%	100%	100%	100%
4	100%	100%	100%	100%
5	98%	100%	100%	100%
6	100%	100%	100%	100%
7	95%	90%	100%	100%
8	86%	95%	100%	100%
9	100%	100%	100%	100%
10	100%	100%	100%	100%
11	100%	100%	100%	100%
12	86%	82%	100%	100%

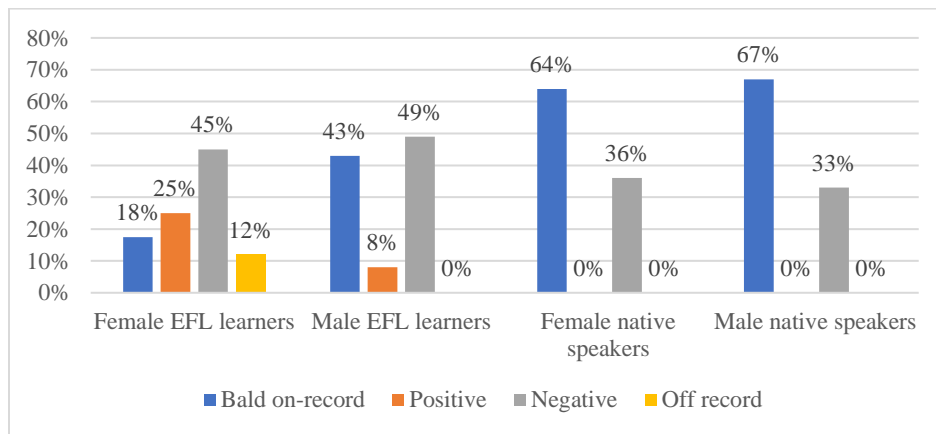
As seen in the table above, all of the participants who did not answer some of the situations belonged to the groups of EFL learners.

**4.1 Results**

In this section, the results of each of the twelve situations are shown below:

**Situation 1: Disagreeing with a Close Male Who has the Same Social Power**

Not all of the participants responded to situation ‘1’; some female EFL learners did not answer. Chart 1’ below shows the percentages of the politeness strategies used when disagreeing with a close male who has the same social power as the participants.



**Chart 1: Disagreeing with a Close Male Who has the Same Social Power as the Participants**

As seen in chart 1’, bald on-record and negative politeness were the most frequently used methods by most of the groups. An example of bald on-record is “*They are ugly...*”. Further, an instance of negative politeness is “*...I think they look bad...*”. Aside from the examples, both of the groups of native speakers used a higher percentage of bald on-record (over 60%) than negative politeness. However, the groups of EFL learners used a lower percentage of bald on-record (less than/ 45%), especially the female group, for it employed the lowest percentage of bald on-record (18%) and thus was the least direct among the four groups. It was also the only group that employed off-record politeness. This might be because Bahraini females must treat their cousins with a bit of formality, as they are considered strangers. As a matter of fact, not only females but both of the EFL learners’ groups can be deemed more polite than native speakers because they used quite a higher number of negative politeness (over 40%) and a lower number of bald on-record (under 45%) than them.

As shown in table ‘2’ below, the individual methods used in negative politeness were expressing a personal opinion, highlighting the fact that each individual has the right to have a personal opinion, asking questions, giving reasons, and hedging. Furthermore,

while EFL learners used a variety of those methods, the techniques native speakers employed were only expressing a personal opinion and hedging. This further supports the idea that EFL learners are more polite.

Table (2) the Specific Methods of Negative Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Close Male Who Has the Same Social Power as the Participants

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Expressing opinion	46%	42%	54%	63%
Hedging	19%	28%	46%	37%
Giving reasons	12%	30%	-	-
Asking questions	8%	-	-	-
Highlighting the right to have a personal opinion	15%	-	-	-

Further, only EFL learners used positive politeness. Also, only female EFL learners employed off-record politeness.

### Situation 2: Disagreeing with a Close Female Who has the Same Social Power

With regard to the participants' eagerness to oppose a close female that has the same social power as them, all of the participants answered the situation as illustrated in table '1'.

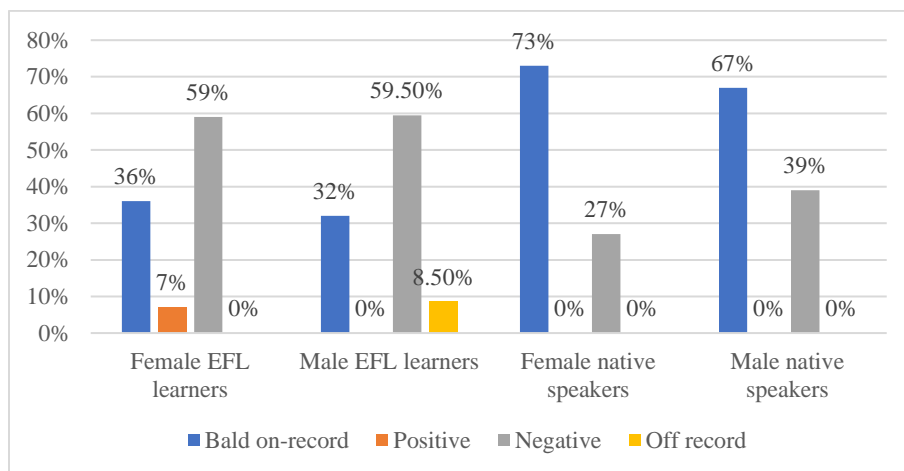


Chart 2: Disagreeing with a Close Female Who has the Same Social Power as the

#### 4.1.1 Participants

The most commonly used strategies in this situation were again both bald on-record and negative politeness, as seen in chart 2'. Further, native speakers were more direct than EFL learners in articulating their disagreements in general, especially females. This demonstrates that EFL learners feel the need to be more polite when dealing with the aforementioned type of female in comparison to native speakers.

Moreover, the strategies within negative politeness are shown in table '3' below. Further, all of the groups focused on informing the other interlocutor that they were just expressing their own personal opinion (around 30%). Furthermore, around the same percentage of the earlier mentioned method, both of the EFL groups utilized the technique of announcing that every person has the right to have his/her own unique opinion on any matter. They also used a variety of hedging devices to reduce the power of their disagreements (around 22%). On the other hand, native speakers, especially females, did not just use fewer percentages (under 40%) of negative politeness in general, but they also hardly ever used hedging devices (around 10%), settling for asking questions as a second technique instead (around 37%).

