

# 'Self-lowering' and 'other-raising' strategies as reflected in Persian political discourse: Implications for ELT

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## Abstract

As two common types of strategies in the Persian politeness system, 'self-lowering' and 'other-raising' forms may be broadly considered as stylistic devices which reflect the speakers' humility, on one hand, and their deference to their interlocutors, on the other hand. By analyzing some formal political speeches made by a number of former members of Iranian Parliament when they discussing the impeachment of the then-minister of the Iranian 'Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance' and the subsequent statements made by him to defend his policies, this paper has identified, categorized, and elaborated on the linguistic forms (i.e., pronominals and verbal expressions, in this case) reflecting each of the above-mentioned politeness strategies in the realm of formal political discourse. The frequency of occurrence of the exponents bearing on each of the two strategies in question has also been computed. Finally, as such politeness strategies seem to be language-specific, i.e., unique to the Persian language, the probable implications for the field of TEFL also have been discussed.

**Key Words:** Theory of politeness, Politeness strategies, Compliments, Self-lowering/Other-raising, Forms of address, Political discourse, ELT

## 1. Introduction

Language is not merely a means by which people communicate messages, thoughts, and feelings. Language speakers do more than these things through language. That is, in addition to such functions, they use language in subtle ways to define their relationships to one another, to identify themselves as members of a particular community, and to establish the setting and speech event in which they are communicating with their interlocutors (Fasold, 1990).

Within the area of sociolinguistics, language merely considered as social phenomena. Thus, the nature and types of social relationships prevalent among the members of any community are reflected, to a great extent, in their language. The way we think of the people around us; whether we like or dislike them; whether we consider them as intimates or strangers, friends or foes, superiors or inferiors; whether they deserve to be addressed in a polite manner or not, and similar attitudes towards others are manifested in the type of language that we employ in our interactions with others.

## 2. Theory of politeness

Although politeness has been studied by several scholars in a variety of cultures for many years, it has been Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory which has been in

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widespread use throughout the world. Their theory was originally introduced in the 1970s and pivoting around the concept “face,” already proposed by Ervin Goffman. The theory accounts for politesse, the expression of the speaker’s intention to mitigate face threats intrinsically imposed by some speech acts, labeled as face-threatening acts (FTAs), on the listener (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

### 3. Politeness strategies

In context of mutual vulnerability between speaker and hearer, one strategy which can be employed by speaker in order to avoid face threatening acts, is politeness strategies which is characterized as positive and negative strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

### 4. Compliments

Hobbs (2003, p. 249) designated a compliment as “a speech act which explicitly or implicitly bestows credit upon the addressee for some possession, skill, characteristic, or the like, that is positively evaluated by the speaker and addressee.”

### 5. Self-lowering and Other-raising

Two stylistic variations in Persian morphology become extremely important social tools that form the core of *ta`arof* in Persian language introduced by William Beeman (1986). He opined that the alternative self-lowering and other-raising which are reflected through lexical substitution in both the verbal and the pronominal system indicated as the marking relative status in speech and formed the component of both formality and politeness practiced by all competent speakers of the aforementioned languages (Ball, 2010).

### 6. Forms of address

The term ‘address’ denotes a speaker’s linguistic reference to his/her interlocutor, and speaking of form of address includes words and phrases that are used for addressing (Schnell, 2007, p. 20). Also, cultural norms and values reflected within the address systems and investigate social attitudes, social structures and group ideology (Lee-Wong, 1994).

### 6. Political Discourse

Van Dijk (1997) defined Political discourse as a field of Critical Discourse which focuses on political forums such as debates, speeches and hearings and identified by its *actors* or *authors*, vs *politicians*. Indeed, the vast bulk of studies of political discourse is about the text and talk of professional politicians or political institutions, such as president and prime ministers and other members of government, parliament or political parties, both at the local, national and international levels (Van Dijk, 1997, p. 15, as cited in Dunmire, 2012).

### 7. Review of related literature

Within the morphological system of Persian language, Beeman (1986) asserted that stylistic variation occurs primarily in two distinct areas: the verbal system of language and the pronominal system.

Moreover, he postulated that variation in style within the morphological system is subject not to criteria of grammaticality but rather that of appropriateness and subsequently choosing the correct variant is vital for social communication strategies.

