The Use of Politeness Strategies in Humans New York s' Selected Short Stories

Asst. Lect. Yasmeen Adil Abbas
Exact jurisdiction (Pragmatics)
Directorate General of Education Anbar
Email: missyasmeen323@gmail.com

م.م. ياسمين عادل عباس

وزارة التربية- مديريه تربية الانبار

Abstract

This paper explores politeness strategies employed in selected short stories shared on the Facebook page Humans of New York and how these strategies contribute to this platform's emotional significance and community engagement. In current digital storytelling platforms, such as the stories and fostering connections between narrators and followers. Politeness strategies are mainly important in these narratives. Nevertheless, there is a gap in understanding how these strategies are function in user-generated digital narratives to maintain face and social cohesion. Therefore, this study severs to investigate how these linguistic choices affect the portrayal of characters, the emotional influence of the stories, and the overall engagement of the followers, by analyzing the interplay between politeness and narrative structure. The importance of studying on HONY page contributes empirical findings on the nature and functions of language in digital social media platform, advancing understanding of digital communication and its social associations. This aligns with current linguistic scholarship that views social media as a major new domain for pragmatic research .The data is analyzed according to Brown and Levinson's theory about the politeness strategies. This study conducted qualitative content analysis of a purposive sample of short stories posted on this page. Ten posted stories were selected based on their narrative richness and variety in content. Each story's textual element was analyzed for instances of politeness strategies, recognizing forms and their roles within the narrative context. The results of the analysis reveal that the role of politeness strategies in Humans of New York assists not only in enhancing social connections but also in making a safe space for sharing personal narratives without any restrictions, containing positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record ,and bald on –record reflecting the delicate ways in which characters manage face-threatening acts and create relational harmony in their storytelling. Eventually, this approach contributes significantly to valuable insights into the complexities of human communication in contemporary digital spaces . This paper adds to the literature on social media platforms like on Facebook. For future research can explore comparative analyses with extra digital storytelling platforms, further revealing the interplay between language, narrative, and community engagement.**Key words: politeness strategies, storytelling platforms, and contemporary digital spaces.**

الخلاصة

تكشف هذه الدراسة الاكاديمية استراتيجيات المجاملة في القصص المنشورة على صفحة القيس بوك(بشر نيويورك) ، ودورها في على تعزيز الروابط الاجتماعية والتأثير العاطفي. تعتمد على نظرية براون وليفنسون لتحليل كيف تُستخدم هذه الاستراتيجيات للحفاظ على الوجه وتحقيق الانسجام في السرد الرقمي. تم اختيار عشر قصص متنوعة لتحليل مظاهر المجاملة داخل السياق السردي. أظهرت النتائج أن المجاملة تسهم في خلق مساحة آمنة للتعبير الشخصي وتعزز التفاعل المجتمعي .للبحوث المستقبلية تستطيع ان تستكشف تحليلات مقارنة باستخدام منصات سرد القصص الرقمية الإضافية، مما يكشف بشكل أعمق عن التفاعل بين اللغة والسرد والمشاركة المجتمعية .الكلمات المفتاحية :استراتيجيات المجاملة، ومنصات السرد القصصي، والفضاءات الرقمي المعاصر.

1.Introduction

According to many authors' perspectives, politeness is considered an important aspect of communication since it is focused on the suitable use of language to show conveying feelings thoughts, intentions, and desires to other people .Therefore, building an interpersonal relationships requires behaving in a way that is publically correct and follows the rules for what the society or one's culture reflects as suitable or polite (Yule 1998:286). According to pragmatic perspective, Thomas (1995:150) states that politeness is essentially about what the addresser writes, and how the addressee reacts. consequently this shows that politeness is regarded as a pragmatic concept, whereas Holmes (2001:2680) concerns it as a sociolinguistic phenomenon. According to pragmatic theory, politeness involves trying to satisfy somebody else's face or public self-image. Brown and Levinson (1987) recognized the four types of politeness strategies: bald on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record . Nowadays, Facebook users have been engaged in online communication on various media platforms and pages, for instance pages on the social network website Facebook. Stories convey messages of communication and indicate degrees of politeness. Then with access to this kind of information, researcher has recently been paying attention to these short stories, as they represent a rich source for research in different fields of study, especially pragmatics (Bader & Obeidat, 2020; Hameed, 2020). The Facebook page *Humans of New York* has expanded global recognition for its convincing short stories that capture the lives, triumphs, and struggles of persons in New York City. These stories, often convoyed by photographs are shared with followers, making a unique space for connection and empathy given the public and interactive nature of the platform, politeness plays a vital role in shaping how these narratives are constructed and received. This paper discovers the politeness strategies employed in selected *HONY* stories, focusing on how narrators navigate face-threatening acts and continue positive relationships with their audience.

2.Research Objectives

This study aims at:

a. To identify of the politeness strategies used.

b. To analysis the communicative functions.

c. To assess their impact on audience engagement.

3.Research Questions

The current study is essential to find the answers to the following questions:

1- What politeness strategies are frequently used by narrators on *HONY?*

2- What are the communicative functions of these strategies in selected short stories?

