

Differences in the Use of Politeness Maxims among First and Fourth-Year Iraqi University Students

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Abstract:

A positive environment of respect and cooperation encourages individuals to communicate effectively and create fruitful discussions, which is what the use of politeness principle contributes to. Using this principle in the educational environment has positive results in improving the quality of communication, especially between students themselves, as using polite language contributes to building healthy social relationships. However, the extent of commitment to using this principle of politeness may differ due to the influence of some factors. Based on Leech's maxims of politeness, this study investigates the use of politeness principles among university students, specifically first and fourth-year students, considering sex differences. It aims to examine whether sex and age impact students' use of the politeness principle and whether there is a development or change in the use of these principles by fourth-year students compared to first years. A quantitative approach was employed, with data collected by distributing questionnaires to the first and fourth-year students from both sexes. The data were analyzed statistically by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) by looking at frequencies and means of use, and applying T-Test and P-Values for validity. The findings showed a significant difference in the use of politeness principles, as the analysis of the first year's interaction showed that females use these principles more than males. In contrast, for the fourth year, the results showed that males use these principles more than females. In addition, the analysis of comparisons showed a development in the use of these principles by fourth-year students of both sexes.

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, Pragmatics, Politeness principle, Leech's politeness maxims, student interaction, sex.

تباين توظيف مبادئ التآدب من قبل الطلبة العراقيين الجامعيين للمرحلتين الأولى والرابعة**أصيل تحسين جمال الهاشمي**

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المستخلص:

إن البيئة الإيجابية التي يسودها الاحترام والتعاون تشجع الأفراد على التواصل بشكل فعال وخلق نقاشات مثمرة، وهذا ما يساهم بفعله استخدام مبادئ التآدب. إذ إن لاستخدام مبادئ التآدب في البيئة التعليمية نتائج إيجابية في تحسين جودة التواصل لاسيما بين الطلاب، حيث يساهم استخدام لغة مهذبة في بناء علاقات صحية. إلا أن الالتزام بمبادئ التآدب قد يختلف بسبب تأثير عدة عوامل. استناداً الى مبادئ التآدب لجيفري ليتش، تبحث هذه الدراسة في استخدام مبادئ التآدب بين طلاب الجامعة، وتحديدًا طلاب المرحلتين الأولى والرابعة، مع الأخذ بالاعتبار اختلاف النوع الاجتماعي. وتهدف الدراسة إلى البحث في ما إذا كان الجنس والعمر تأثير على استخدام الطلاب لمبادئ التآدب بالإضافة الى البحث في ما إذا كانت هناك تغيرات أو تطور في استخدام هذه المبادئ من طلاب المرحلة الرابعة. وقد تطبقت الدراسة الكمية، بتوزيع استبيانات على طلاب المرحلة الأولى والرابعة ومن كلا الجنسين. وتحليل البيانات إحصائياً باستخدام برنامج SPSS باحثاً عن معدلات الاستخدام وتوظيف T-test و P-value للتحقق من الصحة. وأظهرت النتائج وجود فروق معنوية في استخدام مبادئ التآدب، فقد أظهرت نتائج تحليل تفاعلات طلاب المرحلة الأولى أن الإناث يملن الى استخدام هذه المبادئ أكثر من الذكور. في المقابل بالنسبة لطلاب المرحلة الرابعة، فقد أظهرت النتائج أن الذكور يميلون الى استخدام مبادئ التآدب أكثر من الإناث. بالإضافة الى ذلك فقد أظهرت نتائج تحليل المقارنات عن وجود تطور في استخدام هذه المبادئ من طلاب المرحلة الرابعة الإناث والذكور.

الكلمات الدالة: علم اللغة الاجتماعي، علم التداولية، مبادئ التآدب، قواعد ليتش للتآدب، تفاعل الطلاب، النوع الاجتماعي.

