

## Politeness and Gender in a Saudi TV Show

**Nuha AlShurafa**

*Professor of Linguistics. Department of European Languages and literature-King Abdulaziz, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.*

[nalshurafa@kau.edu.sa](mailto:nalshurafa@kau.edu.sa)

**Fatima Aldakheel**

*Lecturer. The Saudi Electronic University. Saudi Arabia*

[dakhilfa@gmail.com](mailto:dakhilfa@gmail.com)

**Tariq Elyas**

*Professor of Applied linguistics. Department of European Languages and literature-King Abdulaziz, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.*

[telyas@aku.edu.sa](mailto:telyas@aku.edu.sa)

**Maather Alrawi**

*Associate professor of Linguistics. Department of European Languages and literature-King Abdulaziz, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.*

[mmalrawi@kau.edu.sa](mailto:mmalrawi@kau.edu.sa)

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### Abstract

Gender is considered a vital factor that contributes in affecting the use and interpretation of politeness strategies by interlocutors (Mills, 2003) which is affirmed by various studies. The objective of the present study is to investigate the use of politeness strategies among male and female interlocutors (a male interviewer and male and female interviewees) in a Saudi TV show to examine differences in case there are any. The present study is primarily based on the theoretical framework proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Such framework gives rise to a systematic network of politeness strategies, presupposing that speech acts are generally linked to the abstract cultural notion of 'face'. Two questions are addressed as: Firstly, does the male interviewer use the same politeness strategies with both male and female interviewees? Secondly, what are the politeness strategies used by male and by female interviewees in their interaction with the male interviewer? Are they the same or different? The results show that the female interviewer, on one hand, uses negative politeness most of the time. The male interviewer, on the other hand, was neutral with the female interviewee. Moreover, the male interviewee uses only positive politeness strategies in his interaction with the interviewer. Similarly, politeness strategies used by the interviewer are positive. Such strategies that are used between male interlocutors indicate a common ground and convey that both are co-operators.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Politeness speech act is one of the important factors in human daily communication and interaction. There have been several approaches and studies that focus on the concept of

politeness and its relation to culture, power and gender. It is a complex concept that could vary from one society to another, and from one culture to another. It has been argued that women in general tend to be more polite than men because they have less power in society, (see among others Brown, 1980; Seto, 2010; Al-Shurafa, 2001; Bacha, 2012; Samara, 2015). The objective of the present study is to investigate the use of politeness strategies among male and female interlocutors (a male interview and male and female interviewees) in a Saudi TV show to see if there exist any differences.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Politeness**

The interest in politeness as social norms goes back to the times of ancient rhetoric (Erkinovna, 2022). The term politeness itself is in dispute among lay members of society in that they appear to be engaged in a discursive struggle over the value of the term (Watts, 2003). There have been several attempts and approaches to conceptualize politeness. Substantial part of the research on linguistic politeness, with the objective to evaluate current politeness theories and to outline directions for future politeness studies (Kasper, 1990; Locher, & Larina, 2019; Ogiermann, & Blitvich, 2019). In general, politeness in language is designed to pay face to the listener, so that they feel respected (Yeomans, Kantor, & Tingley, 2018). The first systematic explanation of politeness was introduced by Brown and Levinson (1978/1987) (Mills, 2014). Brown and Levinson (1987) refer to face as something “emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced” (p.61). In addition, according to them, there are four main strategies for doing a face threatening act (FTA): bald on-record, negative politeness, positive politeness, off-record and not using the face-threatening act.

By the same token, Brown (1980) identifies three factors that make an individual decide to be polite or not, when interacting with: someone who owns socially superior position, when interacting with people who are socially distant, and when interacting with people who are ‘imposing face-threatening acts. Moreover, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) indicate that requests addressing socially a superiors tend to be less direct than those addressing socially inferiors as directness or indirectness depend on particular social constraints. Furthermore, Lakoff (1973) distinguishes between an overt order and a request or a suggestion, with the former assuming an individual in a superior position addressing someone inferior in an imperative form as this order implies compliance, and the latter giving the decision to the addressee and is considered more polite than an order. Blitvich and Sifianou (2019) explore how the analysis of im/politeness can be tackled from a discursive pragmatics perspective and assert the need to develop methods and tools that will facilitate the analysis of politeness phenomena in their study. Other researchers have examined politeness in modern-day social