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Beeman (1986) maintains that pronouns and verbs in Persian are oriented in the directions which reflect basic functions and orientations in social relations. The first orientation of pronouns and verbal expressions, according to him, reflects relationships of *inequality*, i.e., relationships of an *asymmetrical* nature, and it is the site where the politeness strategies of "self-lowering" and "other-raising" enter the scene. The second orientation, Beeman elaborates, is concerned with relationships of *equality*, i.e., with relationships of a *symmetrical* nature, where both sides use parallel linguistic forms. That is, both parties will use the same neutral pronouns and verbs that are commonly employed by speakers in social situations where they address their equals. These forms tend to become less refined and less formal as intimacy between the two parties' increases.

What the present researchers concerned with in this paper, however, is related to the social situations where a relationship of asymmetrical nature between the two parties of a verbal communication exists. In such verbal interactions, as it was earlier mentioned, people are likely to use certain pronouns and verbal expressions to indicate their politeness in two ways:

Firstly, when referring to themselves, Persian speakers tend to place themselves in an inferior position vis-à-vis their addressee(s), by getting the lower hand, by assuming an inferior social status for themselves, by means of certain pronouns and verbal expressions that are specifically used merely in situations where people stand in relationships of an asymmetrical nature with one another. Thus, as an instance of "self-lowering", in referring to oneself, one may use the term *bāndeh* (literally meaning *your slave*) instead of the neutral pronoun *māen* (=I),

Secondly, when addressing somebody of a higher social position, for the sake of politeness, Persian speakers, conversely, tend to elevate their addressee(s) to a superior position, by using special pronouns and verbal expressions which are not usually used under normal circumstances. For instance, as an example of "other-raising", one may substitute the verb *fārmudāen* (literally meaning *to command*) for the neutral verb *goftāen* (=say); or instead of using the pronoun *to* (that is, the neutral pronoun for second person singular, *you*) or *shoma* (namely, the pronoun for either the second person singular or the second person plural, *you*), the speaker may address the interlocutor as *hāzrāet-e alee* (literally, *your majesty*). Therefore, one notices that the process of applying the aforementioned strategies involves a series of stylistic devices which allow specific "marked" verbs and pronominals (cf. Crystal, 1992) instead of the neutral or "unmarked" verbs and pronouns which are normally used under symmetrical social situations.

Furthermore, with regard to "self-lowering" versus "other-raising", two points seem to be worth mentioning. First, while in nearly all languages pronouns have traditionally been considered as substitutes for nouns, in Persian, as Keshavarz (1988) reminds us, at times it makes sense to substitute a noun for a pronoun. Therefore, the set of terms with which speakers may designate themselves includes not only personal pronouns, but also self-lowering terms such as *bāndeh* and *hāqir* (approximately, *your humble servant*). Keshavarz (1988, P. 566) employs the term *pronominal system* to refer to both pronouns and their noun phrase substitutes.

Second, as it was mentioned, Beeman interprets the process of self-lowering versus other-raising merely in terms of the relationships of inequality; however, as a matter of fact, the researchers should remind the readers that the use of such terms is by no means restricted to relationships of inequality; in some cases, they are just employed as part of the Persian politeness system merely to designate the speaker's modesty, humility, or respect for their

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interlocutors. Indeed, Keshavarz (1988, P. 566) restricts the whole politeness system of Persian to these two processes: that is, self-lowering and other-raising.

Furthermore, Beeman (1988, P. 142) identifies self-lowering and other-raising forms as one of the two principal stylistic devices that constitute the core of *tæ'arof* (offering, compliment) as the prime representation of polite language and compliments in Persian. The other stylistic device that serves the same role, along with self-lowering and other-raising forms, is the application of plural versus singular pronouns in reference to singular individuals addressed or referred to by speakers, for example, the use of *shoma* (=plural you) to address a second singular person.

Although there have been a number of studies investigate politeness strategies in Persian language which have made their own generalizations (Cameron, 2001; Arundale, 2006; Haugh, 2007), few studies have been carried out on politeness and politeness strategies in Persian context by native speakers (Eslamirasekh, 1992; Yarmohammadi, 1992; Salmani Nodoushan, 2008; Keshavarz, 1988). The present study, therefore, was designed to provide a springboard for employing stylistic device in political context of Iran and its subsequent function of asymmetrical nature of Persian lexical substitution within the framework of Beeman's (1989) Self-lowering and Other-raising.