1. Introduction

In an academic environment such as a university, principle of politeness plays a vital role in securing a successful interaction between students and professors, fostering a respectful and cooperative learning environment. We may notice that the patterns of politeness vary among university students, and this may be due to several influential factors. Since the university is considered a co-educational environment, it is easy to notice the difference in interaction and adherence to the principle of politeness. Generally, the application of this principle varies among students based on their previous educational background, especially among first-year students compared to older students.

As is known in Iraqi society, schools are generally not mixed (i.e. single-sex schools) regardless of mixed private schools, thus first-year university students coming from a different educational environment (i.e. single-sex schools) may have become accustomed to certain behaviors influenced by sex and institutional culture of the schools they come from. Thus, the transition to a coeducational university environment requires

them to adopt new behaviors and may need to improve their cooperation and interaction skills to fit the new environment. Therefore, we notice this difference, especially when comparing them with fourth-year students, who have gained experience during their years of study at university and their involvement in many interactions with the other sex.

There is a lack of research that explores in detail how the use of politeness principle among university students develops over their undergraduate years from first to fourth year, especially in the case of first-year students who have transitioned from single-sex schools to a co-educational environment at university. These students are not acquainted with interacting with the opposite sex and lack experience communicating and have difficulty adjusting to university life compared to those students in the fourth-year who have more experience in communication and tend to feel more comfortable when interacting with others and may be more willing to offer help and support.

2. Statement of the Problem

As students are enrolled in university education, and mostly coming from a single-sex high school, there is a need to acquire politeness strategies they were perhaps previously unacquainted with as they join a mixed-sex environment and are to engage in cross-sex interaction. This dynamic naturally develops with age as they advance through their university years, and it is interesting to observe how their use of politeness strategies changes with peers, younger, and older students.

3. Research Questions

The study is guided by the following questions:

1. What are the most prominent politeness maxims used by first-year students when interacting with their first-year colleagues, and fourth-year students when they interact with their peers within the same and across different sexes?
2. How do politeness maxims develop and differ between first years and fourth years?

4. Aims of the Study

The present study aims at:

1. Investigating the use of Leech's [1] politeness maxims among university students at college level considering the differences in age and sex.
2. Identifying if there is a difference in the use of these maxims by first-year students compared to fourth-year students when the interaction takes place with the same sex and cross-sex.

5. Significance of the Study

The present study is valuable considering the following:

1. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, there has been no study that specifically compared the interactions of first-year university students who were enrolled in a single-sex educational environment (i.e. single-sex schools) and are not used to interacting with the other sex, with fourth-year university students who gained experience from a co-educational environment as in how to interact tactfully with the other sex. The current study aims to fill this gap.

2. The results are of practical value in developing educational strategies to promote polite communication and improve the quality of university life and interaction among students of different ages and sexes. Both academics and students may benefit from the study's results, as they help in developing awareness programs on the importance of politeness in communication, contributing to a more respectful and understanding university environment.
3. This study benefits graduate and postgraduate students, in addition to junior and even senior academics who have a research interest in pragmatics, in general and the application of Geoffrey Leech's [1] model of politeness in particular.

6. Theoretical Background

In this section, information about theories of politeness, Leech's Politeness Principle (PP), and the maxims of Leech's politeness principle are reviewed.

6.1 Theories of Politeness

In social interaction, both the speakers and the listeners must consider politeness principles. Politeness, as a pragmatic concept, has gained scholarly attention. It is interpreted as a strategy by the interlocutors to promote harmonious relationships as evidenced by Leech [2],[1] and Brown and Levinson [3]. In other words, it shows awareness of another's face. In this sense, politeness is applicable in various social contexts, whether the interlocutors are socially close or distant. Even in the close relationship, it is still important to show politeness by showing respect and appreciation towards the other. Nevertheless, in the close relationship, polite behavior is often interpreted not only as a sign of respect but also as expression of camaraderie, friendliness, and solidarity [4].