media discourse such as WhatsApp (Flores-Salgado & Castineira-Benitez, 2018). The researchers examined verbal means of expressing politeness in the forms of address, opening and closing formulae, the degree of directness, and the amount of syntactic, lexical/phrasal and external modification used in the *WhatsApp* requests employed by Mexican Spanish speakers. The analysis focused on politeness strategy selection, with the findings obtained showing that people use conventionally indirect strategies and a great deal of syntactic modification.

## 2.2. Politeness in the Arabic Culture

In his discussion of politeness in the Arabic culture, Samarah (2015) connects it to the cultural background which includes two sides: the social side and the religious side. In daily personal interactions an individual must keep balance between two aspects/concepts: ‘humility’ which is recommended by Islam religion and ‘dignity’ which is recommended by the Arabic culture. He suggests that politeness is important in nine situations. It is crucial in expressing sociability, gratitude, benevolence and felicitation, guilt, appreciation, hospitality and generosity, respect for the other, and in asking for permission and wanting to start a conversation. However, while indirectness is seen to be the politest way of speaking in elite English, Kerkam (as cited in Mills, 2014) argues that it is not the case in the Arabic culture. She indicates that indirectness in such culture might be considered impolite and that directness is the politest form of excuses and requests. This is affirmed in the three studies conducted by Al-Shurafa (1997, 2001, 2002). The early study (1997) contrasts between two Arabic dialects: Hijazi and Palestinian, where similarities are found to be a matter of degree rather than absolute. Variables such as age, sex, social class and level of education play a significant role to determine the degree of politeness in the two dialects. In (2001), Al-Shurafa examined politeness strategies that are used by educated adults in the Arabic dialect of Palestine (ADOP). The source of data was the oral utterances that occurred naturally at a dinner-table. The results reveal that positive politeness is the predominant strategy and is the first most common type used by speakers of ADOP.

The second most common type is the negative politeness strategy which is used to avoid imposition and coercing. For instance, bald-on-record strategy has the lowest number of instances in the examined data and is usually associated with culture-specific direct forms. In (2002), Al-Shurafa applied a functional pragmatic framework on natural data by educated Palestinian Arabic (EPA). Choices of direct positive forms predominate. Politeness choices correspond closely to Halliday’s three metafunctions: the ideational content, interpersonal or social aspects and the textual discourse.

### **2.3. Politeness and Gender**

Gender is considered a vital factor that contributes in affecting the use and interpretation of politeness strategies by interlocutors (Mills, 2003) which is affirmed by various studies. Bataineh and Bataineh (2006) explored the use of apology strategies among Jordanian EFL students and found that there is variation between male and female students in that females tended to use non-apology strategies in order to avoid any offence, whereas males employed strategies that put blame on the victims. Another study is conducted by Farghal and Al-Khatib (2001) in which they investigated the way Jordanian students respond to compliments. They found that male students tend to accept compliments more than females, whether the complimenter is male or female. In addition, when males are complimented by females, they would employ non-verbal responses but when the complimenter is male they would use more simple responses. They conclude that gender is a crucial factor in accepting or rejecting a compliment reflecting sociocultural differences between male and female students. Makarova and (2020) study on gender factor in the expression of politeness in Farsi shed some light on the complexities of its politeness system, called ‘ta’aroff’, which reflects social hierarchies. Their results show statistically significant differences in the attitudes to ta’aroff in that men’s attitudes to ta’aroff are generally more positive than women’s. In the shopping prompt dialogues, women produced fewer ta’aroff expressions than men. The results suggest that gender should be considered a factor influencing both ta’aroff use in speech production and the attitudes to ta’aroff.

In the Japanese high culture context, Saito (2010) examined male usage of directive speech acts in an institutional setting. Findings show that gender of the speaker in addition to contextual factors play a major role in selecting specific directive forms. Furthermore, actual practices do not always conform with specific gender stereotypes. Ide (1992) investigated politeness among Japanese men and women and found that women employ politer linguistic forms than men which is attributed to functions of demeanor and deference.