## 8. Methodology

### 8.1. Procedure of data collection

In order to carry out the present study, the data have been drawn from Mohajerani's *Estizah* [the impeachment] (1999), a book containing all parliamentary debates and speeches in the *Majlis* (i.e., Iranian Parliament) on the impeachment session of the then Minister of Islamic Guidance, Ataollah Mohajerani.

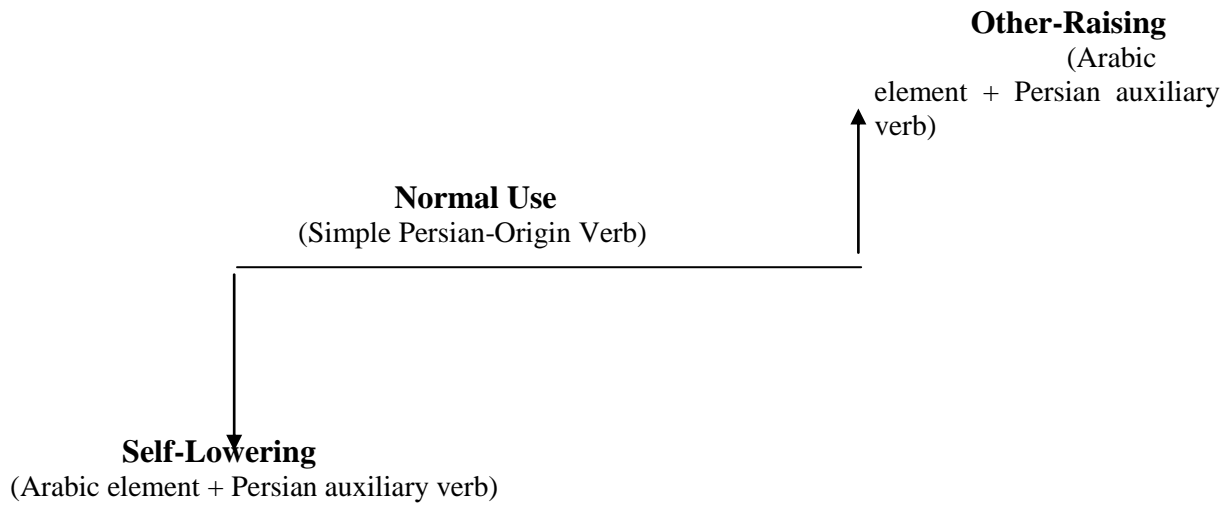
### 8.2. Procedure of data analysis

The present study aimed at identifying, categorizing, and analyzing stylistic devices (i.e. pronominal and verbal expressions in this case) as politeness strategies reflected in Mohajerani's impeachment (the former member of Iranian Parliament) in the realm of political discourse analysis. As related to descriptive and inferential analysis, the book *Estizah* was examined and the frequency of occurrences of each exponent was calculated and in order not to be swamped by irrelevant material Sándrová (2014), the present study employed Beeman's (1989) framework for the analysis of Self-lowering and Other-raising as stylistic variation of politeness strategies.