4.Literature Review

Brown and Levinson (1987), who conducted politeness theory that remains one of the most influential frameworks in this field offers a framework for investigating the communication strategies used to maintain social harmony. This theory identifies four types of politeness: positive politeness, negative politeness which aim to for building understanding and emphasize shared values, and ideas, opinions, which seeks to respect individual autonomy and minimize imposition. These strategies are further categorized into specific linguistic behaviors, such as compliments, hedges, indirect requests, and expressions of gratitude. Analyzing these strategies in *HONY*'s stories allows for a deeper understanding of the interpersonal dynamics at play**.** Short stories in Facebook provide investigators with a rich source for qualitative data on online communications. Among online societies, it has been argued that Facebook is the most widely used social networking site. Thus, Facebook politeness strategies have been investigated from diverse perspectives, for instance (Dąbrowska , 2007,Theodoropoulou,2015 ,Mahzari,2017, Dabrowsk (2019) ; Smadi et al., 2023) . Several previous studies have explored politeness in digital narratives. For instance: Locher and Watts (2005) examined politeness in online forums, emphasizing how digital discourse redefines traditional politeness thoughts. Haugh (2013) focusing on the co-construction of politeness in media interactions, highlighting the role of audience comments and responses in shaping the narrative. Kanwal el at,(2021) focusing on explore the cross-cultural differences and similarities in the use of politeness strategies in Urdu and English short stories The use of politeness strategies in short stories on Facebook pages has been a subject of interest in recent research. Dabrowaka, (2019) showed in his study called *politeness ,gender and English-media Facebook communication* that Facebook users can interact with others without any restrictions . This paper aimed for using English and use it as foreign language in groups of Indian ,Britain and Polish the users of Facebook. The

study highlighted on the identification of certain intentionally polite speech acts conveyed in the posts generated by the three groups of Facebook users within the framework of Brown and Levinson's (1987). The findings showed that the users gender is that the major factor impacting the frequencies of the use of polite meaning ,with women taking the lead to this respect. In a study conducted by Smadi ,el at(2023) *Positive Politeness Strategies Employed by Jordanian Facebook Users*, researchers examined the positive politeness strategies utilized by Jordanian males and females in their Facebook comments on the *Roya news page*. This study highlighted how individuals employ politeness in online communication on social media. The findings revealed that Jordanians tried to minimize the threat to their interlocutors' face through using different positive politeness strategies Furthermore, the findings showed that the most repeatedly used strategy by both genders in all issues was joking. The study concluded that the news issue seems not to affect the use of politeness strategies by both genders Additionally, *Politeness strategies used in Text Messaging* studied by Eshghinejad & Moini ,(2016) highlighted the significance of politeness strategies in short message service *(SMS)* communication. The study underlined the use of politeness strategies in text messaging, which can similarly be applicable to short stories posted on Facebook pages.Moreover, another study like *Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Acts and Politeness in Urdu and English Short Stories, which investigated by* Kanwal, el at (2021). This study aimed strategies as revealed in short stories of two female authors from Urdu and English backgrounds. In such study the descriptive qualitative method is conducted and the data is explored according to Searle's five types of Speech Acts. The findings showed insignificant differences in the use of speech acts but it is the typical difference in their social functions/ illocutionary forces in both Urdu and English short stories which offers deeper insights into the degree of courtesy observed in both cultures. This study concludes that there are dissimilarities in cultural norms and attitudes that bring in the particular differences in the performance of politeness between different languages .Regard to *POLITENESS STRATEGIES ANALYSIS IN TWO DISTANT STRANGERS* written by Damara &Romala ,(2022). This study aims to find out the types of politeness strategies used by the characters in *Two Distant Strangers* and the sociological reasons , and the influence of the use of politeness strategies in the short film. This study conducted the pragmatic approach and qualitative method. The findings shows that all characters in *Two Distant Strangers* employed four types of politeness strategies. The most frequent strategy in this film is bald on- record while the least utilized strategy is the off-record. The characters' utterances also revealed a connection between politeness strategies and related sociological reasons.In conclusion, this study is different from the above studies described previously. They used the different theories and adapts the data analysis approaches utilized in these studies .However, this study can still convey new information since no other studies have examined the politeness strategies applied in short stories used on Facebook page To sum up, this study provides valuable visions into the pragmatic study of politeness strategies in virtual communication, containing short stories on Facebook page. By investigating the use of politeness strategies in online interactions, researchers can get better understand how people express social norms and expectations in online spaces.

4. 1 The significance of politeness in short stories on social media Politeness in short stories posted on social media is a significant for some reasons: Firstly, reflecting cultural values: Politeness usually reflects cultural norms and values regarding communication. Short stories that combine these elements can provide insights into many cultures while promoting shared respect among diverse audiences. Secondly, Building community: Polite narratives can encourage a sense of community among followers. When stories reveal kindness and understanding, they can unite individuals around shared values and experiences, raising connections that transcend geographical boundaries. Thirdly, Encouraging empathy: Politeness in storytelling frequently involves an understanding of different views and experiences. This approach can improve empathy among readers, prompting them to reflect perspectives outside their own and stimulating a culture of compassion. Fourthly, Fostering positive interactions: Politeness encourages respectful dialogue among readers and writers. polite storytelling can make a space for constructive conversations, letting diverse views to be shared without hostility. Finely , Enhancing engagement: Stories that reveal politeness tend to resonate more with audiences. Followers are more probable to engage with content that feels courteous and considerate, leading to improved shares, comments, and discussions.In summary, politeness in short stories on social media is important as it reflecting cultural values , building community, encouraging empathy,

fostering positive interactions, enhancing engagement, all contributing to a healthier online environment beneficial to meaningful interactions.