6.2 Leech's Politeness Principle (PP)

A principle that can be observed, suspended, breached, or flouted, as stated by Leech [1], is known as the politeness principle. As suggested by Leech, politeness in language involves minimizing the expression of impolite beliefs, thus avoiding direct or blunt utterances that may hurt or cause offense to others. Furthermore, Leech focused on the maximization of the expression of polite beliefs as a positive version of the politeness principle. The politeness principle, as pointed out by Leech, seeks to promote a sense of community and enhance social connections through language use.

Leech's politeness principle, originally proposed in [2] and later expanded in [5] and [1], is regarded as an essential complement to Grice's cooperative principle (CP). It is seen as a guideline governing human communication, urging us to prevent communicative discord and maintain communicative concord [1].

Over the years, Leech's work has evolved remarkably, especially in his investigation of politeness phenomena. In [1], Leech confirmed his theory of politeness, which constitutes a revised version and enhancement of his earlier model proposed in 1983 and 2005.

Leech [2] presented a model of the PP consisting of six maxims that were influenced by the differentiation between positive and negative politeness. Negative politeness refers to the act of minimizing impoliteness by showing respect and avoiding direct imposition.

On the other hand, positive politeness refers to the act of maximizing politeness by focusing on friendliness, closeness, and solidarity with others.

One might interpret Leech's maxims as strategies for achieving both positive and negative politeness. For instance, tact and modesty maxims are consistent with negative politeness since they minimize threats to other's autonomy and self-worth. Furthermore, the maxims of approbation, agreement, generosity, and sympathy correspond to positive politeness by focusing on empathy, and friendliness in communication. Moreover, Leech asserted that speech acts can be either self-centered or other-centered, thus they are bilateral as evidenced by the maxims of generosity and tact, along with modesty and approbation [2].

Leech's [2] maxims of politeness were categorized in the form of six maxims: Tact maxim, Generosity maxim, Approbation maxim, Modesty maxim, Agreement maxim, and Sympathy maxim, but later on, in [1] Leech expanded these maxims of politeness to ten maxims, in his work titled *The Pragmatics of Politeness*, included: Obligation of speaker S to other O, Obligation of other O to speaker S, Opinion reticence maxim, and Feeling reticence maxim.

Leech [1] introduced a single super-constraint, that comprehends all these maxims, known as *the General Strategy of Politeness (GSP)*. Leech's analysis of the GSP claims that to be polite, the speaker (S) will either express or imply meanings that attribute a favorable value to the other person (O) or an unfavorable value to oneself (S). Even if persons have underlying selfish motives, this strategy is used to prevent offense and maintain harmony in communication.

GSP can be illustrated through a set of maxims, these maxims represent specific aspects of the overall strategy, ensuring that communication is consistent with the goals of politeness. These maxims can be organized into pairs that reflect the asymmetry between the speaker (S) and the other (O), where the positive-politeness maxims (odd numbers) are S-oriented and the negative-politeness maxims (even numbers) are H-oriented, as shown in table (1) below [1:p91].

Table (1) The maxims of Leech's politeness principle (PP)**The component maxims of the General Strategy of Politeness**

Maxims (expressed in an imperative mood)	Related pair of maxims	Label for this maxim	Typical speech-event type(s)
(M1) give a high value to O's wants	Generosity, Tact	Generosity	Commissives
(M2) give a low value to S's wants		Tact	Directives
(M3) give a high value to O's qualities	Approbation, Modesty	Approbation	Compliments
(M4) give a low value to S's qualities		Modesty	Self-devaluation
(M5) give a high value to S's obligation to O	Obligation	Obligation (of S to O)	Apologizing, thanking
(M6) give a low value to O's obligation to S		Obligation (of O to S)	Responses to thanks and apologies
(M7) give a high value to O's opinions	Opinion	Agreement	Agreeing, disagreeing
(M8) give a low value to S's opinions		Opinion reticence	Giving opinions
(M9) give a high value to O's feelings	Feeling	Sympathy	Congratulating, commiserating
(M10) give a low value to S's feelings		Feeling reticence	Suppressing feelings

In general, the reformulation of Leech's maxims of politeness highlighted the importance of the *General Strategy of Politeness (GSP)* in directing our communicative behavior. These maxims organize a framework for understanding individual use of politeness in interactions, recognizing values and needs of both speakers and listeners in the interaction.