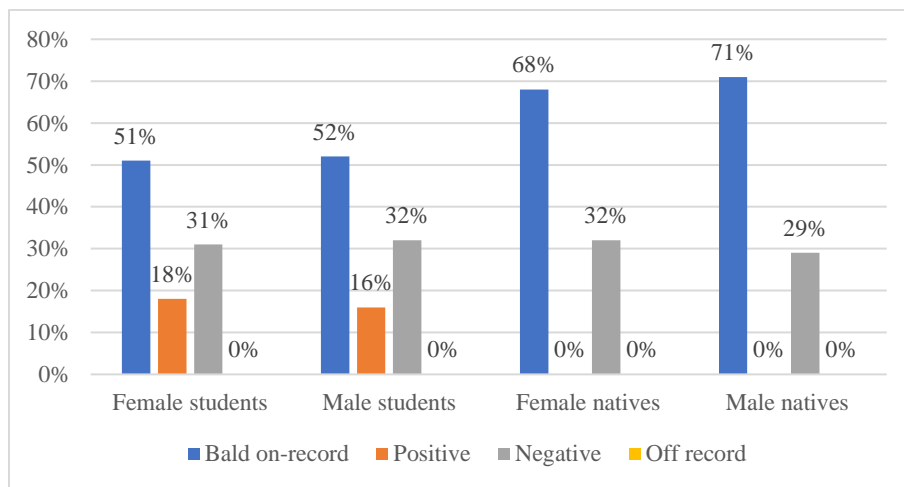
**Table (3): The Specific Methods of Negative Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Close Female Who Has the Same Social Power as the Participants**

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Expressing opinion	31%	38%	57%	38%
Highlighting the right to have an opinion	28%	31%	-	8%
Hedging	24%	19%	10%	11%
Giving reasons	10%	-	-	-
Asking questions	7%	12%	33%	43%

When it comes to positive politeness and bald on-record, the former was applied only by female EFL learners, and the latter was used by male EFL learners. This clearly shows that the EFL learners’ groups were more polite than the native speakers’ groups.

**Situation 3: Disagreeing with a Close Female Who has More Social Power**

All the participants responded to situation ‘3’ appropriately, except for one female EFL learner, who responded to the situation through agreement instead of disagreement. Chart 3’ below shows the percentages of the politeness strategies used in situation ‘3’.



**Chart 3: Disagreeing with a Close Female Who has More Social Power than the Participants**

Chart 3’ above shows that bald on-record and negative politeness were the most commonly applied strategies by all of the groups in disagreeing with their mothers. All of them used a higher percentage of bald on-record (over 50%) than negative politeness (under 35%). However, when divided into two sets of groups, the groups of EFL learners used a smaller number of bald on-record (under 55%).

**Table (4): The Specific Methods of Negative Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Close Female Who Has More Social Power Than the Participants**

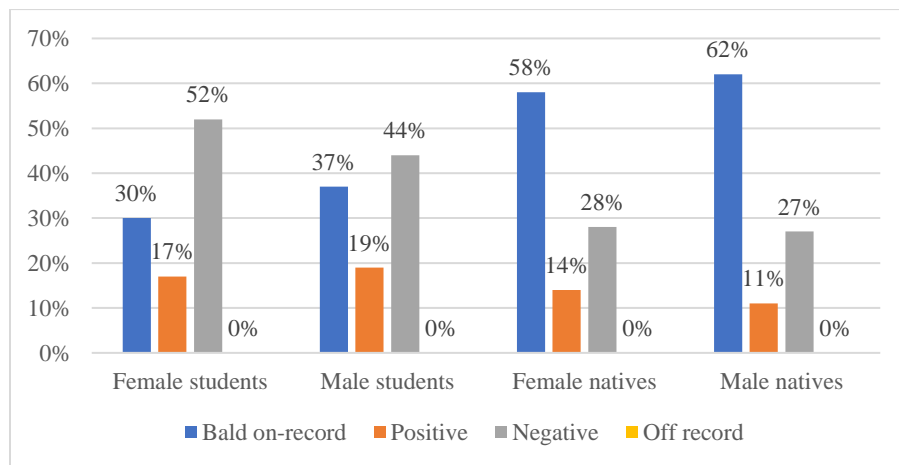
	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Expressing opinion	15%	10%	-	-
Hedging	39%	18%	14%	10%
Giving reasons	23%	72%	73%	90%
Asking questions	23%	-	-	-

As illustrated in table '4' above, native speakers mainly reduced the power of their disagreements by giving reasons (over 70%). They also used a few hedging devices (less than 15%). However, EFL learners, especially females, used a wider variety of techniques.

In relation to positive politeness, it was only applied by the groups of EFL learners. Further, off-record was not used by any of the four groups.

#### **Situation 4: Disagreeing with a Close Male Who has More Social Power**

All the participants responded to situation '4'. Chart 4' below portrays the different politeness methods they used.



**Chart 4: Disagreeing with a Close Male Who has More Social Power than the Participants**

The most commonly applied strategies by all of the groups in arguing with their father were negative politeness and bald on-record. EFL learners used more negative politeness (over 40%) and less bald on-record (under 40%) than native speakers. This means that they were more careful with how they worded their disagreements. Furthermore, when comparing female and male EFL learners, females appear to be slightly more polite, for they used quite a larger number of negative politeness (52%), which amounted to more than half of the sum of the strategies they employed. They also applied a smaller number of bald on-record (30%).

Table '7' below exhibits the various sub-strategies of positive politeness used by the different groups in situation '4'. To cite one example of it, "...No, no, *please*, dad...".

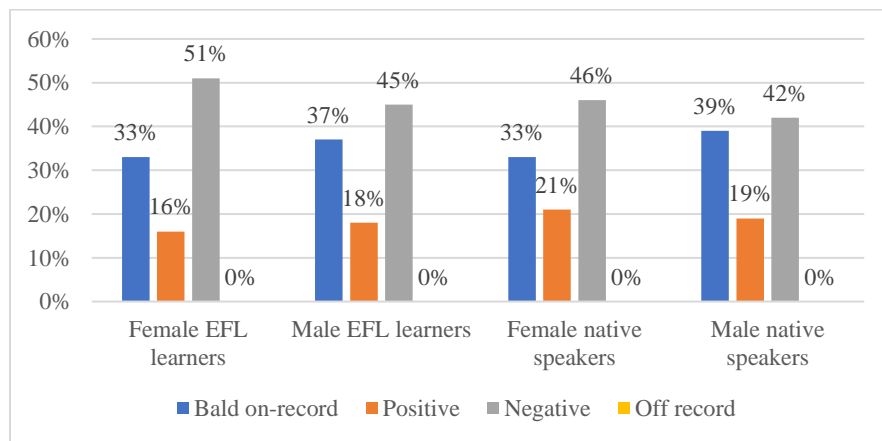
**Table (7): The Specific Methods of Positive Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Close Male Who Has More Social Power Than the Participants**

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Saying please	50%	41%	85%	70%
Highlighting respect	17%	24%	-	-
Showing understanding	33%	35%	-	30%
Being thankful and appreciative	-	-	15%	-

As seen in table '7' above, native speakers used only two methods of positive politeness. EFL learners, on the other hand, used three, which further supports the claim of them being more polite.

**Situation 5: Disagreeing with a Close Female Who has Less Social Power**

All the participants responded to the situation except for one female EFL learner. She responded by saying, "Yeah, she probably does." The way her response was structured gives the impression she was not exactly agreeing with the aforementioned type of female but only playing around with her. This is not unusual, given that she was talking to her little sister. Chart 5' below displays the politeness strategies utilized within situation '5'.



