



RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Pragmatic Analysis of Negative Politeness Strategies Employed by Jordanian Professors

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ABSTRACT

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This study focuses on identifying the negative politeness strategies employed by Jordanian professors toward their students based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. It seeks to find the preferred negative politeness strategies used by the professors in their online classes. A qualitative method in the form of observations and memos was utilized to collect the data from the online lectures that were recorded by the professors. The data were collected from ten recorded lectures by five professors. It was found that the professors preferred to use seven negative politeness strategies: Indirect; Questioning; Hedging; Giving Deference; Impersonalizing Speaker and Hearer; Apologizing; and Minimizing Imposition. The Negative politeness strategy was one of the preferred strategies used by the professors because it was used indirectly to save the students' faces during class and because it made them feel closer to their professors. This study recommends future research that investigates other politeness strategies used by the professors in other aspects of communication, such as complements, greetings, and refusals

I. INTRODUCTION

Communication among community members can be employed in a couple of different ways, one being verbal and the other being non-verbal. Both of these ways are important for people to communicate with each other successfully. Moreover, they sometimes use them in parallel based on their culture, interlocutors, relationships, and situations, encoding and decoding their messages through their speech. Indeed, every society has private signals and indicators which make the strategies used by them either polite or impolite. In this study, the researchers seek to look for the negative politeness strategies employed by Jordanian professors in their online lectures to demonstrate the impact of them on their interactions with their students. Furthermore, this study seeks to identify the reasons for using these strategies through their interactions in their online classes. What is considered polite in Jordanian culture could be seen as impolite in another culture. As a result, this research tries to shed light on understanding the negative politeness strategies used by the professors in this study that make their communication with their students so successful.

Many researchers have conducted studies on politeness nowadays, but identifying the reasons for using these strategies by Jordanian professors has not been investigated adequately. The primary reason for this is that the COVID-19 pandemic forced Jordan's Ministry of Higher Education to approve online instruction, which led to the employment of numerous communication approaches between teachers and students, including politeness strategies. Thus, examining this aspect of linguistics can contribute to the

understanding of the preferred negative politeness strategy used by the professors and help identify the reasons for considering them polite. Leech (2014) stated that pragmatics helps us to solve problems that need to be solved, especially once the intention of the speaker is understood by the listener or once the listener misunderstands the message. In pragmatics, the speaker uses implicit utterances that are understood by the listener. The criteria for making pragmatic speech understood are the addresser, the addressee, the context of the utterances, and the goal of an interaction. All of these criteria play an essential role in making pragmatic speech effective and understandable.

This study is significant because its findings will influence societies, students, professors, and researchers on the politeness phenomenon. It will assist researchers in conducting more research on the pragmatics of politeness in classroom interactions which will make the teaching and learning processes more purposeful.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been several theories created to analyze politeness behaviors used by societies all around the world. One example is Grice's Co-Operative Principle (CP) (1975) theory which seeks to identify the behavior of participants in order to achieve an efficient and cooperative conversation. Grice proposes four maxims to analyze politeness: quality, quantity, relevance, and manner. Another theory, and one that is considered one of the more modern politeness theories, was proposed by Lakoff (1973) who added three rules of politeness for managing interpersonal relationships to Grice's CP (p. 298), and they are: (1) Don't impose (formal politeness); (2) Give options (informal politeness); and (3) Make the addressee feel good (intimate politeness). Conversely, Leech (1983) introduced his theory to "minimize the expression of impolite beliefs; maximize the expression of polite beliefs" (1983) which consisted of half a dozen maxims: (1) Tact; (2) Generosity; (3) Approbation; (4) Modesty; (5) Agreement; and (6) Sympathy.

Brown and Levinson's (1987) work was the first study on politeness which proposed the universality theory of politeness. Based on their observation, the linguistic strategies employed by people of different cultural backgrounds are similar. Their theory was built based on the influential work of Goffman (1967) and the idea of "face". Consequently, Brown and Levinson argued that individuals possess two similar "face" wants, namely positive face and negative face. While, "positive face" refers to the wish to "be desirable to at least some others", negative face, on the other hand, is the desire to have one's "actions ... unimpeded by others" (p.62). From the point of view that people from diverse cultural backgrounds have identical face needs, Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987) stated that the majority of human relationships, through the observance of the universal principles, preserve one another's face. In a bid to measure the degree of a "face threatening acts (FTA), Brown and Levinson (1987) proposed adding three social variables to politeness speech. These include social distance (D) between interlocutors, relative power (P) of the participants, and absolute ranking (R) of the impositions embedded in the act within a particular culture. On top of the mentioned variables, seriousness of the FTA is also determined by the interactants. By using this strategy, the interactants then select an appropriate strategy to suit their needs.