6.3 The Maxims of Leech's Politeness Principle (PP)

1) Generosity Maxim

Generosity maxim means that the speaker is required to minimize benefit to self and maximize cost to self. This means that the speaker provides means of assistance that the listener needs, such as some time, kinds of help, things, information, knowledge, etc., and by the speaker's utterances he is minimizing benefit to him and maximizing it for the other. Based on [1] generosity maxim means giving a high value to O's wants. It applies to directives such as requesting, advising, instructing, and so on, and commissives such as offering, promising, etc.

2) Tact Maxim

Tact maxim is the most important maxim since it cares about the other rather than the self. This means that the speaker is required to be tactful in communication by minimizing the cost and the benefit to others. Based on [1] tact maxim means giving low value to S's wants. It is used in commissives and directives. A commissive means an utterance used to declare a promise or offer something, while a directive is an utterance

used to command something directly or indirectly like, advising, ordering, requesting, etc.

3) **Approbation Maxim**

Approbation maxim means that the speaker is required to minimize dispraise to others and maximize praise. Expressive and assertive utterances reflect approbation. The expressive is an utterance used to express the speaker's attitude toward a situation such as congratulating, thanking, apologizing, praising, welcoming, etc. On the other hand, the assertive is an utterance commonly used to declare the truth proposition expressed like giving opinions, comments, complaints, suggestions, etc. Based on [1] approbation maxim means giving a high value to O's qualities.

4) **Modesty Maxim**

Modesty maxim means that the speaker is required to minimize praise of self and maximize dispraise of self. It includes self-deprecation. It requires the speaker to be modest by giving low value to his qualities through dispraising himself. It is also expressed by expressive utterances such as thanking, blaming, praising, etc., and assertive utterances such as explaining, stating, etc. Based on [1] modesty maxim means giving a low value to S's qualities.

5) **Obligation of S to O Maxim**

Obligation of S to O maxim means that the speaker is required to minimize burdens on the listener and maximize benefits to the listener. This maxim refers to the speaker's obligation to consider the wants of the other during communication. It includes thankfulness or gratefulness for some favor that the listener has done to the speaker or apologies when the speaker offends the listener. Based on [1] obligation of S to O maxim means giving a high value to S's obligation to O.

6) **Obligation of O to S Maxim**

The obligation of O to S maxim means that the speaker is required to minimize discomfort or awkwardness within interaction which means minimizing any negative emotion that may arise from the interaction and to maximize mutual understanding by responding to apologies of the apologizer by reassuring him that his offense or mistake is forgiven to reduce the fault and thanks to reduce the debts. Based on [1] obligation of O to S maxim means giving a low value to O's obligation to S.

7) **Agreement Maxim**

Agreement maxim means that the speaker is required to minimize disagreement between self and other and maximize agreement between self and other. This happens when the speaker and the listener agree with the opinion shared to promote positive interaction. Based on Leech [1], agreement maxim means giving a high value to O's opinions.

8) **Opinion-reticence Maxim**

Opinion- reticence maxim means that the speaker is required to minimize his own opinions and maximize space for the listener's opinions. In this behavior, the speaker creates a more balanced and respectful conversation that makes others feel comfortable when sharing their thoughts or opinions. It includes the use of hedges (i.e. litter verbal softeners that soften the strength or sharpness of the opinions) such as (Do not you think

that...?, I think..., It may be wrong, but..., Maybe..., This is just my guess..). Based on [1] opinion-reticence maxim means giving a low value to S's opinions.