**Chart 5: Disagreeing with a Close Female Who has Less Social Power than the Participants**

In chart 5,' negative politeness was the most frequently used strategy by all of the different groups, followed by bald on-record. Further, when comparing the four groups, it is quite obvious that the percentages of their usage of those two strategies were rather close, as all of the groups used around forty-five percent of negative politeness and around thirty-five percent of bald on-record, but there were still some slight differences. For instance, one conspicuous difference is that female EFL learners employed the largest percentage of negative politeness (51%), which was more than half of the strategies they used. However, given that they utilized the lowest percentage of positive politeness (16%), they cannot be considered the politest among the groups. When it comes to the specific methods all of the groups applied within negative politeness, they were only two: hedging and giving reasons. Table '8' below reveals the percentages of the aforementioned sub-strategies.

**Table (8): The Specific Methods of Negative Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Close Female Who Has Less Social Power Than the Participants**

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Hedging	3%	-	26%	22%
Giving reasons	97%	100%	74%	78%



With regards to the particular methods used under the umbrella of positive politeness, they were highlighting comradery, stressing common experience, showing understanding, and complimenting. To give one example of this strategy, "I know how you feel...". Table '9' below shows the percentages of those methods.

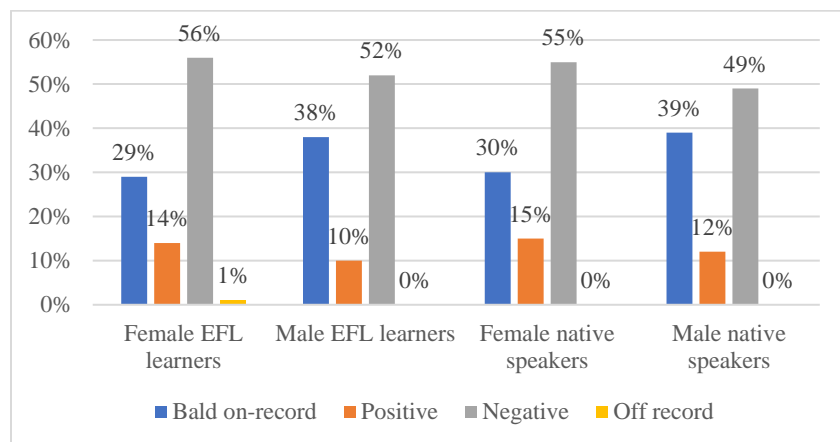
**Table (9): The specific methods of positive politeness used when disagreeing with a close female who has less social power than the participants**

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Highlighting common experience	44%	70%	62%	87%
Showing understanding	22%	22%	38%	13%
Complimenting	12%	8%	-	-
Highlighting comradery	22%	-	-	-

As shown in table '9', the most frequently used one by the four groups was highlighting common experience (over 40%). Further, complimenting was only employed by EFL learners ( 8%). Female EFL learners were the only group to use the method of highlighting comradery, and they employed a significant amount of it (22%).

#### **Situation 6: Disagreeing with a Close Male Who has Less Social Power than the Participants**

All the participants responded to situation '6'. The different politeness strategies they used are manifested in chart '6' below.



**Chart 6: Disagreeing with a Close Male Who has Less Social Power than the Participants**

Based on the results shown in chart 6', negative politeness was the most used strategy by all of the four groups when opposing their little brother's decision. To cite an example of it, "...what if you don't get enough followers? ...". Moreover, bald on-record comes second in terms of the highest applied strategies. An instance of it is "Don't even think of leaving school...". Further, all four groups used extremely close percentages of those two strategies, for they applied around thirty percent of bald on-record and around fifty percent of negative politeness. However, both of the male groups used a slightly higher percentage of baldness on record (over 35%), which means that they were a bit more direct than the female group and, therefore, less polite.

As for the specific methods employed on the spectrum of negative politeness, they were giving reasons, asking questions, expressing one's personal opinion, and hedging, as seen in table '10' below. Further, the most common sub-strategy of negative politeness used was giving reasons (over 30%).

**Table (10): The Specific Methods of Negative Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Close Male Who Has Less Social Power Than the Participants**

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Expressing opinion	-	7%	13%	11%
Hedging	6%	5%	26%	27%
Giving reasons	80%	77%	34%	38%
Asking questions	14%	11%	27%	24%

Positive politeness was used by all of the groups in rather close and modest percentages (around 15%). An instance of this strategy is "I love how inspired you look, but...". The particular methods employed within that strategy are illustrated in table '11' below.

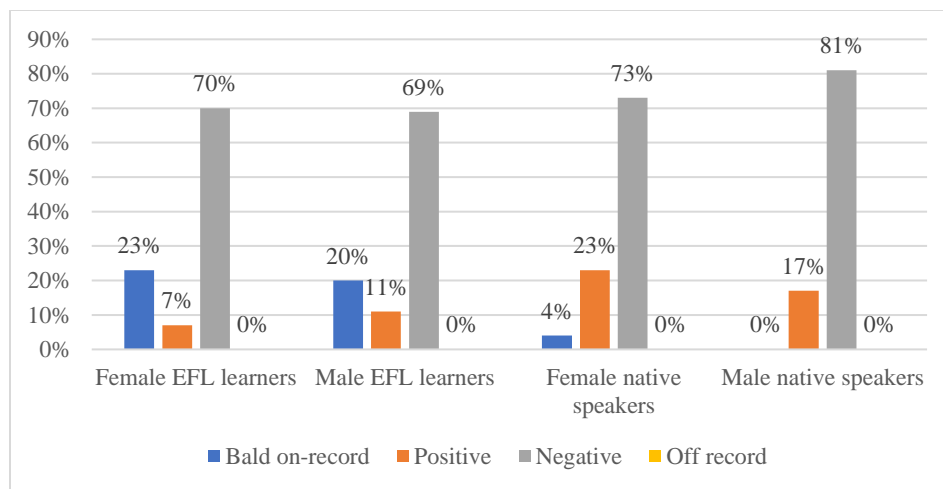
**Table (11): The Specific Methods of Positive Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Close Male Who Has Less Social Power Than the Participants**

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Showing understanding	20%	39%	45%	38%
Complimenting	50%	22%	20%	14%
Giving hope and encouragement	30%	39%	35%	48%

In relation to the off-record strategy, only female EFL learners used it in an extremely low percentage (1%).

**Situation 7: Disagreeing with a Distant Female Who has the Same Social Power as the Participants**

Concerning the participants' willingness to disagree with a distant female with the same social power as them, a few female and male EFL learners refrained from arguing with that type of female. Their reasons were things like "I would not disagree with her; every person has his own opinion and priorities..." This is expected, considering that they are dealing with a stranger. Chart 7' below exhibits the different politeness strategies that were employed in situation 7.'