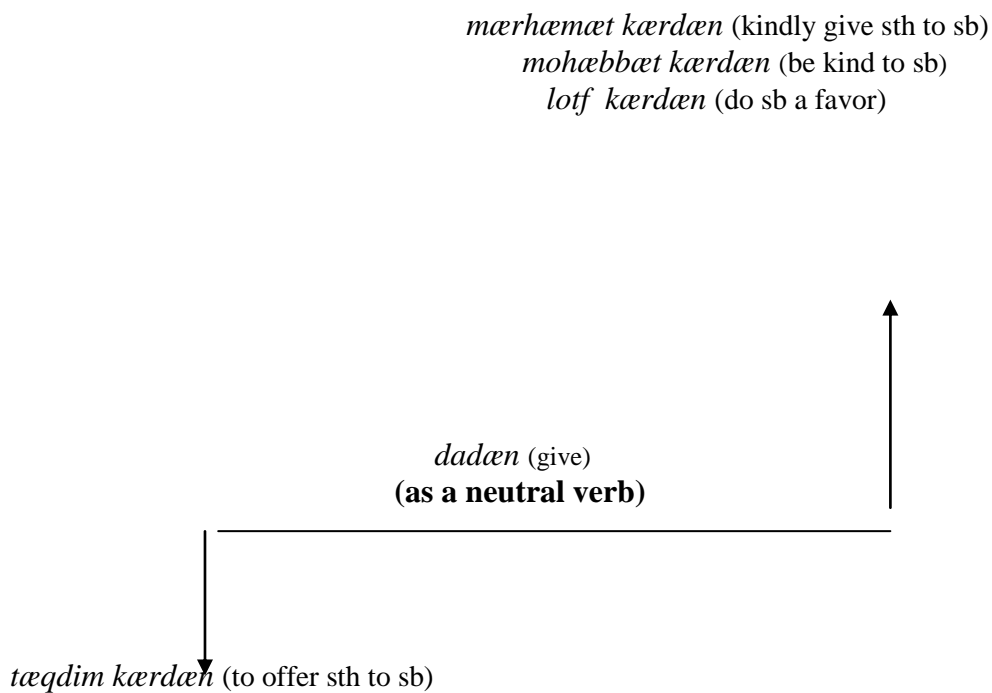
## 9. Results

### 9.1. Self-Lowering/Other-Raising Reflected by Verbal Substitutions

It was mentioned that self-lowering and other-raising are reflected through lexical substitutions in both verbal and pronominal systems. Within the verbal system, most of this substitution is accomplished through the use of varying compound verbs or verbal expressions. The structural pattern of substitution typically consists of a simple verb of Persian origin alternating with a compound verb, consisting itself of an element often of Arabic origin, plus a simple auxiliary verb of Persian origin (Beeman, 1986). Thus, for example, the neutral verb *dadæn* (=to give) may be replaced by the forms *tæqdim kærðan* (=literally, to offer) and *mærhæmæt kærðæn* (=literally, to do a favor) to serve the roles of self-lowering and other-raising, respectively. The representation of this process may be portrayed as in Figures 1 and 2.



*Figure 1.* Self-lowering and other-raising in Persian lexical substitution  
(Partly adapted from Beeman, 1986, p. 143)



*Figure 2.* lexical substitution for the Persian verb *dadæn* (to give) (adapted from Beeman 1986, p. 143)

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It should be further mentioned that the verbal expression substitutions also literally mean the same as the simple neutral verb and perform the same linguistic function as the neutral verb does. Other examples include *mærqum færmodæn* (مرفوم فرمودن) for *neveshtæn* (نوشتن), *telavæt færmodæn* (تلاوت فرمودن) for *xandæn* (خواندن), *meyl færmodæn* (میل فرمودن) for *xordæn* (خوردن), and so on (see Appendix 1).

In this part, the frequency of references to verbal expressions is presented and the percentages out of the total number of references are calculated.

Table 1.

*The Frequency of Occurrences of Self-lowering/Other-raising Reflected by Verbal Expression*

	Verbal expression	Frequency	Overall Frequency	Percentage			
<i>Self-lowering</i>	( <i>ma nemifahmidim</i> )	1	25	73.52			
	( <i>natavan hastam</i> )						
	( <i>kam savad hastam</i> )	1					
	( <i>dar in mozee nistam</i> )	1					
	( <i>modaei nistam</i> )	3					
	( <i>vazifeye khod midanam</i> )	2					
	( <i>mojaz nistam</i> )						
	( <i>khodam ra shayesteh nemibinam</i> )	1					
	( <i>khedmat gozari konam</i> )	1					
	( <i>Eradat dalam</i> )	5					
	( <i>ehtram gheel hastam</i> )	1					
	( <i>edeai nadaram</i> )	1					
	( <i>dar khedmateshan arz kardam</i> )	1					
	( <i>telavat kardand</i> )	5					
		1					
	<i>Other-raising</i>	( <i>marhamat kardand</i> )			1	9	26.47
		( <i>sohbat farmoodand</i> )			1		
( <i>tashrif biavarid</i> )		1					
( <i>ba tajlil yadmikonam</i> )		1					
( <i>haiat dashtand</i> )							
( <i>tavajoh</i> )		1					
( <i>befarmaeed</i> )		1					

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<i>(amr kardan)</i>	
<i>(mifarmayand)</i>	1
<i>(morajee)</i>	1
<i>befarmaeed)</i>	1
<i>(ejazeh dadand)</i>	

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As is shown in Table 1, 73.52% of verbal expressions concerns references to Self-lowering, and 26.47% of verbal expressions concern references to Other-raising.

Some examples containing verbal expressions indicating self-lowering or other-raising follow.