In consideration and preservation of others' faces against face threatening acts, the positive and negative politeness strategies are generally redressive in nature. By saving their own or other people's faces, individuals maintain cordial relationships with one another. In this study, the researchers precisely investigated the negative politeness strategies that were performed by the professors toward their students in their online courses. An example of this strategy is "I feel really embarrassed to ask you this, but do you think I can borrow your mobile for a second? I need to ask my mum to come and pick me up. I left my bag at home and I don't have enough money to go back." In this situation, the speaker shows full awareness of the imposition it may cause to the listener and then gives a full explanation to show the urgency of making the call. Negative politeness assumes that the speaker's words may be imposing or intrusive to the addressee; thus, negative politeness strategies are used to preserve the addressee's face in this respect. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987), negative politeness is similar to what people generally term as being polite. Thus, negative politeness strategies include being indirect, questioning, being pessimistic,

minimizing the imposition, showing deference, apologizing, impersonalization, stating the face-threatening act as a general rule, nominalization and incurring a debt.

There have been several studies conducted on politeness employed by Arabic societies in general and on Jordanian society in particular. Arabic is the official language of Jordanian society and there are various dialects of Arabic used within it. Culturally, with regard to how people think, believe and behave. Jordanian society still practices Muslim-Arab values, which drives all aspects of their life. Ali Al-Natour et al. (2015) investigated the core request strategies among Jordanians in an academic setting. He found that Jordanian students used a variety of strategies ranging from the most direct to indirect. The preferred strategy used by them was preparatory.

Apology strategies in Jordanian Arabic were investigated by Banikalef et al. (2015). He revealed that the apology strategies were influenced by social status more than the degree of the severity of the offense or the social distance. Latrech and Alazzawie (2023) researched the use of politeness strategies in teacher-student interaction in the Omani EFL classroom. They found that more face saving acts (FSAs) are performed by teachers than face threatening acts (FTAs). On the contrary, FTAs are used more by young students than they are by adult students.

Algiován (2022) stated that the positive politeness strategy was mostly used by the students in his research; the lecturer mostly utilized bald-on record strategy, and several factors were believed to influence the use of politeness strategies such as power, institutional position, social distance, age, and social culture. Al-Natour, M. M et al. (2024) found that the professors preferred to use eight positive politeness strategies with their students. They claimed that these strategies minimize the distance between the professors and their students, making them feel closer to one another. Fitriyah et al. (2020) found that the teachers in their study used ten maxims in their communication with their students. They are tact, generosity, approbation agreement, obligation, sympathy, modesty, obligation, opinion reticence, and feeling reticence.

Saputra, et al. (2024) investigated students' communication politeness capabilities towards lecturers in an academic environment. They found that most students tend to use less polite language in communication with lecturers, including the use of slang, non-compliance with communication ethics, and lack of use of polite words such as "thank you". Factors such as the living environment and relationships outside campus influence student communication patterns. The modern era of technology and easy access to digital content has also influenced their communication practices.

The linguistic politeness of teachers in classroom interaction was examined by Syting and Gildore (2022). They found that using politeness linguistic expressions helps show how teachers apply the value of the intercultural approach where students are taught to carefully utilize their linguistic forms to signal politeness. Njuki and Ireri (2021) discovered that members of the National Assembly use positive and negative politeness strategies to lessen threats to face.

Moreover, Hamza and Nordin (2023) investigated pragmatic deviation of politeness principle in Trump's political speeches. They revealed that Trump employed maxims to convince people that his opponents were unacceptable and to elect candidates he backed, to influence the crowd to change their views of the world, to ruin his rivals' image, and to show that his time as the US president was incomparable and better than any other US presidents before.