**Chart 7: Disagreeing with a Distant Female Who has the Same Social Power as the Participants**

As demonstrated in chart '7' above, negative politeness was the most used strategy by all of the different groups when disagreeing with a distant female that has the same social power as them. To give an instance of that strategy, "...having a degree in a certain field will give you a high chance of getting a dream job, a job that a lot of people are dying to get...". Further, even though the utilization percentages of that strategy were so close for the four groups (around 70%), male native speakers applied it at a slightly higher percentage than the rest (81%). Furthermore, regarding the specific methods that were employed under the negative

politeness umbrella, they were giving reasons, being apologetic, expressing personal opinions, hedging, and asking questions, as demonstrated in table '12' below.

**Table (12): The Specific Methods of Negative Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Distant Female Who Has the Same Social Power as The Participants**

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Expressing opinion	3%	7%	18%	21%
Hedging	3%	5%	24%	27%
Giving reasons	85%	83%	32%	21%
Asking questions	3%	5%	26%	31%
Being apologetic	9%	-	-	-

As shown in table '12' above, giving reasons was the most recurring technique for EFL learners (over 80%). As for native speakers, they used more hedging (around 25%), expressing an opinion (around 20%), and asking questions (over 25%) than EFL learners. This means that the latter group was less polite than the former in terms of the methods they employed within the aforementioned strategy. Also, native speakers used a wider range of positive politeness techniques than the aforementioned group, as seen in table '13' below. This further enforces the idea that EFL learners were less polite than native speakers when delivering their disagreements to a distant female with the same social power.

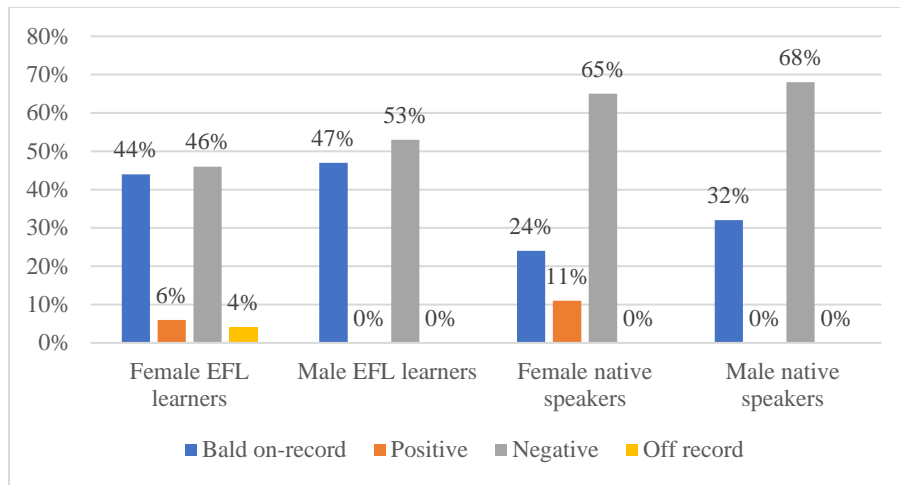
	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Showing understanding	60%	100%	38%	24%
Giving hope and encouragement	40%	-	22%	62%
Adding a sense of humour	-	-	23%	-
Highlighting comradery	-	-	17%	14%

**Table (13): The Specific Methods of Positive Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Distant Female Who Has the Same Social Power as the Participants**

In relation to the off-record strategy, none of the groups used it.

#### **Situation 8: Disagreeing with a Distant Male Who has the Same Social Power as You**

Concerning the participants' eagerness to oppose a distant male with the same social power as them, a few male EFL learners, along with a considerable number of female EFL learners, refused to argue with the aforementioned kind of male. Their justifications for such a refusal were things like 'I don't say anything. It's not my business'. This is understandable, given that they have never met that person before. Chart 8' below displays the politeness strategies that were employed by the participants in situation '8' along with their percentages.



**Chart 8: Disagreeing with a Distant Male Who has the Same Social Power as the Participants**

As shown in chart '8' above, negative politeness was the highest employed strategy by all of the four groups when disagreeing with a distant male that has the same social power as them. To cite one example of it, "...I took some classes with him before, and he is super helpful...". However, the two groups of native speakers used a larger percentage of negative politeness (around 67%) than the EFL learners' groups. Actually, the latter set of groups utilized almost the same percentages of negative politeness and bald on-record (around 45%). This implies that native speakers were more genteel than EFL learners when addressing the earlier mentioned type of male. To have an instance of bald on-record, "No, he is not...". Further, when comparing the two groups of EFL learners, it can be said that females were slightly more polite than males. The reason for that is, unlike males, females used a few positive and off-record politeness techniques (around 5% of each). The specific methods used under negative politeness were giving reasons, expressing a personal opinion, hedging, and asking questions (look at table '14' below).

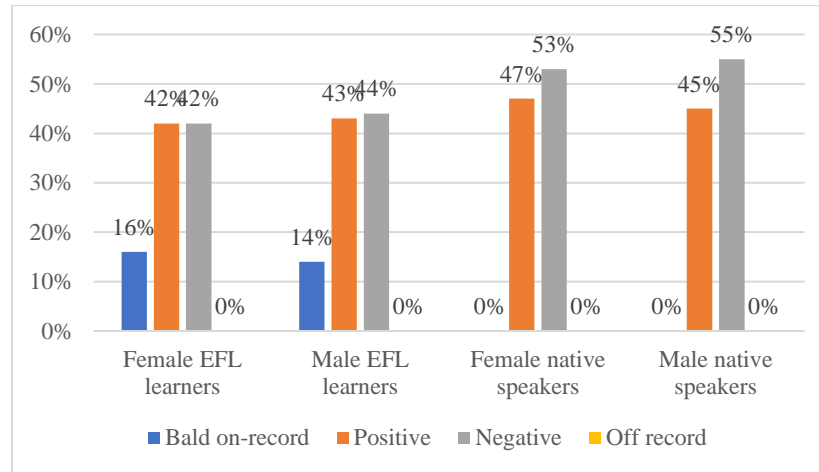
**Table (14): The Specific Methods of Negative Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Distant Male Who Has the Same Social Power as The Participants**

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Expressing personal opinions	3%	-	16%	13%
Hedging	11%	13%	18%	15%
Giving reasons	74%	69%	47%	50%
Asking questions	13%	18%	19%	22%

As manifested in table '14' above, EFL learners focused on the technique of giving reasons (around 70%). They also used a fair amount of asking questions (around 15%) and hedging (around 10%). But when it comes to expressing a personal opinion, only females used it and in a low percentage (3%). In relation to native speakers, they used a huge amount of giving reasons (around 50%), and they also had a larger share of the other three methods than EFL learners (around 15% of expressing personal opinions, around 16% of hedging, and around 20% of asking questions). This fact reinforces the conclusion mentioned above about native speakers being more respectful towards a male they met for the first time. When it comes to off-record politeness, only female EFL learners used this method, and in a very small percentage (4%). However, the idea that it has been used might mean that EFL learners attempted to be a little bit more considerate and tactful when addressing a distant male with a social power similar to theirs.