In Indonesian Islamic context, Mulawarman et al., (2021) echoes clear differences in gender and speech acts. Their study concludes that female students followed the principle of language politeness towards female teachers but not the male teachers while male students expressed more deviations towards male teachers. Sung (2012) suggested that women professionals may be subjected to more stringent gender norms labels which govern what constitutes polite behavior, as linguistic behavior may be evaluated against the ‘norms’ of women’s speech which is assumed to be stereotypically more polite than men’s speech by the masses. Other researchers, on the idea of politeness between genders, argues that women, men and politeness focus on the specific issue of the ways in which women and men express politeness differently

from each other which may indicate gender bias and issues in status quo (Coates, 2015; Holmes, 2013; Yule, 2020; Coates, 2015; Plug et al., 2021; Vu & Pham, 2021; Ikae & Savoy, 2022).

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present study is primarily based on the theoretical framework proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Such framework gives rise to a systematic network of politeness strategies, presupposing that speech acts are generally linked to the abstract cultural notion of “face”. Consequently, an FTA reflects the social relation between speaker and addressees. According to them, there are two notions of “face” wants: the “negative face” which is embodied in the desire not to be impeded by addressee, and the “positive face” which is embodied in the desire to be approved by hearer. In addition, negative politeness consists of doing the FTA on record and is redressive of the face wants. Whereas positive politeness (also done on record) is directed to addressee’s positive face and is the core of behaviors related to joking and familiarity.

The following questions are addressed to answer in the present study:

- 3.1. Does the male interviewer use the same politeness strategies with both male and female interviewees?
- 3.2. Are politeness strategies used by male and female interviewees in their interaction with the male interviewer the same or different?

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Instrumentation and Data Collection

A qualitative method is utilized for the purpose of collecting and analyzing data. Data were collected from two interviews from the Saudi TV show “Tariq-Show” in which the interviewer (Tariq) hosts male and female interviewees. Two episodes were randomly selected where in one of them he interviewed Mohamed Al-Mousa, and in the other one he interviewed Layan Abdallah. Both interviewees are famous Saudi figures in the social media. The duration of the first interview is 20 minutes and the second one 15 minutes. Data were written down for the purpose of analysis.

### 3.2. Data Analysis and Results

Analysis of the data shows that both positive and negative strategies are employed by the interlocutors. In addition, face threatening acts (FTAs) that are done baldly without redressive

action are detected. The following abbreviations are used in the analysis: T (Tariq- of “Tariq-show”), F (female interviewee), M (male interviewee), H (hearer), S (speaker), PP (positive politeness) and NP (negative politeness).

### **3.2.1. Male-Interviewer with female-interviewee**

Below are 1-27 data between T. the interviewer with the female-interviewee exchanges. The dominating politeness strategy besides deference is NP.

The exchange (2) below, starts with the female interviewee (F) as a reply to the question by T. the interviewer (1) as follows:

1. T: **tkallam-i 9an nafs-ik**  
talk- you about self-your  
*Talk about yourself.*
2. F: **okay! Ke-nt rassa:m-ah.**  
OK! Was- I drawer-Fem.  
**halHi:n ma: 'asammi nafsi rassa:m-ah li'ann-i mwagef-ah**  
Now not I call myself artist -Fem. because-I stop – Fem.  
**rasim, okay?**  
drawing ok?  
*Ok! I was an artist. Now I don't call myself an artist because I stopped drawing, ok?*

In the conversation (1 and 2 above), statement (2) starts and ends with **okay** which is a manner hedge that reflects NP and is used to check if H is following S adequately. The female speaker marks her speech by using the borrowed expression from English caring for prestige.