4.2 Cross- cultural use of politeness in New York The cross-cultural use of politeness in *New York* reflects the city's unique status as a vibrant, multicultural metropolis where diverse ethnic backgrounds and traditions meet. Politeness in this context is expressed through a combination of social norms, linguistic practices, and behavioral expectations that accommodate the city's fast-paced, direct communication style while respecting cultural differences. In *New York*, good manners such as saying "*please*" and "*thank you*," holding doors open, and showing patience and helpfulness are universally respected across cultures. Regardless of the city's reputation for being blunt or direct, these acts of politeness help preserve positive social interactions among its diverse population. https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/crosscultural-pragmatics/politeness/AD14680E29011893DF59BE6E8AFE5D26Respecting personal space is important in *New York's* crowded environment; pushing or standing uncomfortably close is frowned upon. Besides, avoiding aggressive language, including racist or sexist remarks, is a strict and vital rule of politeness, highlighting sensitivity to the city's multicultural makeup. Ethnically, New Yorkers tend to select sincerity over formality. They can appear straightforward or even brusque to outsiders, but this truthfulness is often a sign of familiarity and efficiency instead of rudeness. For instance, feeding back candid opinions or correcting line-cutting is common and socially accepted because it supports fairness and respect for shared social rules. At the same time, the highly various population results in varying pragmatic politeness strategies influenced by individual cultural backgrounds. This means that some communication may balance positive politeness; expressing friendliness and inclusiveness, and negative politeness showing respect for others' autonomy another way based on cultural norms carried by different ethnic communities.Overall, *New York's* politeness practices foster social agreement amid cultural diversity while acceptance the city's energetic and straightforward communication style. This dynamic supports everyday communications in the city's public, social, and professional settings. https://fac.umc.edu.dz/fll/images/expressions/lounis.pdf

5. Methodological Procedures Research method According to the nature of the objectives of the present study and its research questions, the analysis of the data in the study is conducted qualitatively. This type of analysis is known as content analysis. In this regard, David and Peter (2003) state that content analysis is a procedure used in analyzing texts components. It is one of the best tools that be responsible for a powerful nature to the text analysis. Therefore, this study conducted a qualitative content analysis because this method links linguistic theory with real-world communication , providing insights into how politeness forms storytelling and social construction in digital spaces.**Sampling and Data collection** Ten short stories were purposively selected from the official Facebook page *Human of New York* between January and June 2025, based on narrative depth, diversity of themes, and emotional engagement. A purposive sampling refers to the selection of participants or sites which can help the researcher understand the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2012). In addition, Kumar (2011) states that purposive sampling provides the best information for qualitative studies to achieve the objectives and questions of the study. Each story's written component was examined for instances of politeness strategies, classifying patterns, and their functions within the narrative context. These short stories are chosen for their emotional depth, whether they suggest empathy, joy, sorrow, or motivation. The most virus-related stories often contain emotionally generating content, especially those with positive or relatable themes. The data was analyzed according to Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory. The analysis indicates that politeness strategies facilitate emotional significance, cross-cultural communication, and moral storytelling, which aligns with *HONY's* mission to humanize various experiences. The analysis highlights the interplay between pragmatics, medium, and sociocultural context in shaping online communication.

6. Results and Discussion Eighty data were identified from the narrators' utterances in the short stories. This section contains analyzing and clarifying some of the data.

The table below displays the distributions of the types of politeness strategies with their frequency and percentage employed by Ten short stories on Facebook page *Humans of New York*: The results on the various politeness strategies recognized in the narrators of the short stories on *Humans of New York* are summarized in the previous table with a total of 80 utterances. The table shows 28 with (35.5 %) percentage utterances were categorized into positive politeness, 30 with (37.5 %) percentage utterances into negative politeness,10 with (12 %) percentage utterances into off -record politeness, and 12 with (15%) percentage into the bald on-

Types of Strategies	Frequency	percentage
Positive politeness	28	35.5 %
Negative politeness	30	37,5 %
Off-record	10	12%
Bald on-record	12	15 %
	80	100%

record strategy.The narrators in selected short stories on Facebook page *HONY* applied four types of politeness strategies , The data analysis for each type can be seen in the following stories;

5.1 story (No.1) This story is about a personal reflection on identity ,vulnerability, and emotional healing. The narrator states how being dependable and strong was central to their sense of self-they were the "*pillar*" that others depended on. The narrator in this selected short story on Facebook page *HONY* applied four types of politeness strategies:

 A. positive politeness : It can be seen that this story contains two utterances that apply positive strategy .This strategy functions to reduce social distance, create solidarity, and emphasize shared understanding. Positive politeness is about building relationship, creating a sense of belonging, and showing empathy.

For instance : The characters sister and father use positive politeness when the sister says, "*You do not need to speak in this moment. I don't need to hear anything you have to say*,"

This expresses of sharing   personal struggles and comprehensions fosters closeness and encourages sympathy. The characters use emotional honesty to invite relationship, not pity.

B. **Negative politeness :**

 This story contains three utterances that imply negative politeness. This strategy helps avoid imposition, soften potential judgments, and express respect for the followers' autonomy.Such as: "*Which sounds like the smallest thing in the world.*""*What I thought were weaknesses*".According to ,a pragmatic analysis of   these lines the character uses hedging ("*sounds like*, "*thought*"), minimizing "*smallest thing*", and self-criticism (admitting past misperception of "*weaknesses*") to state potentially delicate ideas while respecting the follower's autonomy and minimizing any possible face threat. They illustrate how language can be created to be indirect, non-imposing, and polite of the other person's "space."

c. off-Record politeness The study states that two utterances has applied off-record politeness in this story . This strategy relies on implication and indirectness to carry deeper messages without confrontation . The narrator implicate hidden meaning for letting the followers on such page infer emotional weight .Such as: "*I couldn't speak. I was hyperventilating.*""*They're gonna know.*"Based on Brown & Levinson's framework ,the narrator uses off –record strategies in these two lines by using physical signs and vague implications of threat to communicate a state of acute panic and fear of exposure completely off-record. This permitted followers to signal distress and seek understanding while minimizing the direct face threat to both character and the followers, and avoiding explicit deep sensitive information. The politeness lies in the complexity and the reliance on the followers' inference.