**Situation 9: Disagreeing with a Distant Female Who has Less Social Power than the Participants**

All the participants responded to situation 9. The particular politeness strategies they used are uncovered in chart '9' below.



**Chart 9: Disagreeing with a Distant Female Who has less Social Power than the Participants**

As shown in chart 9' above, negative and positive politeness was the most used strategy by all of the groups. In fact, native speakers depended exclusively on those two strategies in their disagreements. An example of negative politeness is "...I'm allergic to mushrooms", and an example of positive politeness is "Thank you, but...". Further, all of the groups used similar percentages of those strategies (around 45% of positive politeness and around 48% of negative politeness). Actually, one of the groups, female EFL learners, had exactly the same percentage in both of them (42%). However, negative politeness was still employed slightly more than positive politeness in relation to the other three groups. Also, native speakers used a little bit more negative politeness (more than 50%) than EFL learners (around 43%). This means that the former were more polite than the latter. Relation to the percentages of the specific methods employed under the negative politeness strategy, as shown in table '15', were giving reasons, asking questions, being apologetic, expressing a personal opinion, and hedging.

**Table (15): The Specific Methods of Negative Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Distant Female Who Has Less Social Power Than the Participants**

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Expressing opinion	4%	7%	-	-
Hedging	22%	28%	-	-
Giving reasons	57%	65%	58%	61%
Asking questions	9%	-	42%	39%
Being apologetic	9%	-	-	-

As revealed in table '15', the EFL learners' groups used a wider variety of negative politeness methods than native speakers.

Table '16' below shows the sub-strategies used within positive politeness.

**Table (16): The Specific Methods of Positive Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Distant Female Who Has Less Social Power Than the Participants**

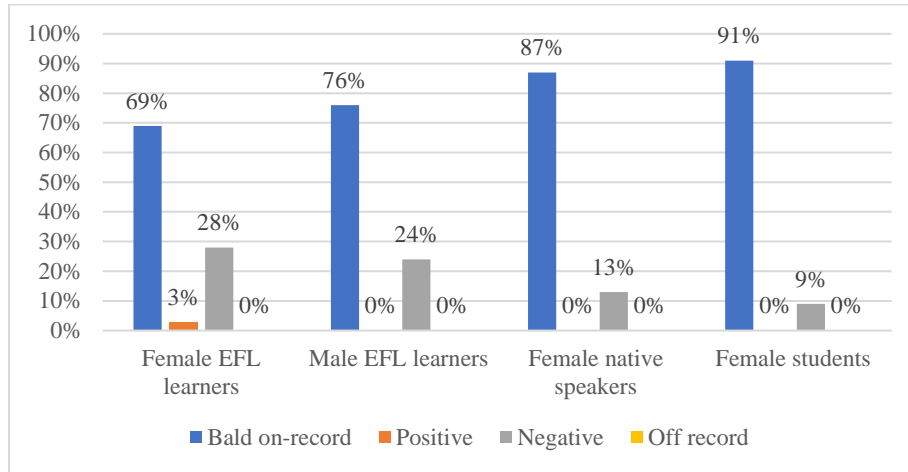
	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Being thankful and appreciative	61%	65%	77%	85%
Complimenting	22%	10%	-	-
Using honorifics	4%	6%	-	-
Greeting	9%	11%	15%	12%
Highlighting comradery	4%	-	-	-

As uncovered in table '16', EFL learners used a wider variety of positive politeness methods. This means that they were trying to be as polite as they could.

Regarding the strategy of bald on-record, only EFL learners used it, and in quite small percentages (around 15%). Further, none of the four groups employed off-record politeness.

**Situation 10: Disagreeing with a Distant Male Who has Less Social Power than the Participants**

All the participants responded to the situation '10'. Chart 10' below displays the politeness strategies utilized and their percentages.



**Chart 10: Disagreeing with a Distant Male Who has Less Social Power than the Participants**

Third, as portrayed in chart '10', bald on-record was the most used strategy by all of the groups when opposing a distant male who has less power than them. However, the two groups of EFL learners employed a slightly lower percentage of this strategy (under 80%) than native speakers (around 90%). To cite one example of it, "No, I'm sure it was not...". They also utilized a larger percentage of negative politeness (around 25%) than native speakers (under 15%). To give an instance of it, "I have just bought it...". This means that they were genteel with how they delivered their disagreements than native speakers. The techniques of negative politeness applied by all of the different groups were giving reasons, apologizing, expressing a personal opinion, and hedging (see table '17' below).

**Table (17): The Specific Methods of Negative Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Distant Male Who Has Less Social Power Than the Participants**

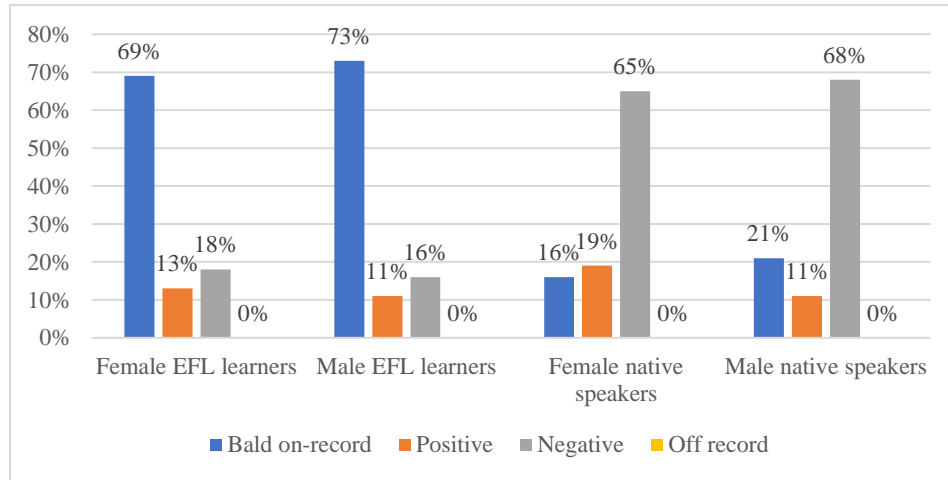
	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Expressing opinion	27%	24%	-	-
Hedging	11%	33%	-	-
Giving reasons	44%	53%	60%	78%
Being apologetic	18%	-	-	-
Asking questions	-	-	30%	22%

As shown in table '17', EFL learners employed a wider variety of negative politeness methods. This means they tried to be more polite.

Further, only female EFL learners employed positive politeness, and in an extremely small percentage (3%). Furthermore, none of the groups employed the strategy of being off-record in their disagreements when dealing with a distant male with less social power than them.

**Situation 11: Disagreeing with a Distant Male Who has More Social Power than the Participants**

All the participants responded to the situation '11'. The politeness strategies used and their percentages are demonstrated in Chart 11' below.