In statements (3 and 4 below), the interviewee in (4) confesses about her state of mind, as in the following speech:

3. T: **Hilu ... keef 'aštahar-t- i ?**  
nice how famous-you-Fem.?  
*Well! How did you become famous?*
4. F: **kin-t mitlaθim-ah bil-liqa:' kiða w Tala9-t bil-liqa:' ...**  
was-I veiled-I-Fem in-the interview like this and appeared-I in-the interview..  
**awwal liqa:' li: w h:aða θa:ni liqa:' li: Tab9an,**  
the first interview for me and that second interview for me of course,  
**fa šwaiy ba-ku:n mätwatir-ah**  
so a little bit I(Sing.) become nervous-Sing.F  
*I was veiled in the interview, this way; and I appeared in that interview, the first interview for me, and it was my second interview. That is why I was a little nervous.*

The female interviewee describes why she was nervousness. Thus, she was humbling herself and her capacities and showing deference reflects NP (negative politeness).

The exchange below, in (5 – 8), indicates FTA, as follows:

5. T: **ummmm ... Hilu**

Ummmm ... nice

*Umm ... that's nice!*

6. F: **wa:DiH min əl-jalsah ... SaH?**

obvious from the-sitting ... right?

*It's obvious from the way I'm sitting, right?*

7. T: **La...l-kersi Hagga-na raxiiS w dar wa:jid dax l-kersi Haggana**

no...the-chair our-Pl. cheap and spin a lot dizzy the-chair ours

*Well, no! The chair is cheap. It got dizzy from your movements.*

8. F: **...wil-laθma Ta:H-at b-ha:ða l-liqa:'. fa ha:ða lš-šayy l-**

...and the veil fell-F, Sing in-this the-interview so this the-thing

**mafru:ð ma: 'ðkir-ah Hitta bha:ða l-liqa:'. šayy y-faššil**

must not mention-F Sing. So with this the-interview shame

*And the veil fell in at that meeting, so I shouldn't mention this even in this interview because it is shameful.*

The interviewer replies with ummm in (5) above, which shows hesitation and indicates that an FTA is in presence. In (6) above the female interviewee is seeking agreement in the end of her PP statement by using SaH right. In (7) above, the interviewer is joking with H which reflects PP. The interviewee's reply in (8) above, includes a relevance hedge which shows she is partially apologizing for mentioning the incident, which is discussed in (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

The following exchange (9-12) below, involve reducing FTA and the tendency in the exchange between T and his female interviewee, as the following conversation exchange:

9. T: **Ya9ni sa:9ad-ik 'inna 'ixt-ik mašhu:r-ah?**

means helped-you that sister-your famous-F.Sing

*It means it helped you that your sister is famous*

10. F: **'aki:d ... ya9ni ma: tinkir 'ina sa:9ad-ni kθi:r.**

Certainly... means not deny that helped-me a lot

*Certainly... I don't deny that it helped me a lot.*

11. T: **Tayyib ... aahhhh**

Fine ... aha

*Fine! Aha!*

12. F: **Tab9an**, **ha:ðə-a šayy θa:ni**  
Of course, this-Masc. thing (lit. second)different  
*Of course, that's a different thing.*

In her reply to the question in (9) above, the female interviewee used a quality hedge '**ki:d** *certainly* (10) above. The interviewer replies with the prosodic **aahhhh aha** in (11) above, which is followed by another quality hedge **Tab9an** *of course* in (12) above by F. Both politeness strategies used by the interlocutors are negative.

In the statements (13 and 17) below, the exchange includes the following NP strategies:

13. F: **'ana xayya:l-ah**  
I horse rider-F Sing  
*I am a horse rider.*
14. T: **wallah?**  
(swear)by Allah! *Seriously?*
15. F: **la:, mu: xayya:l-ah 'a-TagTig mu: 'int iTTagTig?**  
No, not horse rider-F.Sing I-joke not (also) you joke  
*No, I'm not! I'm joking. Don't you also joke?*
16. T: **eeh mash-allah 9ali:k. ma: xalleit-i:-ni 'as'al el-su'a:l el-θa:ni**  
yeh masha'allah on you not leave-F-I ask the-question the-second  
*Yeah! Masha'allah, you didn't make me ask the next question.*
17. F: **šəft bag9id maka:nik ba9ad šwayy**  
You see stay in your seat after a bit  
*You see, I will take your seat shortly.*

In the exchange (18 and 19 below), PP is marking the conversation as in:

18. T: **Ummm .. la ya šeixah?**  
ummm... no you "dear"  
*Mmmm.. seriously my dear?*
19. F: **Okay fii šabaab bas šwayy**  
Ok there youths but few  
*Ok! There are youths, but few.*

F in (18 and 19 above), is joking with T which is used to soften FTAs and this indicates PP.