Suyono and Andriyanti (2021) examined negative politeness strategies used in the television show *What Would You Do?* They found that seven negative politeness strategies were used by the participants in their responses to the actors: being indirect, questions, hedges, minimizing the imposition, apologizing, giving difference, being pessimistic, and state the FTA as general rule.

Other researchers such as Al-Ali (2006) examined genre and critical discourse analysis of written wedding invitations in terms of their component patterns. It used two analytic frameworks from discourse: genre analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA). Badarneh (2010) investigated the pragmatic functions of diminutives in colloquial Jordanian Arabic (CJA) inspired by Brown and Levinson's

model of linguistic politeness. El-Shafey (1990) examined politeness in Egyptian Arabic and British English. Furthermore, Atawneh (1991) studied the directives performed by Palestinian Arabic-English bilinguals; Stevens (1993) studied the pragmatics of “No!” using some strategies in English and Arabic; Nelson et al., (2002) investigated cross-cultural pragmatics and strategy use in Egyptian Arabic and American English refusals; Ferguson (1983) conducted research on God-wishes in Syrian Arabic; Davies (2005) on linguistic constraints on codeswitching and codemixing of bilingual Moroccan Arabic-French speakers in Canada. Lastly, in a lexical study, Bahammam (2011) investigated Islam in English.

Although there is a lack of more contextualized support in Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory, there is no study which completely invalidates their conceptualization of politeness. In defense of their theory politeness, Watts (2003) asserts that the theory can “help us to refine and elaborate on their original insights” (p.11). As a result, this study follows Brown and Levinson’s (1987) analytical frameworks to find out the preferred negative politeness strategies used by the professors with their students. Their theory has been used in many studies since it was first introduced, thereby ensuring its validity to sufficiently analyze the data of this study.

III. METHODOLOGY

According to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory, five strategies may be universally used by speakers. First, there is *positive politeness* which involves addressing the positive face of the listener. Second, there is *negative politeness* which involves addressing the negative face of the listener. Third is *bald-one record* which is used to express a message directly to the listener. The fourth one is *off-record* which allows speakers to execute a *face-threatening act* (FTA) indirectly where their utterances can consist of several ways of interpreting the utterances. Finally, the last one is *Do not do FTA* which means the speaker just avoids saying anything and continues doing other things that represent his or her full activities. The following diagram explains the circumstances determining the choice of politeness strategies that are proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 60):

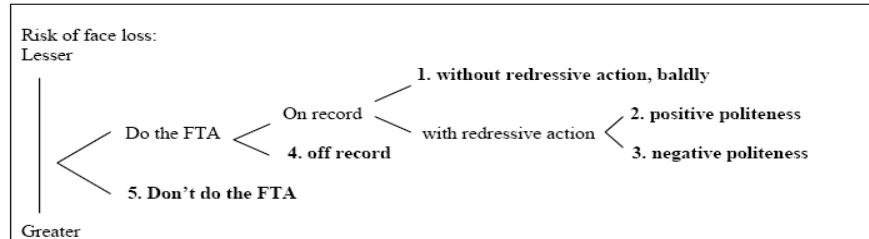


Figure 1 Circumstances Determining Choice of Strategy (from Brown and Levinson, 1987, p.60)

This study analyzed the data based on the above framework to determine the preferred negative politeness strategies utilized by the professors toward their students. It is noteworthy to mention here that this framework has been used in several studies that aim to find out the occurrence of politeness utterances through using the above framework (1987:60).

This study was a qualitative one. It concentrated on the utterances that are produced by the professors of English programs with their students in online lectures at Jerash University. The data was recorded and uploaded to the university platform which facilitates collecting it from the professors. Additionally, a permission letter requesting to gather the data was collected from the university’s Department of English and Translation, and a consent form was signed by the professors. The objectives of the research were addressed to the participants who were also informed that they were not forced to participate in the study and that they could cancel their participation while collecting the data. Each participant was coded in order to maintain the privacy of their interactions using codes for the professors such as P-1, P-2, P-3, and so on.