**Chart 11: Disagreeing with a Distant Male Who has More Social Power than the Participants**

Third, regarding the most common strategy employed by the four groups, there were clear distinctions between the two groups of EFL learners and those of native speakers, as seen in chart 11' above. At the same time, female and male EFL learners used over sixty percent of bald on-record and under thirty percent of negative politeness, and female and male native speakers used over sixty-five percent of negative politeness and under twenty-five percent of bald on-record. An example of bald on-record is "No doctor, I know I submitted it..." and an example of negative politeness is "...you *might* have lost it somehow...". Further, when it comes to the specific methods the four groups used within the negative politeness strategy, they were giving reasons, hedging, and apologetic (see table '18').

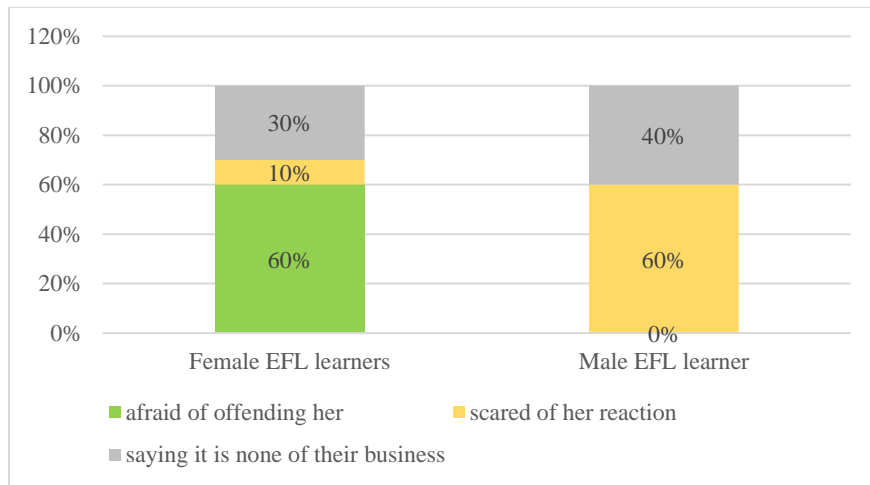
**Table (18): The Specific Methods of Negative Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Distant Male Who Has More Social Power than the Participants**

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Hedging	67%	71%	82%	79%
Giving reasons	28%	29%	18%	21%
Being apologetic	5%	-	-	-

When it comes to positive politeness, all of the groups had close percentages of that strategy (under 20%). The particular methods they employed were saying 'please' and showing appreciation and thankfulness. Further, the latter method was only employed by EFL learners. With regard to the off-record strategy, none of the participants employed it.

**Situation 12: Disagreeing with a distant female who has more social power than the participants**

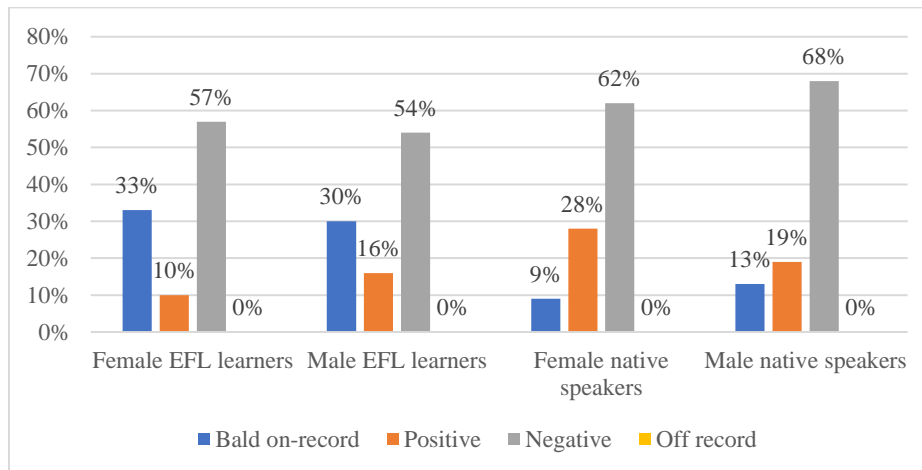
With respect to the participants' willingness to disagree with a distant female with more social power than them, a considerable percentage (around 17%) of female and male EFL learners refrained from opposing that type of person (see table '1' above). This paints a clear picture of how important and powerful they perceived her to be. Further, most of the reasons the two groups mentioned for doing so were of a distinct nature, as seen in chart 12' below.



**Chart 12: The Reasons Why EFL Learners Refused to Disagree with a Distant Female Who has More Social Power than them**

As displayed in Chart 12' above, female EFL learners were mostly (60%) concerned that they would offend the doctor. This can be considered an illustration of their emotional side and how it affects their judgments. By contrast, the vast majority of male EFL learners (60%) were afraid of the doctor's reaction to their disagreement. This can be seen as a demonstration of the domination of their mental side.

Chart 13' below illustrates the various politeness strategies used within situation '12', along with their percentages.



**Chart 13: Disagreeing with a Distant Female Who has More Social Power than the Participants**

Concerning the most employed strategy by all of the groups in disagreeing with their female doctor, it was negative politeness, as demonstrated in chart 13' above. As a matter of fact, over fifty percent of the strategies each of the groups used were within the sphere of the aforementioned strategy. This demonstrates that they deem the female doctor to be of high importance and illustrates their carefulness in formulating their arguments when addressing her. An example of it is, "Are you sure his name is Socrates? ...". Moreover, when it comes to the specific methods employed under the frame of the earlier mentioned strategy, they were hedging, expressing a personal opinion, asking questions, and giving reasons (see table '19' below).



**Table (19): The Specific Methods of Negative Politeness Used When Disagreeing with a Distant Female with More Social Power than the Participants**

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Expressing personal opinion	29%	23%	37%	39%
Hedging	17%	9%	-	-
Giving reasons	21%	22%	-	9%
Asking questions	33%	46%	63%	52%

As shown in table '19', the groups of EFL learners used more negative politeness methods than native speakers.

Regarding the second most used strategy, it differed for the two sets of groups. While the two groups of EFL learners used more bald on-record (around 30%) than the groups of native speakers (less than 15%), the latter used more positive politeness (around 25%) than the former (around 13%). This means native speakers were more polite when addressing their female doctor when examining the situation in general. An example of positive politeness is "Could you *please* remind me of his name so that...", and an example of bald on-record is "No doctor...". Further, concerning the specific methods used under the umbrella of positive politeness, they were saying 'please,' showing understanding, and highlighting respect, as mentioned in table '20'.

**Table (20): The Specific Methods of Positive Politeness Used When Disagreeing with A Distant Female with More Social Power Than the Participants**

	Female EFL Learners	Male EFL Learners	Female Native Speakers	Male Native Speakers
Saying please	91%	100%	85%	93%
Highlighting respect	9%	-	-	-
Showing understanding	-	-	15%	7%

As displayed in table '20', the most used method was saying 'please'(over 80%). Also, highlighting respect was only applied by female EFL learners, which implies that they were trying to be more polite. Off-record politeness was never applied by any of the participants when arguing with their female doctor.