D. Bald on –Record politeness There is one utterance that applies bald on- record in this story. This strategy is categorized by direct, clear, and explicit communication without any force to soften or mitigate the face-threatening act toward the followers on Facebook. It can be seen the narrator in his story uses this strategy in the statement "*come home now*" illustrates the bald on-record politeness strategy in pragmatics."*Come home now* " is a clear example of bald on-record politeness strategy where the character concerns a clarity , and a direct order. The directness and imperative words indicate clearly conveys the character's intention.

5.2 short story (No.2) This study indicates this story is a journey of personal progress, creative purpose, and dedication. It reveals how a moment of weakness being laid off and unclear sparked a lifelong project deep-rooted in human connection and storytelling. Concluded perseverance and reflection, the narrator clarifies how empathy, passion , and hard work can change a dream into something meaningful, concluding in a heartfelt praise to the city that inspired it all. The narrator in this story on Facebook page *HONY* uses four types of politeness strategies:

A. **positive politeness** In pragmatics, a positive politeness strategy serves to reduce social distance and shape a sense of connection and harmony between (writer and reader) By revealing personal facts: job loss, travel , age, and uncertain career goals , the narrator uses self-disclosure to indicate vulnerability and honesty. This offers the reader to understand and feel closer to them. Such as: The narrator uses five utterances positive politeness strategy as follows: "*I was twenty-six years old, recently laid off, travelling around the country with a vague ambition to become a photographer.*" Pragmatically ,The narrator reveals personal aspects of their life like losing their job, having an unclear goal of becoming a photographer, and feeling anxious about asking strangers for portraits. This candidness makes the narrator more relatable and approachable, helping to build a bond with the reader.

B. **Negative politeness** It may be noticed that there are four utterances applied negative politeness strategy in this story .such strategy aims to respect the reader's freedom from imposition. The narrator implies negative politeness strategy in his story as follows: "*How the world receives our work will always be out of our control.*" In pragmatic ,This line does not directly tell the followers what to feel or do. Such a line can function to encourage the narrator and the reader that it's suitable not to control everything. It moderates any anxiety about decision by giving it as an external, inevitable factor ,therefore avoiding direct conflict or pressure.

C. **Bald on- Record politeness** In this story, there is one utterance that applies bald on record. This strategy is used when efficiency or sincerity is prioritized over politeness .The narrator seems as a direct and clear announcement it can be noticed as follows: "*'Dear New York' will be released on October 7th, 2025.*" This utterance is an example of the bald on record politeness strategy in pragmatics. It highlights on efficiency and in formativeness, particularly in a formal or public context such page *HONY*. The utterance is a clear and straightforward. The narrator tends to convey accurate information (e.g. *a release date*) with no modifiers or emotional tone. There are no hedging devices (e.g., "*I think,*" "*maybe,*" "*we hope*"), which creates it a clear-cut declaration.

5.3 story (No. 3) The story highlights on personal growth, the intentional work of creating better, emotional healing, and healthier relationships than those we may have seen in our past. It underlines the value of self-awareness, constant growth, and emotional strength in overcoming risky patterns and nurturing sympathy and connection. Below the analysis of pragmatic politeness strategies used: **Positive politeness** The story contains four utterances applied positive strategy , this strategy functions to build solidarity, makes the narrator feel relatable, and shows appreciation for shared values. Such as: .*" I tell her I need to go on a walk".* Pragmatically ,The narrator shows positive politeness through his self-reflection and the way he communicates with his wife. Instead of reacting angrily, he chooses to take a walk and reflect on his core values, allowing him to approach the conversation in a calm and respectful manner.

A. **Negative politeness** There are three utterances that implicate negative strategy in this story as follows : for instance, *"It's almost like you revert to being a child again."*

It is clear , This line employs pragmatic negative politeness through indirectness, hedging, and softening language. This strategy helps the character express an observation that may be understood as critical while reducing the threat of offending the reader. The phrase "*almost like*" is a hedge, which moderates the assertion. This hints that the character is being careful about making a bold or possibly face-threatening claim.

B. **off-Record politeness** The story covers one utterance that applied off- record strategy. It may be seen, the narrator uses this strategy since its purpose avoids direct confrontation or instruction; relies on the reader to deduce the implicate meaning, for example: "*I'll ask myself: 'Who are you?' Then I'll say, 'I'm Gabriel… I'm courageous. I'm faithful.'*

According to pragmatic analysis, off-record strategy relies on implicature , the character suggests at something without declaring it directly, allowing for reasonable deniability, in this case: Gabriel does not directly request

others for validation. In its place, he involves in self-talk, looking to talk to himself, which ultimately communicates his inner identity ,struggle, or need for affirmation.

D. Bald on- Record politeness There is one utterance which applies bald on –record strategy in this story. This strategy used sometimes when sincerity outweighs politeness concerns. This is obvious in the following example: "*That's why it's so important to heal childhood wounds.*" Pragmatically, This statement is a direct, and unqualified .It's a key message of the storyline and presented bravely to emphasize its importance .There are no justifying devices like "*maybe," "I think," or "perhaps."* The statement conveys certainty and urgency, signaling a truth the character reflects obvious or necessary.

5.4 story (No.4) The story reveals the different stages of life, highlighting that the forties are the most sensible and fulfilling period. By the forties stage, self-awareness stabilizes, things stabilize, career and interactions grow stronger, similar to the solid legs of a table. On the other hand, as the narrator approaches eighty, ambiguity returns, but this time it's not about the result of oneself, it's about wanting more time forward and the simple desire for a future. The narrator applied four politeness strategies in this short story.