The interviewer uses *ummm* in (18) which indicates tentativeness and that an FTA is in presence.

In the conversation below, (20-24), an exchange of PP and NP takes place, as in:

20. F: **'ana bagu:l lak šayy .., 'ana min el-šaxšiyya:t elli n-na:s tigu:l 9anha**  
 I tell you something.., I from the- personality who people say about(me)  
**mustafizzah ya9ni 'na 'ašu:f nafsi musa:limah madri le:h**  
 provocative means I see myself peaceful don't know why  
*I will tell you something; people say that I am provocative; but I see myself as being peaceful. I don't know why!*

21. T: **kel wa:Hid yšu:f nafsah 'innah kwayyis**  
 every one sees himself that good  
*Everyone sees himself as a good guy.*

22. F: **Tab9an 'ana musa:limah ; tšu:fni inta! 'ana mu: min eš-šaxšiyya:t**  
 of course I peaceful see me you! I not from personalities  
**illi tiHeb tsawi šow**  
 who likes make show  
*Of course, I'm peaceful as you can see. I'm not that personality who likes to show off.*

23. T: **Tayyib haḍa elliθa:m 'akbar šow**  
 good this veil biggest show  
*Your veil is the biggest show.*

24. T: **ma9li:h tara:k ḡayyarti 'ija:btik marraten 9akasti 'ija:btik 9kasti nafsik**  
 It's ok you changed your reply twice ... reversed your reply and yourself  
*Ok! You changed your answer twice and so you contradicted yourself!*

25. F: **'ənt ḡašb T-Talli9-ni mitna:qḍ-ah**  
 You forcefully expose-F Sing contradicted-F Sing  
*You forcefully desire to show I am paradoxical!*

The ridicule expression in (21) above, shows the interviewer has a negative evaluation of H's positive face. This is followed by a quality hedge by F in (22) above. Both of these expressions are strategies that indicate (NP) negative politeness. In (23 and 24) above, T does an FTA baldly which contradicts F's statements and hence threatens F's positive face. F offends her negative face by an FTS which constitute a criticism to T (25) above.

The following statements (26 and 27), contain a hedge in NP, as follows:

26. T: **fi dubayy w hina Hitta fi: Abha əlḌaaher**  
 In Dubai and here even in Abha to guess

27. F: **i:wah fa fi: na:s mustaHi:l ysawwu:n-ha bas 'ana min**  
yea so there people impossible do (make) -F Sing but I of  
**aš-šaxšiya:t illi 9adi 'ja:zif, 9araft?**  
**the-personality who normally risk, you see**  
*Yea, there are people who would never do it! But I'm the personality who would take the risk, you see!*

F ends her statement in (27) above, with a manner hedge that reflects NP. The hedge NP is implemented by the female interviewee.

### **3.2.2. Male-Interviewer with female-interviewee**

Below are 27-57 data between T. the interviewer with the male-interviewee exchanges. The FTA is an obvious difference from the above-data, and the dominating politeness strategy besides assuming common ground on record is PP.

With regards to the other interview, positive politeness (PP) strategy dominates in which the interviewee (M) is male, and it starts with the following intimate forms as in (28-30) below:

28. T: **nawwar-ta-na muHammad**  
illuminated-you-us Mohammed  
*You illuminated us Mohammed! (Lit.:We're glad to have you Mohammed)*
29. M: **Habi:b galb-i biwju:d-ak. 'ku:n Šari:H ma9-a:k. ya HaḌḌ-i**  
sweet heart-my presence-your to be frank with-you oh luck-me  
**ašu:f ha-lwajh el-jami:l. 'ant min el-muqarrabi:n w**  
see this-face the-beautiful you of the-nearest and  
**il-muHabbabi:n 'ila: qalb-i**  
the-sweetest to heart-my  
*You are my sweetheart. Your presence makes me happy! I will be honest with you; I'm lucky to see your beautiful face! You are my sweetheart!*
30. T: **ya ḥabi:b-i**  
You sweetheart-my  
*You are my sweetheart.*

The addressing forms **ḥabi:b galbi** *sweetheart* - **ya ḥabi:bi** *darling* that are used to claim a common ground and to convey in-group membership indicate positive politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Moreover, **il-muHabbabi:n 'ila: qalb-i** *my sweetheart* ; **nawwar-ta-na** *You illuminated us* are phrases and clauses that are not normally used between males. It will be culturally embarrassing to use with a female.