Two lectures were collected from each professor for a total of ten online lectures collected. Each lecture lasted about 40 minutes. The data was collected from five professors who teach different courses over a

period of one month. Observations and memos were used while reviewing the recorded lectures to identify the positive politeness strategies that were performed by the professors with their students. The politeness strategies were listed while listening to the lectures. Finally, they were classified and then analyzed based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theoretical framework.

IV. Analysis and Findings

This study investigated negative politeness strategies particularly because it is mostly discussed with other politeness strategies in the most recent research. It deals with the professors' politeness meanings with their students in their classes that reflect the Jordanians' social conditions in language use. The impact of the sociopragmatic factors is essential. As Brown and Levinson (1987) explained, they include sociological variables: social distance, social power and rank of imposition. The following table represents the frequent negative politeness strategies by the professors:

TABLE 1: THE PROFESSORS' NEGATIVE POLITENESS STRATEGIES

Negative Politeness Strategies		
No.	Strategy	Frequency
1	Be Indirect	29
2	Questioning	22
3	Hedging	16
4	Giving Deference	20
5	Impersonalize Speaker and Hearer	5
6	Apologizing	10
7	Minimizing Imposition	12

As observed in the analysis of the data, the professors preferred to use more than one negative politeness strategy. Table 1 explains the negative politeness strategies used by the professors which are: Be Indirect, Questioning, Hedging, Giving Deference, Impersonalize Speaker and Hearer, Apologizing, and Minimizing Imposition. Each one of these strategies is clearly explained with examples in the analysis. The most preferred negative politeness strategy out of the seven was Be Indirect. It was used 29 times by the professors. This strategy saved the students' faces and represented a respect for them because the professors wanted them to feel that they were close to one another.

The second highest strategy used was Questioning which appeared 22 times. The third one was Giving Deference which was uttered by the professors 20 times. Hedging was used 16 times and Minimizing Imposition was used 12 times. Next, there was Apologizing which was used ten times and the last negative politeness strategy used by the professors was Impersonalize Speaker and Hearer, used 5 times. All of these negative strategies are considered very polite based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory. To get a more in-depth understanding of the reasons behind using them and why they occurred in the professors' utterances, the researchers analyzed each one of them in detail. Additionally, a variety of examples are mentioned to precisely demonstrate their use. The following sub-sections represent the analysis of using these strategies in detail. Figure 2 describes the percentages of using each strategy by the professors:

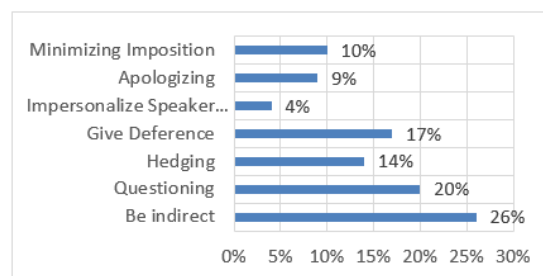


Figure 2: The Percentages of Using Negative Politeness Strategies by the Professors

Be Indirect Strategy

By far the most frequent strategy employed by the professors was the Be Indirect strategy. It was used 26% of the time. In using this strategy, the professors avoided imposing on the students by being indirect in their speeches. Brown and Levinson's (1987) stated that the speakers have to avoid impinging on the listener's negative face by using utterances that are desired by the listeners.

One of the characteristics of negative politeness is seeking to soften the speech by using some words to avoid imposing on the listener. Such examples appeared in the data were like "please", "can", "could", "may", and "would". These words and modals indicate to the listeners that the speaker wants to save their faces. Be indirect is one of the most negative politeness strategies that was used by the professors as obviously exhibited in the following examples. Moreover, the professors hinted at wanting something from the students themselves by using suitable utterances in their interactions to minimize the imposition. They formed their commands into a piece of information to let the students understand the hint and do what they are supposed to do by themselves. The following examples clearly show this:

P-4: "Shall we start the lecture before discussing the issues related to the midterm exam?"

P-10: "Raghad, can you send the lecture link to your classmates through the course's WhatsApp group?"

P-3: "Listen, I will give you a choice for the date of the midterm exam."

P-11: "Speak louder, please!"

P-7: "Can you take a look at the syllabus of this course on the university platform after the lecture? You will then know the dates for studying the topics and the exam dates."