(1) Mr. Hosseini (one of the MPs):

a. ... *mætaledi ra be estehzar-e shærif-e tan mi ræsanæm.*

(... I have the honor to submit some issues.)

b. ... *fehrest-e nomouneh-ee ra taqdim-e nomayændægan-e mohtæræm mi konæm.*

(... I offer the Honorable MPs a sample list of items.)

(2) Dr. Mohajerani:

a. *mæn hæmin moured ra xedmæt-e riasæt-e jomhourî 'ærz kærðæm.*

(I had the honor to tell the President about this case.)

b. ... *jenab-e aqa-ye Nateq dær mosahebeh-ee ke dashtænd færmoudeh boudænd ...*

(The Honorable Mr. Nateq in his interview said ...)

c. *vaqti riasæt-e jomhourî-e mohtæræm-e ma mætræh færmoudænd ke ...*

(When the Honorable President proposed that ...)

d. ... *ishan (Ayætullah Emami Xansari) ayeh-e hæstom-e soureh-e maedeh ra bæra-ye ma telavæt kærðænd.*

(He [i.e., Ayætullah Emami Xansari] were kind enough to recite the 8<sup>th</sup> verse of the Maedeh Soureh (a Quranic chapter) to us.)

e. *jenab-e 'ali [Mr. Hosseini] mostæhzær bashid bæ'zi æz mævaredi ke dær soureh-ye Yousof hæst ægær dær yek romani yek nevisændeh-ee tærjomeh-ye an ebaræt ra biaværæd ma labod ejazeh næxahim dad.*

(Your Excellency [i.e., Mr. Hosseini] are kind enough to acknowledge that if it happens that a novelist includes some of the issues in the Joseph Soureh (the Quranic chapter on Joseph), we wouldn't allow such material to be included.)

## 9.2. Self-Lowering/Other-Raising Reflected by Pronominal Substitutions

Similar stylistic variation is observed within the pronominal system of Persian. As it was earlier mentioned, people use self-lowering forms to show their modesty and to observe politeness. The reason is that self-abasement has traditionally been considered a good moral virtue in Iranian culture (Keshavarz, 1988). Thus, normally when talking to a superior in terms of age, status, or knowledge, they may use one of the self-lowering forms of address with reference to themselves. Keshavarz (1988) mentions that “it is interesting that even superiors sometimes refer to themselves by the polite forms in order to show their modesty” (P. 567). Beeman (1986) and also Keshavarz (1988) mention *bænde* (بنده), *hæqir* (حقیر),

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*moxles* (مخلص) *chaker* (چاکر) and *injaneb* (ای-بنجاب) as the most common forms of self-lowering terms used for self-reference and prevalent in the pronominal system of Persian. (For a comparison between the frequency of occurrence of *bāndeh* (بنده) and *mān* (من), for instance, see Appendix 3.)

However, there are restrictions for the usage of these forms in terms of age and gender. That is, they are not used by females and children. The use of them by children usually evokes ridicule. But, according to Keshavarz (1988), there is a feminine counterpart for *bāndeh*, that is, *kāniz* (کنیز), which is occasionally uttered by elderly women in rural and working-class communities. He adds that *bāndeh* is the most common term used in the speech of adult male members of the Iranian society regardless of their social status.

Having a stronger connotation of politeness and humility, *hæqir* and *moxles* are less widely-used self-lowering forms and their usage is not restricted to a specific class (Keshavarz, 1988).

According to Keshavarz (1988), *chaker* is the least common form of self-lowering, the usage of which being associated with the uneducated and working-class people.

It is worth mentioning that in normal familiar situations where the participants have an intimate relationship and are of equal social status and age, the usage of self-lowering forms is rare and the neutral form *mān* (= I) is preferred to be used for self-reference.

With regard to second and third person singular, it is possible in Persian to use either a singular or a plural pronoun, that is, *to* (تو) [= you, singular] or *shoma* (شما)[lit., you, pl.] to refer to a second person singular, and *u* (او) [=he/she] or *ishan* (ایشان)[lit., they] with reference to a third person singular. The conventions for usage of each form, however, differ. Generally speaking, *shoma* and *ishan* are considered as other-raising forms which are utilized for politeness reasons in contemporary Persian. With regard to this same issue, Beeman (1986, P. 147) points out that “alternative form distinction in single second person reference is found in many of the world’s languages and in virtually all Indo-European languages.” With respect to the use of *to* (تو) and *shoma* (شما), as two existing pronouns for the second person singular, Keshavarz (1988, P. 570) holds that Persian is similar to many other Indo-European languages in this respect.