9) Sympathy Maxim

The sympathy maxim means that the speaker is required to minimize antipathy between self and other and maximize sympathy between self and other. By using this maxim, people show that they care about other's feelings. The sympathy maxim can be interpreted in the form of offering condolences for someone's loss, congratulating someone on his achievements, and expressing empathy when someone is going through a difficult time. So, it includes condolences, congratulations, good wishes, and inquiries about people's health. Based on [1] sympathy maxim means giving a high value on O's feelings.

10) Feeling-reticence Maxim

Feeling-reticence maxim means that the speaker is required to minimize the expression of negative feelings and maximize adherence to social norms or expectations of politeness. This means that it is polite for the speaker to avoid imposing his true feelings on the listener to maintain a positive facade in interaction and avoid making him feel uncomfortable. So, suppressing any bad news falls under this maxim. Based on [1] feeling-reticence maxim means giving a low value to S's feelings.

6.4 Previous studies

Hameed [6] investigated how gender influences the use of politeness strategies among Iraqi fourth-year students focusing on acts threatening an interlocutor's face (FTAs) such as offers, requests, and orders using Brown and Levinson's (1987) model. Data were collected through a written test designed to evaluate the linguistic choices and responses of male and female students in situations requiring specific politeness strategies. The results revealed differences in the use of politeness strategies among male and female students, where males are generally more capable of recognizing polite requests than females, indicating that gender significantly influences this recognition .

Keikhaie and Mozafferi [7] examined the impact of gender on the speakers' politeness strategies to see whether females speak more politely to other females than males or not, and how the politeness of males varies based on the gender of the listener. For that a questionnaire was designed based on the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and distributed to native females and male students aged (19-26) randomly selected from the Razi University in Kermanshah city, educated with different socio-cultural backgrounds. Findings revealed that gender impacts politeness strategies used in communication in that females were more polite with other females whether friends or strangers than with males. It was concluded that the politeness behaviors of the males and females depend on many factors such as the relationship between the listener and the speaker, the gender of the listener, and the role of the culture.

Mohammed [8] addressed classroom interaction from a pragmatic perspective by adopting Leech's 10 politeness maxims. He conducted qualitative and quantitative methods examining the attitudes of teachers and students toward the implication of the politeness maxims in classroom interaction. The data were collected by preparing two questionnaires, one for teachers and the other for fourth-year students for the academic year 2018-2019, revealing a positive attitude by teachers and students toward the

principle of politeness, which helped them apply politeness principles during classroom interactions .

Fitriyah et al. [9] conducted a qualitative study based on Leech's (2014) model to investigate the politeness strategies used by teachers and students through various speech acts, namely directive and expressive speech acts in an (EFL) classroom at an Islamic college, besides how politeness influences the student's compliance. After analyzing the data collected through observation, recordings, and interviews, the findings showed that teachers in Islamic college EFL classes use these ten maxims during their interactions with students. Tact maxim was the most frequent strategy. However, the students did not comply with all the teachers' utterances although they were delivered politely. However, Fitriyah et al. (2020) do not consider any sociolinguistic variables such as gender and age, which would have perhaps enriched their findings further.

Omran and Ahmed [10] investigated the effect of gender on the choice of appropriate politeness strategies in social apologetic contexts based on the socio-pragmatic scale to determine the degree of participants' politeness. They also investigated the politeness principles frequently used by male and female postgraduate EFL students. Omran and Ahmed (2022) utilized the oral DCT as an instrument, supported by a semi-structured interview, which was analyzed qualitatively based on Leech's (2014) model of politeness. The results of this study showed that the participants used most of these politeness maxims in appropriate situations regardless of their gender, which indicates that their gender has a slight effect on the choice of politeness maxims compared to the effect of social status and age, which were the most effective social factors.