As the above examples indicated, the professors took into consideration the preservation of students' faces against face threatening acts, the negative politeness strategies is generally redressive in nature. By saving their own or other people's faces, individuals maintain cordial relationships with one another by using this strategy. Using the modal verbs made the request more acceptable and polite. Moreover, using the word "please" indicated that that they treated the students as they treated other people in the workplace. They did not let them feel that they treated them as students who they had power over in the classroom. P-4, P-10, and P-7 used modals in their requests which illustrated evading the students from feeling embarrassed. They used this indirect strategy to avoid making the students lose face. Likewise, they wanted the students to feel that they are familiar with the professors while they interact with them.

Questions Strategy

As shown in Table 1, the questioning negative politeness strategy was the second most-used strategy, accounting for 20% of the total negative politeness strategies that were used by the professors. This strategy is used by the professor to give options to the student to accept or reject doing something for their professors. In this case, the professors tried to give freedom of the action by the students. It was also used by the professors to politely avoid disagreements with the students.

P-9: "Is the music suitable for you my students?"

P-5: "Can you mute your mike, Aseel?"

P-7: "Could you please repeat your answer, Ibtihal? Your voice was not clear."

The above examples show that the professors asked the student politely, using modals in forming their questions. In example P-5, the professor could have muted the mike himself; however, he was polite with the student because he wanted her to turn her mike off herself. She got the attention of the professor while the professor continued speaking in the lecture. Thus, he avoided embarrassing her directly. Sometimes the questions were used in a form of joke to get the students' attention, or they were directed towards students who did something inappropriate in class. For example, P-9 said, "Is the music suitable for you my students?" The reason behind him making this joke is that one of the students unknowingly left their mike

open in an unsuitable place while he was attending the lecture. As he wanted to save the student's face, he used this type of question to get the student's attention to his open mike. Furthermore, the professor known as P-7 used a polite request by using modal verbs to minimize FTAs toward the students. The analysis shows that the professors used various types of questions that conveyed polite utterances which helped the students to feel familiar with him and answer his questions without feeling uncomfortable, even if they were unable to answer them.

Hedge Strategy

The Hedge strategy occurred 16 times, accounting for 14% of the total negative politeness strategies. The Hedge strategy is another negative politeness strategy that was used by the professors in order to save the students' faces. In this case, the professors did not want to coerce the students to do something for them. This strategy helped the professors to save their students' faces.

P-3: "I wonder why the students want to postpone the date of the exam. I'm surprised about their request."

P-2: "Although you have answered the question, I think there was part of the answer that was not covered completely. Can you give more explanations?"

P-1: "It seems that you want me to explain the previous topic again. Okay, let us do that."

As noted in the above examples, the Hedge strategy was used to avoid threatening the student's face. For example, P-3 explained that he was surprised about the students' choice but he did not reject their request. His reaction indicated that he did not want the students to lose face once they requested to postpone the exam date. Similarly, P-2 did not reject the student's answer totally; in fact, what the professor did was encourage the student to explain his answer further. Thus the professor motivated the students to speak rather than feel shy giving either partial, full, or even incorrect answers or once they did not answer correctly. This kind of motivation helps students overcome the obstacle of fear and speak freely in class. Moreover, P-1 indicated that he agreed with his students that there should be a revision of the previous topics although they did not request that from him directly. Using these strategies demonstrates the intelligence of the professors in making the students feel comfortable around him.

Minimize Imposition Strategy

This strategy was used by the professors 12 times, accounting for 10% of the total strategies used. The professors used this strategy to minimize the imposition on the student's faces. This strategy was illustrated in various examples, including:

P-4: "Before we start our lecture today, I would like to discuss some issues related to the subjects of the midterm exam with you."

P-8: "Do not hesitate to ask me questions about the immediate constituents if you do not understand them."

P-10: "I noted that many students are shy when it comes to participating in class. Feel free to commit mistakes. As you are foreign language speakers, you do not have knowledge about everything in the English language."

P-7: "Some of the students have not given me a note about their absence. I encourage them to give me a note once they have an emergency case. Do not hesitate to call me before you decide your absence."