In this part, the frequency of references to pronominal expressions is presented and the percentages out of the total number of references are calculated.

Table 2.

*The Frequency of Occurrences of Self-lowering/Other-raising Reflected by Pronominal*

	Verbal expression	Frequency	Overall Frequency	Percentage
<i>Self-lowering</i>	<i>(mazellat khedmat)</i>	1	24	18.05
	<i>bande</i>	50		
<i>Other-raising</i>	<i>(hazrate</i>	5	109	81.95
	<i>hojatoleslam</i>			
	<i>valmoslemin)</i>			
	<i>jenab aghaye</i>	29		
	<i>haj akhund</i>	1		
	<i>eishan</i>	21		

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<i>baradaran</i>	
<i>mokhalef</i>	11
<i>raees mohtarem</i>	1
<i>harate ayatollah</i>	10
<i>jenab aalii</i>	5
<i>khaharn</i>	1
<i>(mahzare magham</i>	
<i>moazzam rahbari)</i>	7
<i>hazrat emam</i>	
<i>molaye bozrgvar</i>	
<i>Zeinab kobra</i>	3
<i>nazare bozorgan</i>	1
<i>mokhalefe</i>	1
<i>mohtaram</i>	1
<i>(raeese mohtaram</i>	
<i>jomhoori)</i>	1
<i>jenab aghaye Dr</i>	
<i>marhoom</i>	4
	1
	6

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As is shown in Table 2, 18.05% of pronominal substitution concerns references to Self-lowering, and 81.95% of pronominal substitutions concerns references to Other-raising.

It is true that in contemporary Persian, as Keshavarz also maintains, it is generally considered rude to use *to* (تو) with reference to second-person singular nonintimates; however, neither Keshavarz nor Beeman points out that, historically speaking, we are almost certain that the plural form *shoma*, which is now considered the most appropriate form to address a second person singular as a “base” reference, was not common to be used for a single person in the past usage of Persian. Its application to second-person singular seems to go as far back as to the era when the *Qajars* ruled Iran, and possibly under the influence of familiarity with Indo-European languages such as French and English (Yarmohammadi, personal communication).

Anyway, in today’s Persian, the pronoun *to* (تو) is no longer used in formal situations, nor is it used in situations where personal knowledge about other people is minimal. According to Beeman (1986), the pronoun *to* (تو) is used to indicate intimacy or *sæmimiæt* (صمیمیت) among the participants, but parents and teachers usually warn children and pupils against the use of it, particularly when talking to older people, and recommend that they use *shoma* instead, which is considered its polite counterpart (Keshavarz, 1988). Keshavarz (1988, P. 570) enumerates the following settings to which the usage of *to* (تو) is restricted:

1. In a very intimate relationship between close friends and colleagues, peers, classmates, and spouses.

2. In a familial situation, it is common practice for parents to address their children by *to* (تو) until they are about fifteen., though some pedantic educated middle-class parents have been observed to address their children by the polite pronoun *shoma* (شما) right from an early

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age.

3. One of the interesting uses of *to* (تو) is in one's soliloquizing addressed to oneself, and also in one's prayers to God in solitude.

4. And finally, when one wishes to show disrespect or anger to another person, *to* (تو) is deliberately used in an insulted manner.

In situations other than these, the polite "singular" pronoun *shoma* (شما) is used instead of the familiar *to* (تو) as a normal practice of other-raising.

Moreover, there exist other terms in Persian which can be used as other-raising forms to address a second person singular, among which Keshavarz mentions *jenab-e 'ali* (عالی جناب) ('your excellency') as the most common of such words. He elaborates, "this is widely used by and to adult members of the society regardless of their social status" (1988, P. 569). The usage of this pronominal is gender-specific; it is not used to address a female. Instead, people use its feminine equivalent *særkar* (سرکار), accompanied with the title *xanom* (خانم) [=Mrs., or Ms.]. However, according to Keshavarz, there has been a decline in the use of this pronominal since the Revolution.