#### 4.2 Discussion

There are some interesting and rather important points within the results of each of the twelve situations that need to be addressed and discussed. In order to make those essential points more conspicuous, the strategies used by the four groups in each of the twelve situations need to be compared.

When comparing all of the important data of the four groups, unusual patterns arise. The reason is that when looking at the first six situations, which required having disagreements with close people (e.g., siblings), EFL learners were generally more polite. On the other hand, when examining the second part of the DCT, which was about arguing with socially distant people, native speakers were more polite. So what are the possible reasons behind this? The only logical explanations for this phenomenon are four: improper/inaccurate use of the English language on the part of EFL learners, some interference from their first language, which is Arabic, some influence from their culture, and the fact that they study and use English in an educational sense only. These conclusions surfaced out of nowhere, for the evidence to support their lies within the answers of the EFL learners themselves. Let us examine the following examples:

1. *Im really delighted by your recommendation, but I was thinking of taking another dish that was on my mind; thanks for your recommendation Im very thankful for it. Maybe next time Ill order it. (overextraction and thus unnatural use of the English language)*
2. *I beg of you, mom, listen to me for once and go left. (it sounds like a conversation in a historical movie and, thus, unnatural use of the English language)*
3. *Let me show you, dear brother, the percentage of the people that said that and actually succeeded, but at the end, this ..... (does not sound like something an English person would say)*

4. *Sister honey, our mother does not just love you but wishes you a good life. She wants you to go up in life. (unnatural use of compliments)*

The italicized parts in the four sentences above clearly demonstrate the lack of ability of EFL learners to use the English language properly. Most of the utterances do not seem natural, for they either show unnecessary excessive politeness (examples 1, 3, and 4) or extreme rigidity (example 2). Looking at these instances gives the impression that EFL learners knew a substantial amount of vocabulary, phrases, and expressions in English, and they did their best to utilize as much of them as possible to show their competence in the language. However, their knowledge of them was incomplete or inaccurate, as they did not know whether or not those phrases were suitable for the situations in which they were. These are but a few examples of the plethora of unusual phrases that were encountered during data analysis. With such inaccuracies in their use of the English language, it is not surprising that EFL learners looked much more polite when arguing with their close ones, for they constructed their responses using the vocabulary and phrases they were familiar with. In other words, they might not have utilized all of the strategies they used if they were talking in a language they were more proficient in, such as Arabic, but their insufficient knowledge of the English language resulted in them employing whatever they knew to argue in a situation. In fact, EFL learners did not just use more politeness strategies, but they also used a wider variety of sub strategies than native speakers in most of the situations.

Further, the aforementioned fact about EFL learners' insufficient use of the English language and its impact on their use of politeness strategies can also explain why they appeared less polite when having arguments with strangers (distant people). The reason is that native speakers tried to be more genteel with strangers by applying more politeness strategies. EFL learners, on the other hand, still used similar percentages of politeness strategies in general, which was why they appeared less polite.

Moreover, EFL learners appearing more polite when addressing their close ones might also be the result of them using English mostly in formal educational situations, as manifested in example '2' above. The language in that sentence seems to be taken from a Shakespearian text.

Furthermore, when comparing the length of the answers of the groups, the vast majority of the arguments of EFL learners were much longer than native speakers, as seen in examples '5' and '6' below. This further supports the claim that them not being able to use the English language sufficiently enough, which was very likely why they used more sentences to make a point.

5. You might be right; however, there's a logical explanation for all of the "flaws" you just mentioned. A movie is a work of art, and art is subjective to the perspective of the viewer and to the artist's vision. You might not get it, but I'm pretty sure that you've missed a couple of hidden details that would've made you feel differently. *(a response written by an EFL learner)*
6. No... the acting is wonderful, and the events are more than logical. *(a response written by a native speaker)*

Further, the fact that the incompetence of EFL learners in the English language hindered their ability to form pragmatically acceptable disagreements in English closely echoes the findings of Bavarsad, Eslami-Rasekh, and Simin (2015), who did not just highlight this issue but went even further to anticipate that it might be the result of a deficient teaching system in Iran.

When it comes to the influence of Arabic on the language used by EFL learners, examples '7' and '8' below, show and explain the impact clearly. However, the only influence that can be clearly seen is within the structure of the EFL learner's language and not in relation to their use of politeness strategies. In order to examine the latter point, the EFL learners' disagreements in English should be compared to their disagreements in Arabic. Since this study did not have responses written in Arabic, the earlier mentioned point could not be examined.

7. If you become a millionaire without knowledge, then you will *lose all of your money within a night*. *(similar to the Arabic saying 'بِتَضِيْعِ فُلُوْسِكِ فِي لَيْلَةٍ')*
8. *Don't do that to me; leave me at rest if you take all of them. I will do worse intentionally, but if you give me some time, I will do my best.* *(similar to the Arabic saying 'لَا تَسْوِي لِي جِدِي، خَلْنِي عَلَى رَاحَتِي')*

In relation to the influence of culture on the responses of EFL learners, situations '1' and '2' can be considered the most obvious examples of that. The reason is that those two situations were about disagreeing with a male and a female cousin. In the Islamic culture, no matter how close your cousin of the opposite sex is, he/she is still considered a stranger whom the interlocutor can get married to. Thus, a level of formality must be maintained when addressing him/her. It is mentioned in the data presented in situation '1' that a few female EFL learners refused to share their opinion with their male cousins. Also, some of them actually

complimented the choice of their male cousin before arguing with him. Furthermore, situation '2' was the only one in which male EFL learners used off-record politeness. They did it because they were addressing their female cousin. Thus, they needed to be more polite. On the other hand, native speakers were way more direct with their cousins. This might be due to the fact that in America, cousins are considered more like siblings. Based on this, culture might have had some influence on the responses of the participants. This finding corresponds with the results of Yan (2016), who demonstrated the clear effect of cultural differences on the formation of disagreements between Chinese EFL learners and American native speakers.

### **Part C: Answering the questions of the research paper**

In this section, the questions of the research study are answered.

- **Question 1: Is there a difference between the politeness strategies used by speakers with different social distances in the realization of speech acts of disagreement?**

As mentioned in the previous section, EFL learners were mostly more polite when addressing people who were close to them than native speakers. On the other hand, native speakers were generally more polite when arguing with strangers. The reasons for these differences are explained in detail in the previous section.

- **Question 2: Is there a difference between the politeness strategies used by both genders in the use of speech acts of disagreement?**

In relation to the effect of gender on the degree of politeness of EFL learners, female EFL learners were generally more polite than males, as they frequently used a wider variety of politeness strategies and techniques. They also employed a slightly higher percentage of negative and positive politeness than males in most of the situations. However, males were specifically more polite with female interlocutors, especially those who were at the same level of social power, regardless of their social distance (situations 2' and 7'). They were also more polite when addressing the distant female with more social power than them (situation '12'). This means that male EFL learners were generally more careful when having an argument with female interlocutors and thus used more politeness strategies to reduce the power of their statements.