The professors in the preceding examples handled the students graciously in order to avoid the students feeling hesitant to ask for or receive something from them. Examples P-8, P-7, and P-10 demonstrate the professor's flexibility and understanding of the causes behind their students' hesitation. Indeed, they utilized various expressions to demonstrate their gentle speech with the students, such as "feel free to commit mistakes...", "do not hesitate to ask me questions...", and "do not hesitate to call me". Utilizing these phrases minimized the imposition that the student indirectly had once they interacted with their professors. Like example P-4, the rest of the examples sought to decrease the students' fear about the exam by discussing with them some issues related to the exam. Therefore, using this strategy was considered very polite by the

students, allowing them to continue their successful process of teaching and learning. This result improved group work and student participation in class during the lectures.

Giving Deference Strategy

This strategy occurred 17 times and accounted for 17% of the total strategies used. The professors used this strategy to show their students that they appreciated certain actions the students performed during class. Brown and Levinson (1987) said that this strategy is like paying the listener a positive face. It makes the listener feel appreciated by the speaker. The professors used some honorific words and phrases to show their gratitude, allowing the students to feel on the same level of power as their professors. Look at the following examples:

P-6: "Your answer is very good. Thank you."

P-5: "Thank you, Ahmad, for sending the WhatsApp link to your classmate."

P-9: "You are an excellent student, Yousef. You got the highest mark on the exam."

P-3: "I would appreciate it if all students entered the class on time at the beginning of the lecture."

P-2: "Thank you, Ayah, for raising your hand before speaking."

The professors followed different techniques to employ this strategy. They sometimes showed their appreciation to one of the students for a good action that he or she did, and at other times, they showed their appreciation to all of their students for following his instructions in the lecture. Using this strategy helped satisfy the listener's want to be noticed and praised. This kind of appreciation made the student feel honored and commendable which saved face and encouraged them to delve in the course progressively.

Saying to the students "thank you, your answer is very good", "you are an excellent student Yousef", and "I would appreciate if all students..." motivated the students to participate in the class and feel proud of themselves. These kinds of strategies are very effective in class because they encourage the rest of the students in the class to also feel appreciated, thus giving them the self-motivation to participate in class.

F. Impersonalize Speaker and Hearer Strategy

The most rarely-used strategy was the Impersonalize Speaker and Hearer Strategy. It was used only five times. In this strategy, the professors tried to address one of the students, instead of pointing out that one particular student, they spoke to all of the students. Doing this sends a general message, but is intended to be sent to either one or a group of students. To avoid embarrassing a student or group of students directly is a sign of respect by the professor. In this case, the professors sometimes used pronouns like "we" or "some of" or general announcements to make the target student or group of students understand that he was talking about him, her, or them indirectly. Moreover, the professors made all of their students assume that they were the intended ones spoken about in their messages. The following examples exhibit this strategy:

P-3: "Some students attend class very late. I hope they do not do that again."

P-1: "I would like to request the students who answer without permission to be patient."

P-4: "Many students claimed that I have to postpone the lecture to another time; I am not the one who can do that without getting the permission from the head of the department."

P-6: "Some students contacted me by WhatsApp at night; I hope all of you contact me before 5 o'clock p.m."

This strategy was very polite because the professors avoided embarrassing the students although they knew who they wanted to receive the message. The professors preferred to speak generally in order to save face. In example P-3, the professor knew who came to class late, and he sent them an indirect message so that they would avoid doing that again. In example P-1, the professor warned the students who were answering questions before they were being called on to answer it without singling out any specific student

to save face. Similarly, P-4 did not want to discuss the issue of postponing the exam with the students who requested the postponement because there were other students who did not want to postpone it. He answered them indirectly and explained that the postponement of the exam was not his decision to make. Lastly, in the last exercise, P-6 was obviously bothered by the fact that students were calling him at all hours of the night and gave them a gentle reminder that calling him after 5 p.m. was unacceptable.

The above examples show that the professors kept saving their students faces by using the negative strategy of the Impersonalize Speaker and Hearer Strategy which saved face for the students. Using this strategy, the professor meant to avoid threatening the students' faces. This strategy, therefore, addressed the students indirectly by making the face threatening act look like a general message to all of them rather than just one student.