The statements (31-36) below, share of common ground between the interviewer and the interviewee is achieved on record within PP, as follows:

31. T: **malyo:n riya:l? Tayyibb 'ana 'abi 'iḍa 'axaḏ ed-dawri**  
 One million riyal? OK I want if won the-football game  
**el-hila:l' aw el-'ahli ; w- eš li?**  
 the-Hilal or the-Ahli ; and what for me  
*A million Riyal? Okay, suppose if Al-Hilal or Al-Ahli won the football game,  
 How much will I get?*
32. M: **madri 'int weš tabi Tayyib?**  
 don't know you what want then  
*I don't know... what do you want then?*
33. T: **malyu:n-ein w neṢ**  
 million-two and half  
*Two million and a half.*
34. M: **la Hawla w la qwwata 'illa: bil-la:h**  
 no power and no strength except in-Allah  
*Ooh dear me! (Lit. "There is no power but in Allah!")*
35. T: **swa:li:f flu:s**  
 talk money  
*Money talk!*
36. M: **xalha xalha 9ala kabsah hahaha**  
 let it be let it be on kabsa (meal) hahaha  
*Let it be (a celebration) on kabsah, hahaha (A Saudi dish).*

The above exchange exhibits their promises if their football teams win the final match which conveys reflexivity and that both interlocutors are cooperators. They have the joke in (33) as common ground positive strategy to comply with the flow of the exchange.

Below are (37 and 38) also contain positive politeness, as:

37. M: **mu: tajammu9 ya: Habi:bi**  
 not gathering you darling  
*It is not crowded, buddy!*
38. T: **ya rajjal Landan əlše:la:t fi l-šawa:ri9 tisma9-ha**  
 yo man (in)London Sheilas (Saudi music) in the streets hear-that  
*Ooh man! In London, You can hear the Sheilas (Saudi music) in the streets!*

The addressing forms of common ground are also seen in (37 and 38) **ya: Habi:bi** *darling*; and in (38) above, **ya rajjal** *oh man*.

The statements below, (39-42), manifest common ground of cooperation between T and M, in PP strategy, as follows:

39. T: **fi ḡalaḡ šwa:ri9 illi fi:-ha al-9alam kelhum S9u:diyyi:n w kellen**

in three streets that in-them the-flag all of-them Saudis and all  
**ja:yib qarḌ ga:9di:n kiḍa**  
bring loan sit there  
*Three streets are full of Saudis where everyone there took a loan and sat there.*

40. M: **hhhhhh !! ja:z-at li , ja:z-at li**  
Haha! Like-it me, lik-it me  
*Haha! I like it! I like it!*

41. T: **Ṣaḥ wala la?**  
correct or no  
*Is this correct or not?*

42. M: **eeh! ṢaHi:H ; ṢaHi:H**  
Yeh! Correct; correct  
*Yes, that is correct.*

The statements (40 and 42) above, show M's approval to T and thus the FTA is done on record with redress to T's wants.

Similar examples are (43-44) below, in which PP strategy of common ground between T and M is used as follows:

43. T: **ya9ni l-faḍl el-'awal w el-'axi:r li-lsna:b?**  
Means the-credit is the-first and the-last due-to snap  
*This means that the credit goes for Snap (Snapchat).*

44. M: **li-lḷa:h ʔum li-lsna:b**  
For-Allah then for-snap  
*The credit goes for Allah then for Snapchat.*

The statements above stress agreement with H. Both strategies are used to claim common ground with H (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

The statements (45-50) below, include the use of address forms also to indicate common ground, as follows:

45. M: **ma tHib al-flu:s?**  
not like the-money  
*Don't you like money?*

46. T: **yaxi bas 'a-stiHi**  
my bro, but I-shy  
*Yes bro, but I'm shy.*

47. M: 'ana 'astiHi ya rajja:l 9aša:n kiḍa 'agu:l il-hum haḍa 'i9la:n  
 I am shy you man because this I say for-them this ad  
*I'm shy (wavering) bro. That's why I say to them that this is an ad.*
48. T: ya9ni 'aktib 'i9la:n w xala:Ş?  
 It means I write an ad. and finish  
*It means I just write that it is an ad and that's it?*

49. M: 'aktib 'i9la:n gabil haḍa? 'i9la:n ya jama:9ah  
 I write an ad before this ? ad guys  
*Shall I write that it is an ad before this? An ad, guys?*

50. T: Helu 'ant 9allamta-na el-Tari:qah  
 Nice you told -us the-way  
*Nice, you let me know the way*

Common ground of PP are achieved by using: (46): **yaxi** *my bro*; (47): **ya rajja:l** *yo man*, repetition of some phrases in (46 and 47): **'astiHi** *I feel shy*; (49): **'aktib 'i9la:n** *write an ad* and phrases that presuppose that H's values are the same as S's values. All such strategies are positive and are used to claim a common ground.

In (51 and 52) below, over-approval is used for claiming common ground in PP strategy, as follows:

51. T: 99% fi: Twitter 'ana 'u'ayyid kala:mik  
 99% in Twitter I support your words  
*99% in twitter, I support what you say.*
52. M: (shaking hands with T) law fi: maja:l, bist 'i:d-ik ba9ad  
 If there a chance, I kiss hand-your too  
*If there is a chance, I would kiss your hand too.*

In 51 above, T is exaggerating approval and sympathy with M which is followed as in (52), by a kinetic act by M (shaking hands with T) and the phrase: **bist 'i:d-ik** *kiss your hand*, that reflects his approval with T. Both acts presuppose that the two speakers share the same values and thus claiming a common ground (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Below, in 53 and 54, the addresser laughs at the joke by M, as follows:

53. M: 'adri fi: na:s mustafizi:n, Ta:rig. 'ana 'attifig ma9kum  
 I know there people antagonise, Tariq, I agree with you  
**'aHya:nan yeku:n mustafiz 'inna yirfa9 ḌağTi widdi 'asi:bbinnah**

sometimes there antagonize that raise my-temper i feel like cursing  
*Tariq, I know there're people who can raise temper! I agree with you sometimes  
a person antagonises to the extent to raise my temper and I feel like cursing him!*

54. T: **hahaha**

hahaha

*Yes, sure.*

M is making a joke in (53) and it is a basic positive politeness technique that stresses the shared values between the speakers. It is achieved on PP strategy.

In 55 and 56 below also have PP strategy, as follows:

55. T: **šu:f šu:f 'alHeen tru:H 'i-jra:'im l-'ilektro:niyyah fi: 'abšir**

look look now you go to-crime the- electronic in Absher(link)

**Şawwiha w 'arsil-ha**

Do it and send it

*Look look, now you go to cybercrime in Absher. Do it and send it.*

56. M: **ŞaHi:H, ŞaHi:H! Hitta ma: 'aru:H li- lš-šerTah**

*True! So there is no need to go to the police.*

In statement (55) above, T intensifies his interest to M and thus presupposing that his values are the same as M's values. Common ground of PP (56) is achieved on repetition of **ŞaHi:H** *True*.

#### **4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

According to the above data (1-27), in sub-section (4.2.1) above, ((NP) negative politeness strategies that are used by the female interviewee are the following: manner hedge (2 and 27), relevance hedge (7), quality hedge (9, 12, 21), giving deference (4 and 6) and contradiction (24). She also used one positive politeness strategy which is joking (14 and 16). In addition, there is an instance of an FTA that is used to offend S's negative face and constitute criticism to H (24). With reference to the interviewer, there are instances of one negative politeness strategy (prosodic *ummmms* and *uhhhs*) which is found in three statements (5,11,18). Also, two positive politeness strategies are found: joking (6, 15) and the use of address forms (187).