Another other-raising term which is used with reference to the addressee is *hæzræt-e 'ali* (حضرت عالی) ('Your Excellency') which, Keshavarz believes, expresses greater respect than *jenab-e 'ali* (جناب عالی), but its usage is, in other respects, similar to that of *jenab-e 'ali*. However, the major difference that was found in the present study between the two terms was that of the frequency of occurrence in formal speech events. In other words, the frequency of occurrence of *jenab-e ali* was found to be far greater than *hæzræt-e 'ali* in the formal situation of parliamentary speeches.

Of course, in addition to the above-mentioned pronominals, one can mention other common forms of other-raising such as *aqā* (آقا), *xanom* (خانم), *haj aqā* (آقا حاج), *haj xanom* (خانم حاج), *jenab* (جناب), *ostad* (استاد), and so on, which can be used by themselves or in combination with other titles (e.g., *doktor* (دکتر) [Doctor]) + last name to address a second person in different situations, e.g., *aqā-ye doktor Parsi*.

Moreover, while interacting with different classes of common people nowadays, one can notice an increasing tendency among them to replace the time-honored honorifics *aqā* and *xanom* with *haj aqā* (with reference to an adult male), *haj xanom* (to refer to an adult female), or *ostad* (in reference to an adult male).

As to the singular/plural distinction with reference to a third person singular, when one wishes to indicate respect or regard towards another person, normally the singular referent *u* (او) [= he, she] is replaced with the plural pronoun *ishan* to observe other-raising. Beeman (1986) identifies *ishan* --when used to designate a third person singular-- as a form which "has come to be used almost exclusively to indicate relative status in verbal interaction" (P. 149).

Concerning the difference of use between *u* and *ishan*, Keshavarz makes the following distinction:

In a speech event, when speakers are equal in age and social status to the person referred to, or with whom they have an intimate relationship, they use the familiar pronoun *u*. When referring to a superior, they are expected to use the polite

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pronoun *ishan*. Unlike *to* (تو), *u* is not considered rude ... (P. 573)

Nonetheless, with regard to the historical trace of the plural pronoun *ishan*, nowadays applied to refer to a third person singular to convey respect or politeness, one can make an argument similar to that made concerning *shoma* replacing *to* (تو). In other words, such a usage of the pronoun *ishan* might be traced back in the Persian prose to the last two centuries at most, and probably not farther back (Yarmohammadi, personal communication).

One more point which deserves to be made with regard to the other-raising issue concerns the existence of another seemingly new trend in formal speech events. An honorific term such as *aqa* or *xanom*, or sometimes a series of honorifics such as *jenab-e aqa-ye* (جناب آقاي), *hæzræt-e hojjætoleslam vælmoslemin* (والمسلمين الاسلام حجت حضرت), *særkar-e xanom* (خانم سرکار), etc., followed by a last name, may be followed by a verb with a plural ending to indicate politeness or other-raising. Moreover, it is common practice in the discourse of today's Iranian mass media (radio, television, newspapers, etc.) to use a plural verb with reference to the religious leader of the country and a few other theologians of high religious status, e.g., *mæqam-e ræhbæri færmudænd...* (The leader, his excellency, said that...).

#### 10. Examples of Other-Raising Forms in Political Discourse

Instances of other-raising forms in political discourse and similar formal speech events are numerous. Some examples taken from parliamentary speeches follow:

1. ... æwvælin sokhænran jenab-e aqa-ye Taqavi hæstænd.
2. jenab-e aqa-ye Doctor Mohajerani be porsesh ha-ye moxtælef pasox gofteh ænd.
3. hæzræt-e hojjætoleslam væl moslemin jenab-e aqa-ye Neyyeri nomayændeh-e ræis-e qoveh-e qæzaiyeh ... hæstænd.
4. shoma jenab-e aqa-ye vazir! be chehreh-ye in gooneh nevisændeh gan læbxænd mi zænid.
5. aqa-ye væzir dær akhærin mosahebeh bæra-ye æksæriyæt-e majles xæt o neshan keshideh ænd.
6. hæzræt-e Ayætullah-e shahid Beheshti væqti ke ræis-e qoveh-e qæzaiyeh boudænd ...