A. Positive politeness According to Brown and Lievenson (1987), there are three instances of linguistic positive strategy that apply in the current story. This study revealed that the character uses metaphor since it is a classic tool of pragmatic positive politeness, helping the reader understand abstract ideas in a familiar, relevant way. It is clear in the selected example: "*It's like the legs of a table; everything gets stronger...".*

Regarding a pragmatic positive strategy, the character used positive politeness by: using a familiar metaphor for building relationships, inviting the readers to identify with the character's perspective, and emphasizing shared experiences of strength and maturity. This may help the character build empathy and alignment with the Facebook followers, making their reflection feel warm, affirming, and inclusive.

B. Negative politeness The study reveals two utterances of negative strategies applied in this story. The strategy shows deference and avoids sounding presumptuous or overly certain. It can be seen in the selected sample: "*Maybe you have more endurance...*" The pragmatic analysis of this phrase employs negative strategies mainly through hedging and indirectness by using "*may be* ". This moderates the statement, respects the reader's autonomy, and reduces face-threatening acts by avoiding direct obligation or assertion. It illustrates how language can be used pragmatically to conserve politeness and social harmony in communication.

c. Off- Record politeness The study shows that there is one utterance implicit off- record strategy in the fourth story. The character utilizes implication to express vulnerability, and shows a pragmatic off-record politeness through vagueness and indirectness. The following example can illustrate this strategy: "*It's hoping that there is one, as simple as that.*" According to politeness theory, this line allows the narrator express vulnerability without being too direct. This keeps face for the reader to respond sympathetically without feeling obligated to act. In addition, he softens the emotional or conceptual weight behind the statement by saying "*as simple as that",.* It avoids direct conflict or a clear stance, inviting clarification rather than asserting a strong position

D. Bald- on Record politeness The researcher finds that the story contains only one utterance that implies bald- record strategy. such strategy is used when the narrator tends to be direct, clear, and explicit, usually when there's no necessity to minimize face-threatening acts ,or when efficiency and simplicity are prioritized over politeness. The study reveals the following utterance :"*I'll be turning eighty in a few weeks.*"

The utterance employs this strategy by delivering personal information openly and without justification, emphasizing sincerity and efficiency over social cushioning or indirectness. The narrator states a personal fact without softening, hedging, or using indirect language.

5.5 story (No.5) The study reveals that a fifth story 's theme highlights how genuine love and care from teachers can influence a child's emotional development, intelligence of belonging, and behavior even outside the classroom. The current story highlights that teaching is not just about academic learning (*sounds, shapes, colors*), but also about producing a nurturing environment where children feel safe, loved, and supported. The analysis shows this story contains three politeness strategies expect bald on-record :

A. **Positive politeness** There are two utterances applied positive politeness strategies in this story. Such strategy's purpose is to build solidarity, show thankfulness for shared values, and make the narrator feel relatable. The study selects the following example that state this strategy:"*Helping these babies make their milestones; that is awesome for me...*"A pragmatic analysis demonstrates that this selected line employs

positive strategy when the narrator expresses his interest and approval by saying *"that is awesome for me,"* which helps build solidarity with the reader. This creates a sense of mutual goals or shared understanding on social media on Facebook communication.

B. **Negative politeness** The story contains two utterances that apply pragmatic negative strategy .The study indicates that the narrator uses modal verbs and hedging, it is a noticeable as follows:

"You have to show some type of affection, right?" Pragmatically ,the line *"some type of affection"* is a hedge that moderates the imposition. The adding of *"right?"* changes the statement into an indirect, soft question, attractive agreement but not insisting on it. The narrator would like to give the reader space to disagree or respond without restrictions on social media paltiform.

c. **Off Record politeness** The story employs one utterance of a pragmatic off-record strategy in the current story. This strategy here aims to soften the critique and avoid online communication's conflict. The study shows that the narrator uses this strategy as follows: *"If they come to a classroom and don't feel love, they won't want to be there."* Pragmatic politeness strategy interpretation of this line uses off-record strategy by implying a criticism or recommendation indirectly. Instead of directly accusing teachers of being unloving or saying *"Teachers must show love,"* the narrator frames the statement as a hypothetical restrictive, allowing the reader to infer the hidden message without direct imposition.

5.6 story (No.6) The study indicates that the story focuses on intense mental health struggles, mainly dissociation and existential crisis. It discovers feelings of unfriendliness from oneself and others, the challenge of sympathetic one's humanity, and the journey to recovery and reconnection. The story employs politeness strategies in the following points : **positive politeness** Regarding this strategy ,the study states three utterances applied pragmatic positive strategy. Here, this strategy relies on the concept of intimacy, and emotional support .It can be clear in the selected example on Facebook page *Humans of New York* *"I'm trying to fortify myself."* As pragmatic perspective , this statement shows that the narrator builds a shared understanding with the reader like ,wanting recognition for growth. She draws upon personal achievement as a bridge of connection on Facebook platform. **Negative politeness** The researcher finds that the story contains four utterances employed negative politeness strategy . This short story is rich with negative politeness strategy, mainly as theorized by Brown and Levinson (1987) in their framework of negative politeness, which people use language to achieve face self-image, it is clear in the following example: *"That's what he told me."* This phrase applied pragmatic negative politeness strategy by depending on the concept of avoidance of direct assertion, this allows the narrator to moderate the force of what may be a contentious, debatable, or possibly face-threatening remark. It reserves his or her from judgment or blame.

c. **Off- Record Politeness** This story contains one utterance that applied pragmatic off- record strategy .It is obvious that this strategy states deep psychological and suffering indirectly, hedging, using metaphor, and ambiguity to moderate the emotional intensity and protect from vulnerability .It is clear in the following selected example from sixth story: *"It feels like I'm sobering up from being on some really bad acid trip that lasted years."* This line represents a pragmatic off-record strategy through its use of metaphorical language and unintended emotional expression. The narrator relies on context, and inference to convey meaning without uttering it explicitly, by saying *"sobering up from a really bad acid trip"* this allows the narrator to share their psychological journey while still keeping emotional distance and keeping their vulnerability.