Further, the two genders used similar degrees of politeness when addressing their mothers (situation 3'). This might be because they were raised to talk to their mothers in similar ways.

When it comes to native English speakers, females were more polite than males in most situations. Also, the two genders were of equal politeness when arguing with their parents (situations 3' and 4'). This might indicate that they were socially conditioned to address their parents in particular ways.

Moreover, the fact that both of the female groups, EFL learners and native speakers, were more polite than males in general matches the findings of Bavarsad, Eslami-Rasekh, and Simin (2015), whose results clearly stated that female participants were more polite than males.

- **Question 3: Is there a difference between the politeness strategies used by speakers with different social power in the realization of speech acts of disagreement?**

When it comes to female and male EFL learners, gender is more important than social power. That was clearly manifested in the way both of the groups were trying their best to be polite to distant females of more and less social power than them (situations 9' and 12'). On the other hand, they were extremely direct with males of more and less social power than them (situations 10' and 11').

On the other hand, for native speakers, social power was important. This is clearly demonstrated in situations 5' and 6'. Those were the only two situations dealing with close people where native speakers became as polite as EFL learners. This is attributed to the fact that they were addressing their little sisters and brothers, people who have less social power than them. Also, they were more polite with their male doctor in situation '11' even though their grades were at stake, as he possesses more social power than them.

### **5. Conclusion**

This study employed Brown and Levinson's (1978) model of politeness strategies to examine the distinctions between the politeness strategies used by university EFL learners and American native speakers in the speech act of disagreement. The variables it was concerned with were gender, social status, and social distance. Its sample consisted of 63 EFL learners (41 females and 22 males) and 20 native speakers (10 females and 10 males). The EFL learners were currently studying in the English Language and Literature Department at the University of Bahrain. All of them were in their fourth year of study and above; thus, they were supposed to be advanced students who could employ the English language to form proper disagreements. The instrument utilized

to gather information was a DCT that was taken from a previous study conducted by Khoirunnisa and Hardjanto (2018) and modified by the researcher to fit what was needed in this study.

With reference to the findings of this study, first, one of the most important results was that, in comparison to native speakers, EFL learners were generally more polite when addressing people who were close to them (e.g., family members) and less polite when addressing strangers. The reason for that phenomenon was that EFL learners used similar amounts of strategies in most of the situations. As a result, they appeared more polite when native speakers were more direct (i.e., with close people) and less polite when native speakers became more polite (i.e., with distant people). This might be the outcome of several reasons, such as improper utilization of the English language by EFL learners, an influence from their first language, which is Arabic, an impact from their culture, and their learning and employing English in an educational sense most of the time.

The significance and impact of this study on society are demonstrated below. First, the results of this study can easily be used by English language teachers to show EFL learners how their disagreements differ from native speakers and the reasons behind those distinctions. Consequently, EFL learners can focus on those reasons (e.g., using an English expression without knowing if it is suitable in a particular situation) and try to lessen their effects. Second, EFL learners can use the responses of native speakers as a model on which to base their disagreements, thus becoming more nativelike when arguing in English.

### **5.1. Further studies**

One important idea that is recommended for a future research paper is comparing disagreements of Bahraini EFL learners in Bahraini Arabic and then in English. Such a study will determine whether there is an influence from the former on the latter.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

**ORCID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6740-0055>

**Publisher's Note:** All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations or those of the publisher, the editors, and the reviewers.

### **References**

- [1] Afidha, Z. M. (2015). The Politeness Strategies Used by Ron Clark in The Ron Clark Story Movie. *Journal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Fib*, 2(9) (n. pp). Retrieved from <http://jimbastrafib.studentjournal.ub.ac.id/index.php/jimbastrafib/article/view/975>
- [2] Al-Sobh, M. A. (2013). An Analysis of Apology as a Politeness Strategy Expressed by Jordanian University Students. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 3(2), 150-154. Retrieved from [http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol\\_3\\_No\\_2\\_Special\\_Issue\\_January\\_2013/15.pdf](http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_3_No_2_Special_Issue_January_2013/15.pdf)
- [3] Bavarsad, S. S., Eslami-Rasekh, A., & Simin, S. (2015). The Study of Disagreement Strategies to Suggestions Used by Iranian Male and Female Learners. *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, 49, 30–42. <https://doi.org/10.18052/www.scipress.com/ilshs.49.30>
- [4] Brown, P. & Levinson, S. C. (1978). *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [5] Brown, P. & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage (Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics 4)* (Reissue ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- [6] Eshreteh, M. K. & Draweesh, Y. Y. (2018). Applying Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory on Lady Macbeth's Speech in Shakespeare's Macbeth. *Applied Linguistics Research Journal*, 2(1), 27-43. doi:10.14744/alrj.2018.24633
- [7] Farnia, M. & Yazdani, E. (2018) A Cross-cultural Study of Iranian EFL learners and Americans. *Journal of Intercultural Communication* 46, (n.pp). Retrieved from <https://www.immi.se/intercultural/nr46/farnia.html>
- [8] Khoirunnisa, N. Y., & Hardjanto, T. D. (2018). Politeness Strategies of Disagreement by English Native Speaker Students. *Lexicon*, 5(1), 19–27. <https://doi.org/10.22146/lexicon.v5i1.41271>
- [9] Lee, Y. C. (2011). Comparison of Politeness and Acceptability Perceptions of Request Strategies between Chinese Learners of English and Native English Speakers. *Asian Social Science*, 7(8), 21–34. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v7n8p21>
- [10] Noviani, Q. (2014). *A Pragmatic Analysis of Politeness Strategies and Politeness Principles in Uptown Girls* (Unpublished master's thesis). Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia. Retrieved from <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/33516524.pdf>
- [11] Patrawut, C. (2014). A Cross-Cultural Pragmatic Study: Politeness Strategies and Realizations of the Strategies Used to Perform Student-Lecturer Multiple Disagreements by Native Speakers of Thai and English. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 1(1), 147–158. <https://doi.org/10.5901/jesr.2014.v4n1p147>
- [12] Qari, I. (2017). *Politeness Study of Requests and Apologies as Produced by Saudi Hijazi, EFL Learners, and British English University Students* (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis). University of Roehampton Retrieved from <https://pure.roehampton.ac.uk/portal/en/studentTheses/politeness-study-of-requests-and-apologies-as-produced-by-saudi-h>
- [13] Tabe, C. A. & Warda, F. (2018). Politeness in the English of Fulfulde Native Speakers in Maroua. *International Journal of English Language and Linguistics Research*, 6 (3), 11-31. Retrieved from <https://www.eajournals.org/wp-content/uploads/Politeness-in-the-English-of-Fulfulde-Native-Speakers-in-Maroua.pdf>
- [14] Yan, C. (2016). A Contrastive Pragmatic Study of Politeness Strategies in Disagreement between Native Speakers of English and Chinese EFL learners. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 39(2), 231–245. <https://doi.org/10.1515/cjal-2016-0015>