#### 11. A Note on "Self-Raising"

The last point the researchers are going merely to touch briefly here and to leave unresolved, in one sense, is concerned with a process which apparently stands in a position opposite to self-lowering. That is, contrary to self-lowering, in such a process, a speaker in reference to himself/herself usually employs a plural first person pronoun followed by a verb with a plural ending (see examples that follow). It seems that the person who employs such forms makes use of a kind of, so to speak, "self-raising" process; nevertheless, contrary to their surface structure, it is not true to interpret such forms in terms of arrogance, pride, or superiority on the part of the speaker. Rather, a more profound examination of the meaning

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conveyed through such structures indicates that they can be interpreted in terms of self-lowering as well. The reason is that the speaker uttering such linguistic forms attempts to diffuse authority, power, and self-centeredness, particularly if he/she is somehow associated with an authoritative office, institute, or position. Some examples of this type of usage in Persian follow.

1. Tāqævi (one of the MPs): ke **ma** mætlæbi ra bi dæilil næ gofteh **bashim**.
2. Hosseini (another MP): **ma** ba ishan **doustim** væ 'æz in mosahebeh væ goft-o-gou negæran væ pærishan xater **shodim**.
3. Mohajerani: goftim **ma** bæra-ye hæfteh-ye digær 'amadeh **hæstim**.
4. Mohajerani: **ma** be onvan-e væzir-e færhæng væ eršad-e eslami **næ mi tævanim** qæbl 'æz næshr ... jolow giri **konim**.
5. Nateq-e Nouri (Majlis speaker): [**ma**] 'ærz **mi konim** ...  
(literally: We have the honor to say ...)
6. Mohajerani: 'æslæn mæ'ni-ye tæsaħol væ tæsamoh ke **ma goftim** in nist.
7. Nateq-e Nouri (Majlis speaker): bæna shodeh ke **ma** 'æz yek 'ebaræt jolow tæræsh ra **be xanim**.
8. Mohajerani: moshkeli ke **ma** be onvan-e væzir-e færhæng væ eršad **darim**; bær **ma** væhy næ mi shævæd!

## 12. Discussion and Conclusion

Concerning Politeness strategies, two stylistic variations namely Self-lowering and Other-raising introduced by William O. Beeman are very important as social tools which oriented basic functions of social relations through reflecting Pronominal and verbal expressions.

According to Beeman (1986), in such verbal interaction, every competent of Persian community by choosing certain linguistic forms create asymmetrical or symmetrical relationships which may lead to either intimacy or distance among them.

But why does it happen?

Persian speakers tend to place themselves in an inferior position to their addressee(s) specially in an asymmetrical relationship by means of certain Pronominal or verbal expressions like (*Bande*) as an instance of Self-lowering.

Accordingly, in an Other-raising instance, they try to elevate their addressee(s) which is sign of respect and aiming at mitigating face threats by using certain linguistic forms. Thus, we can conclude that EFL teachers, with the help of using Other-raising linguistic forms like (*Eishan, Tavajoh Befarmaeyd*) can save students' face in the class and create an air of intimacy and reverence which may provide the ground for sharing interests and breeding sense of cooperation among students.

Moreover, EFL teachers by employing Self-lowering linguistic forms can diminish their impositions and offer help and create chattier and more contemplative environments for

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students therefore they can have more supportive and adorable role in the classrooms.

To wrap up, the present study carried out based on the framework of Beeman (1989) and emphasizes the importance of cross-linguistic studies of speech acts and politeness strategies. Such study not only examines existing theories about Pronominal and verbal expression concerning Persian language but also offers insights into (mis)communication by revealing differences of social values among its speakers with different walks of life.

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**Appendix 1:** some other-raising verbal expressions

تشریف آوردن

استدلال فرمودن

دقت فرمودن

فرمودن (= گفتن ؛ مطرح کردن)

معنا فرمودن

امضاء فرمودن

تشریف داشتن (= بودن ؛ ماندن)

تشریف بردن (= رفتن ؛ حرکت کردن)

فرمودن (= آغاز سخن کردن ؛ ادامه دادن)

شرف حضور پیدا کردن

صحبت فرمودن

ملاحظه فرمودن

مراعات فرمودن

مقرر فرمودن

مطرح فرمودن

مستحضر بودن

استفاده فرمودن

اعلام فرمودن

در محضر کسی بودن

شروع فرمودن

حضور داشتن

عنایت فرمودن

**Appendix 2:** some self-lowering verbal expressions

عرض کردن

به استحضار(شریف کسی رساندن

تقديم کردن

تصدیع کردن = ) وقت کسی را گرفتن(

خدمت کسی بودن / رفتن / عرض کردن

خدمت کسی رسیدن / گفتن

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