D.Bald on –Record politeness

The study reveals the story contains one utterance of bald on- record strategy. Here, the narrator communicates directly, obviously, and without softening or hedging, particularly when revealing personal realities or emotional states. Such as: *"I'm very scared."* The pragmatic study shows that this statement employs this strategy when the narrator indicates his emotional condition directly to make online communication more understandable and cooperative with followers on *HONY*.

5.7 story (No.7) The paper illustrates that this short story is a clear image of reflection on unemployment, sadness, and personal resilience. In spite of its raw and emotional tone, the narrator uses pragmatic politeness strategies to manage the online communication in a way that maintains understanding with the reader while discussing difficult topics. Below is an investigation of the politeness strategies used:

A. positive politeness The research suggests that pragmatic positive politeness strategy is frequented three times in this story to emphasize solidarity, mutual respect, and closeness. It is evident that in this story, the narrator employs this strategy to build relationship and express gratitude toward his wife and son, for instance: *"My wife is so supportive. When I go on interviews she makes sure that I dress the right way: put on that sport coat on, don't wear those boots all the shit I usually get annoyed with her about."* According to Brown &Leivinson theory (1987) ,The narrator uses positive politeness by recognizing his wife's support and stating appreciation for her efforts. Although he admits to being bothered by her advice at times, he frames her actions clearly, showing solidarity and affection.

B .Negative politeness The paper shows that a negative politeness strategy is used to decrease imposition and show respect for the reader's autonomy. This strategy frequented four times in this story, negative politeness is clear in the narrator's self-reflective and his tries to soften the weight of his struggles ,such as *"Am I doing enough? Shouldn't I be at my computer, looking for opportunities? Why can't I fucking find a job?"* In pragmatic view, The narrator utilizes rhetorical questions to demonstrate his internal conflict without directly impressive his frustrations on others. The self-directed questioning reveals the negative politeness strategy, as he avoids accusing external factors and instead centers on his own perceived shortcomings.

c.Off -Record politeness The story has contained one utterances that are employed off- record politeness strategy . The results states that this strategy involves indirect communication, often depending on implication or vagueness to convey meaning. This strategy is used carefully in the story but may be identified in moments of reflection, for instance:*"It's the world that changed, really. I was an expert at print production in magazines, and that whole industry kinda died."*

The results shows, this utterance indicates that the narrator doesn't explicitly say he's out of job or struggling, since ,he lets the reader infer that: *"That whole industry kinda died."* The word *"kinda"* further softens the claim, signaling understatement or hesitancy.

D.Bald on-Record politeness

There is one utterance that applied bald on –record strategy in seventh story .Regarding the analysis, this strategy includes direct and unambiguous communication, regularly used when the narrator feels urgency or when the situation allows for truthfulness. It can be notable in the selected example:

"Depression is like a beast; you have to fight it."

Pragmatically, this statement demonstrates that the narrator utilizes a direct metaphor to describe his suffering with depression. This strategy emphasizes the importance of the issue and expresses the effort required to overcome it.

5.8 story (No.8)

This paper sates that the short story reflects on consideration, self-awareness, and emotional processing, a contemplative yet engaging tone. However, the narrator isn't essentially trying to be polite in a conventional sense; he employs several politeness strategies to make his thoughtful and philosophical ideas more accessible and less intimidating to the reader. Below is a pragmatic analysis of the politeness strategies used:

A. **positive politeness** This strategy applied three utterances in this story. Here, the positive politeness depends on using inclusive language by saying, *"Think about it: how many times do you distract yourself during the day?"*. According to pragmatic positive politeness strategies analysis, the line has a question that is directed at "*you*." In the phrasing "how many times do you distract yourself," is rhetorical and assumes the answer is: "*many*." The narrator uses the question to infer a shared human experience.. This invites the reader to reflect alongside the narrator, creating shared understanding to make digital communication a bridge of connection on Facebook among different cultures.

B. **Negative politeness**This study reveals that negative strategy is frequented four times in this story. The analysis shows this strategy is oriented toward the reader's desire not to be forced upon. It frequently shows respect, indirectness, or hedging to recognize the reader's independence, vulnerability, or potential sympathy, it can be seen in the following example: *"No one walks into a Buddhist center on a high note. You come in wrecked, like you were in a shipwreck and just crawled up onto the shore."*The analysis states that the narrator uses a generalization "*no one*" instead of singling out a specific individual. That's a key negative politeness move: It avoids pointing at the reader directly. This lets the narrator address a sensitive topic (*emotional distress*) without sounding accusatory or aggressive. In addition , the study states this line *"You come in wrecked, like you*

were in a shipwreck..." employs the metaphor of a _shipwreck_ moderates the reality of personal conflicting by framing it _indirectly_. It gives emotional distance to a vulnerable experience.

c. Off –Record politeness The analysis shows that this strategy employs two utterances in the eighth story. This strategy applied the aspects of**,** implication, metaphor, indirect language, and hints. This strategy provides the readers opportunity to interpret without any restrictions , consequently reducing the threat to their negative face .such as; "_We pushed them out of the way, buried them deeper…_". The strategy employed the metaphors e.g., "_buried them deeper_" doing as indirect vehicles for sensitively loaded content, creating it more palatable for the followers.