In the second interview, (sub-section 4.2.2 above), data (28-56), in which the interviewee is a male, 6 positive politeness strategies are found in the data: address forms (28, 36, 47), promises (31, 35), exaggeration of approval (28, 39, 41, 52, 56), repetition (43, 47, 49), joking (53) and presupposing H's values are the same as S's values (52, 56). With regards to the interviewer,

the data shows that there are also 6 positive politeness strategies: address forms (29, 46), promises (30, 32), repetition (44, 48), presupposing H's values are the same as S's values (51), exaggeration of approval (51) and intensifying interest to H (55). There are no instances of statements that reflect negative politeness in this interview. Such strategies that are used between male interlocutors indicate a common ground and convey that both of them are co-operators.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This article investigates variations in politeness strategies employed by male and female interviewees in their naturally occurred interaction with their male interviewer. In addition, it examines if the interviewer uses different politeness strategies with the male and female interviewees. The results show that the female interviewer uses negative politeness most of the time (9 statements) and only two statements that reflect positive politeness are detected. The male interviewer was neutral with the female interviewee; there are three statements that reflect positive politeness and three others that reflect negative politeness. On the other hand, the male interviewee uses only (PP) positive politeness strategies (17 statements) in his interaction with the interviewer. Similarly, all the politeness strategies used by the interviewer are positive (9 statements). Such strategies that are used between male interlocutors indicate common ground and convey that both are cooperators. According to Brown & Levinson (1987), "positive-politeness utterances are used as a kind of metaphorical extension of intimacy, to imply common ground or sharing of wants to a limited extent even between strangers who perceive themselves . . . as somehow similar" (p. 103). It is apparent that politeness is a universal dimension of human communication (Lakoff, 1973; Brown & Levinson, 1987). Further studies are recommended to be conducted to investigate a wider number of interviews from the same TV show in order to consider this point in addition to examining other aspects of gender politeness in the Saudi culture.

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**List of PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION representing the Saudi-Arabic data throughout this article,  
(adapted from Hussein, 1998: 13-14)**

<b>A. <u>The consonants</u></b>	<b><u>Phonological Description</u></b>	<b><u>Arabic letters</u></b>
/ʔ/	Glottal stop	أ
/b/	Voiceless bilabial stop	ب
/t/	Voiceless alveolar stop	ت
/θ/	Voiceless dental fricative	ث
/j/	Voiced palatal affricate	ج
/H/	Voiceless pharyngeal fricative	ح
/x/	Voiceless uvular fricative	خ
/d/	Voiced alveolar stop	د
/ḏ/	Voiced Dental fricative	ذ
/r/	Voiced alveolar flap	ر
/z/	Voiced alveolar fricative	ز
/s/	Voiceless alveolar fricative	س
/š/	Voiceless palate-alveolar fricative	ش
/S/	Voiceless velarized alveolar fricative	ص
/D/	Voiced velarized alveolar stop	ض
/T/	Voiceless velarized alveolar stop	ط
/Ḍ/	Voiceless velarized alveolar stop	ظ
/ɣ/	Voiced pharyngealized fricative	ع
/ġ/	Voiced uvular fricative	غ
/f/	Voiceless labiodental fricative	ف
/q/	Voiceless uvular stop	ق
/k/	Voiceless velar stop	ك
/l/	voiced (or Voiceless) alveolar lateral	ل
/m/	Voiced bilabial nasal	م

/n/	Voiced alveolar nasal	ن
/h/	Voiceless glottal fricative	هـ
/w/	Voiced bilabial semi-vowel	و
/y/	Voiced palatal semi-vowel	ي

## B. The Vowels

### *Monophthongs* Phonological Description

/a/	short half-open unrounded
/a:/	long open-front unrounded
/e/	mid-front unrounded
/i/	short half-close front unrounded
/i:/	long close-front unrounded
/u/	short half-close back rounded
/u:/	long close-back rounded
/o:/	long half-close rounded

### *Monophthongs* Phonological Description

/aw/	Open front unrounded vowel moving towards a close back round vowel.
/ay/	Open front unrounded vowel moving towards a close front unrounded vowel.