Apology Strategy

This strategy reduces the threat to face for the listener by offering an apology. It was used by the professors ten times, accounting for 9% of all the strategies used. Generally, this strategy was used by speakers to represent that they requested forgiveness and admitting the impingement. This study showed that the professors used it to reduce the FTA when they wanted to explain an idea, to request silence, to ask specific questions, and so on. The following examples demonstrate their usage for this strategy:

P-2: "Sorry Ahmad, let me ask a question for the students."

P-5: "Excuse me, Ola. Can you repeat your answer for the students?"

P-9: "I would like to apologize for my late presence. The platform was down."

P-10: "Sorry, guys! I do not like it when anyone talks with their classmate while I am speaking."

All the above examples showed that the professor apologized to the students in specific situations. P-2, for instance, indicated that he wanted to elaborate on an idea related to the topic that Ahmad was reading aloud about. P-5 observed that the students did not understand an answer given by another student, Ola. As a result, he apologized to Ola before asking her to repeat the answer. Example P-9 showed that a problem with the platform was the reason for him arriving late to the online class; as a result, he first apologized, and then mentioned the reason for his lateness. In the last example, P-10 minimized the threat to face by apologizing first, then letting the students know they were doing something he did not appreciate. As a result, he clearly indicated that he did not want to attack the face of those students who were talking to each other.

Apologizing is a polite strategy that is used by the speaker to avoid face threatening. Likewise, the professors preferred to use it in their classes to save the students' face even if they committed unacceptable behaviors. Although there was a distance between them and their students, they preferred to preserve the students' face by using the apology terms and phrases. They did not like to be offensive or use terms that scared the student in order to make the process of teaching and learning more comfortable.

V. DISCUSSION

The findings showed that, out of ten negative politeness strategies, the professors used seven of them as they appeared in the data. It was obvious that the professors progressively wanted to save the students faces by using negative politeness strategies in their online lectures. By adopting the negative strategy in their classes, the professors intentionally wanted to reduce the threat. Moreover, they desired to shorten the distance between them and their students. In terms of power, the data showed that there was an asymmetrical power relationship between the professors and their students. This power is intentionally understood by the students because they study in the same university that the professors work in. But the professors minimized this feeling with the students by using the negative politeness strategy to reduce this feeling, make the lectures interesting for the students, and motivate them to interact freely with the professor and their classmates in the lectures.

Although the level of imposition was quite clear in the class interaction as the professor obviously managed the discussion in the lectures and gave the students permission to speak, the professors at the same time tried to reduce this imposition by using some words and phrases in their negative strategies to minimize impositions. Examples for these words and phrases like “please”, “excuse me”, “I would like to apologize”, “could”, “may” and so on.

The negative politeness strategy is one of the politeness strategies Brown and Levinson’s (1987) mentioned in their theory which is used to preserve the negative face of listeners. Therefore, the professors used seven negative strategies in their speeches to the students. This leads to the conclusion that Arab culture has a major impact on the interactions between the professors and their students. The Arab culture is indirect which encourages them to be accepted by others. The frequent usage of this strategy shows that impact although there was a distance between the interlocutors. In most of the examples presented in the analysis, the professors avoided threatening the students’ faces and make the environment of teaching more enjoyable and attractive for the students. It is said in the Jordanian culture that if the students like the professors, they will like to study the course and take it seriously. This quote could show an essential reason for using the negative politeness strategies that were used by the professors. They had a main goal which was attracting the students to them, to be a model for them in their life, and to teach them how to be polite in the future with their students.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the negative politeness strategies that are used by Jordanian professors toward their students in online lectures of Jerash University. As the data indicated, the professors preferred to use various negative politeness strategies. They used seven negative politeness strategies which represented that they were very polite with their students. The strategies used were Indirect; Questioning; Hedging; Giving Deference; Impersonalizing Speaker and Hearer; Apologizing; and Minimizing Imposition. The reason the professors used these negative politeness strategies was to maintain students’ freedom of action and, thus, give them a certain autonomy in managing their own learning process. For further research on politeness, the researcher suggests that studies be conducted on other politeness strategies such as positive politeness, bald on record, and off- record strategies. This study focused on the realization of negative politeness strategies in online lecture interaction; it is expected that further research can analyze the use of politeness in other settings and cultures. They can compare the results of this study with the performance of these strategies by professors from other cultures.

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