D.Bald on- Record politeness As stated by Brown & Levinson (1987), bald on-record politeness occurs when a narrator communicates in a direct, explicit, and concise manner, hedges, or indirectness. The study reveals that the story has applied three utterances of bald on- record strategy. "_My train leaves in twenty minutes. I'm going on a five-day silent meditation retreat._" This sentence is plain, direct, and unqualified. The narrator expresses personal, situational information without hedging or explanation, this leads to increasing the impact of personal realities and moments of realization.

5.9 story (No.9) This story is about how courage, self-discipline, and persistence can transform timidity into power, allowing one to rewrite their own storyline and embrace new possibilities in life. The analysis reveals that the story employed pragmatic politeness strategies, below is an analysis of the strategies used:

_A._ **Positive politeness** The study shows there are three utterances that implicate positive strategy in ninth story. According to this story ,the study explores how the narrator utilizes or experiences positive politeness strategy which aimed at expressing solidarity, friendliness, and approval to build online relationships and social bonds. It is obvious in the following example _; "Timidity. Timidity is the best word for it."_

The study shows that the narrator begins in a state of _timidity_ and low self-confidence, feeling socially inferior and incapable to assert themselves. This interior conflict sets the period for a journey toward social empowerment. and self-improvement . The narrator requests the audience to connect over shared past experiences, through personal disclosure, in-group references, rich storytelling, and emotional kindness, this story builds a bridge between narrator and readers.

B. **Negative politeness** The story contains four utterances that imply a negative politeness strategy. Here, the study reveals that this strategy aims at mitigating potential threats to the reader's negative face, their desire for self-sufficiency and self-determination from imposition. Such as: _"I'm wearing steel armor, it's not going to hurt me."_ Pragmatically, the narrator reframes the threat by concentrating on the protective function of the armor, which symbolically moderates the impact of external impositions. This serves as a negative politeness strategy that reduces the perceived threat to their self-sufficiency and face, permitting them to engage more confidently.

c.Off- Record politeness

This selected short story contains one utterance that applied a pragmatic off-record politeness strategy .It is clear this strategy implied in this selected line from story: _"What's the worst that can happen? I've been hit with an axe."_

According to a pragmatic study, this line utilizes humor to indirectly express emotional flexibility and determination. The joke softens the significance of past experiences while letting the reader draw the deeper meaning for preserving conversational modesty and social harmony.

D.Bald –on Record politeness

The use of pragmatic bald on-record politeness strategies in this story frequented once and improves its reality and emotional force. Pragmatically, this strategy create a direct association with the viewers, inviting accepting and respect without demanding it. such as_: "I was useless at first." "He was telling the truth._ These statements help as complete acknowledgments of personal failure. Instead of deflect blame or justification his behavior, the narrator utilizes a bald on-record strategy to own his faults. Pragmatically, this strategy makes face-threatening acts to himself for the gain of self-awareness and storyline growth.

5.10 story (No. 10) This story posted discovers how two people, affected by the similar pain, process it in conflicting ways: one isolates and self-destructs, whereas the other apparently "_moves on_" and embraces life. This difference highlights the individual nature of pain responses and how misinterpretations can arise even

between individuals who share the same wound. The narrator employs several politeness strategies in this story:

A. **positive politeness** In this selected story positive politeness strategies on such Facebook page aren't just linguistic aspects , they are emotional tools that support rebuild trust, reduce anger, and foster healing. They permit the narrator to transfer from isolation to association, from bitterness to gratitude. At this point ,it can be seen how these strategies are revealed in the narrator's developing relationship with her sister; "*I started taking drugs when I was twelve, maybe thirteen.*"Pragmatically, the study reveals that the line expresses personal struggles, the narrator invites empathy and reduces social distance, and make online communication more active and understandable on Facebook. This is a key goal of positive politeness strategy in this story.

B. **Negative politeness**Four utterances applied a negative strategy in the tenth story. This strategy reveals the narrator's emotional care and her desire to state pain without being irresistible or accusing others. Such a strategy helps her to maintain dignity while revealing vulnerability, and respect her sister's emotional boundaries .such as, *"I isolated myself. I started taking drugs..."* According to this story ,the study states that the line is direct in form, however it functions as a pragmatic negative politeness strategy in context caused by its self-directedness and distancing. The narrator selects to focus on thier own actions, instead of than blaming or confronting others. It can avoid threatening the reader's face by not conveying responsibility or demanding emotional labor.

c. **Off-Record politeness** This story comprises two utterances that employs off-record strategy. This strategy as stated by Brown and Levinson, include indirect language that allows the narrator to avoid direct obligation or conflict. This strategy relies on implicature, meaning the reader must infer the narrator 's intent. for instance, *"She just moved on with her life… I couldn't move on."*Pragmatically, the strategy in this line relies on indirectness and implicature, allowing the narrator to convey sensitive concepts while preserving both their own and the reader's face. In this case, the narrator contrasts two emotional replies without explicitly evaluating. This association invites the reader to deduce the emotional tension and difference, rather than stating it outright.

D.**Bald on –Record politeness**

According to Brown and Levinson, this strategy is used once in this story when a narrator does a face-threatening act without any regressive effort, it means no indirectness ,softening or hedging. Let's discover how this strategy functions in the story: *"I was exhausted. Exhausted from carrying these heavy feelings. Exhausted from making bad decisions. Exhausted from the drugs."*

A pragmatic analysis shows, this line embodies bald on-record strategy through: directness and repetition when the narrator uses repetition to give emphasis to emotional and physical exhaustion.

7.Conclusion

According to the results and discussion, the results of the study can be concluded as follows:

There are four types of pragmatic politeness strategies employed by the narrators in selected short stories on the official Facebook page *Humans of New York*. They include negative politeness, positive politeness, off-record strategy, and bald-on-record strategies. Among these four strategies, negative politeness is the most frequent strategy that occurs 30 times out of 80, with 37.5%. It is followed by positive politeness strategy (28 out of 80 with 35.5%), bald on-record strategy (12out of 80 with 15%), and off-record politeness strategy (10 out of 80 with 12%).The negative and positive in *HONY*'s narratives are most frequent strategies that demonstrate the platform's commitment to fostering an inclusive and empathetic community. Negative politeness ensures respect for individual autonomy and vulnerability. while, positive politeness increases emotional connection, and shared identity. These strategies contribute to the platform's success in engaging a different audience and behind meaningful interactions.

The study concluded that pragmatic politeness strategies function as crucial linguistic tools in social interactions, successfully helping narrators in these short stories to build social relationships and conserve face, as defined in Brown and Levinson's (1987). The analysis of politeness strategies in selected *HONY* stories reveals their critical role in influential the narrative tone and audience dynamics.

By competently blending positive and negative ,off record and bald on record politeness, *HONY* generates a space where personal stories resonate deeply, fostering a culture of
empathy and understanding. these strategies are applied to convey respect, friendliness, and mitigate face-threatening acts amidst the social context presented in the narratives. In the online storytelling environment of *Humans New York*, the language of these online politeness strategies expose how narrators balance directness

and indirectness to realize communicative goals for instance: building relationship, conveying solidarity, or managing social distance. This study focuses on that politeness in such online literary communication not only preserves social harmony but also reveals the socio-cultural dimensions rooted in contemporary digital communication. This study contributes significantly to valuable visions into the complexities of human communication in contemporary digital spaces. For future research can explore comparative analyses with extra digital storytelling platforms, further revealing the interplay between language, narrative, and community engagement.

References

Bader, Y. & Obeidat, H. (2020). *The language of Facebook comments on political articles in Jordan,* **International Journal of Linguistics**, 12(6), 180-205.

Brown, P. & Levinson, S. (1987). Politeness: *Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: planning conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research.* (4th Edn.).USA: Library of Congress Press.

Dąbrowska, M. (2007e). *Male and Female Strategies of Communication in E-mail Discussion Groups.* // 2(4)/2007. / Ed. by S. Gasparyan. Yerevan: Lusakn

Dąbrowska , M. (2019*). Politeness, gender, and English-medium Facebook communication.* **Rhetoric and Communications Journal***, Issue 40, July 2019*

Damara, G. (2022). *A Pragmatic Analysis of Politeness Strategies in Two Distant Strangers* (Undergraduate Thesis). Retrieved from http://repository.usd.ac.id/id/eprint/42813 **ELF Annual Research Journal 23**.

David, W. & Peter, B. (2003).*Using research instruments: A guide for researchers*. (1st Edn.). UK: Taylor and Francis Group.

Eshghinejad, Sh & Moini , M.R. (2016). *Politeness Strategies Used in Text Messaging: Pragmatic Competence in an Asymmetrical Power Relation of Teacher–Student.* DOI: 10.1177/2158244016632288. sgo.sagepub.com

Hameed, A. (2020). *The realization of strategies of impoliteness in Iraqi Facebook comments on Covid_19.* PJAEE, 17(6), 15802-15813

Holmes, J. (2001). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. New York: Longman

House J, Kádár DZ. (2021). *Politeness*. In: *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics*. Cambridge University Press; 2021:57-68.

Kádár, D. & Haugh, M. (2013). *Understanding Politeness. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*

Kanwal, N. Gulzar , M.A. &Sabina, Sh. (2021) 93-122. *Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Acts and Politeness in Urdu and English Short Stories.*

Kumar, R. (2011). *Research methodology a step by step guide for beginners. New Delhi: SAGE.*

Locher, M. A., & Watts*, R. J. (2005). Politeness Theory and Relational Work. Journal of Politeness Research: Language, Behaviour, Culture, 1, 9-33.* https://doi.org/10.1515/jplr.2005.1.1.9

Mahzari, M. , Adams, K& Matthew, M. (*2017).A Sociopragmatic Study of the Congratulation Strategies of Saudi Facebook Users.*

Smadi, A., Al-Sayyed, S., Bani Younes, M., Al-Momani, D., & Alazaizeh, S. (2023). *Positive Politeness Strategies Employed by Jordanian Facebook Users: Users: A Case From Comments on the Roya News Facebook Page.* Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 13 (11), 3006-3018. DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1311.31

Theodoropoulou, I. (2015). *Politeness on Facebook: The Case of Greek Birthday Wishes; International Pragmatics Association*: 25:1.23-45

Thomas, Jenny. (1995)*. Meaning in interaction: an introduction to Pragmatics*. New York: Longman Group Limited.

Tohamy, M. (2013). *A Pragmalinguistic Approach to the study of Facebook Language: Indirectness as a politeness strategy*. Faculty of Arts Magazine, Helwan University

Yule, G. (1998). Pragmatics. Oxford: OUP.

Internet sources
https://www.facebook.com/humansofnewyork

https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/crosscultural-pragmatics/politeness/AD14680E29011893DF59BE6E8AFE5D26

https://fac.umc.edu.dz/fll/images/expressions/lounis.pdf