Betti and Yousif [11] explored how Iraqi EFL fourth-year university students recognize Leech's politeness principle by conducting descriptive-analytical research by designing a test as a tool for collecting data to evaluate students' recognition of politeness maxims in various conversational contexts to determine if students observe or flout politeness maxims, to assess their mastery of these maxims, and to identify which maxims are most commonly observed or flouted. The authors assumed that the modesty maxim is most observed, the generosity maxim is most flouted, and students are more likely to flout than observe these maxims at the level of recognition. The study emphasizes the need for more instruction on politeness to help students improve their communicative competence because they often do not apply the principle of politeness correctly in conversational contexts.

7. Methodology

This section discusses the overall design of the study, the sample, the data collection procedure, and the data analysis procedure.

7.1 Sample

The study participants were restricted to first and fourth-year students at the University of Mosul, College of Arts, Departments of English, French, and Translation. The total sample size of 104 students was divided into 26 male first-year students, 26 female first-year students, 26 male fourth-year students, and 26 female fourth-year students as these numbers are representative of classes in the College of Arts which average at around 50 students per class.

7.2 Data Collection Procedure

Data for the present study was gathered from students of the College of Arts, restricted to first and fourth-year students of the English, French, and Translation departments. Two questionnaires (See appendices A and B) were designed based on Leech's (2014) maxims of politeness and distributed to the first and fourth-year students in the departments mentioned above to measure the extent to which the politeness maxims are used among them when they interact with their colleagues of the same and different sexes. Distributing and collecting the questionnaires from the departments took about a month to complete. Both questionnaires were distributed after explaining the purpose of the study and the method of answering. Answering the questionnaires took the students no more than 15 minutes.

7.3 Data Analysis Procedure

After collecting data from the students of the College of Arts from the aforementioned departments, the data were analyzed statistically using SPSS and qualitatively based on Leech's (2014) model.

7.3.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze questionnaire results, including calculating means to assess the differences in the use of politeness maxims depending on sex and age. As a first step after collecting data using questionnaires distributed to first and four-year university students of the departments mentioned above, these questionnaires were taken to the Statistical Consulting Office at the University of Mosul to conduct a statistical analysis of all the data. The entire statistical analysis process took about a month, and the researchers received a document confirming the validity of the statistical analysis from the office after completing the analysis.

The Statistical Consulting Office used the SPSS program to analyze all the copies of the questionnaire related to the first and fourth-year students of both sexes to gain the Mean of students' interaction of each sex and the P-value that shows whether or not there is a significant difference. Initially, the office analyzed the questionnaires' responses of the first-year students of both sexes. The questionnaire of male first-year students included their interaction with male (male-male) and female (female-male) colleagues, while the questionnaire of female first-year students included their interaction with female (female-female) and male (male-female) colleagues. The office analyzed all these detailed interactions of the first-year students and then followed the same method of analysis with the questionnaires' responses of the fourth-year students of both sexes. After analyzing all the copies of questionnaire, comparisons were made between the interaction of the students at the same level, for instance, for the first year, the office compared the results of the interaction of (male-male) with the results of the interaction of (female-female) to verify who used maxims of politeness more in their interactions male or female students. In addition to comparing the results of the interaction of (male-female) and (female-male) to see who uses the maxims of politeness more when interacting with the other sex. The same was conducted with the fourth year, and then comparisons were made between the two levels, between interactions of the first year and the fourth year to examine whether there is a development or improvement in the use of the politeness maxims.

After receiving the analysis results presented in the form of tables and graphs (Bar charts) from the Statistical Consulting Office, the researchers analyzed the data of each table and compared the results of the different interactions. All this was done to gain results that prove whether there is an influence of age and sex on students' use of these maxims of politeness or not, and whether there is any development or significant difference in the use of these maxims by first year students when they reach the fourth year.

8. Data Analysis and Discussion

8.1. Comparing First-Year Student Interaction based on Sex

Regarding the first-year students, a comparison was conducted between the interaction of males and females. The results showed that male and female speakers employed relatively the same maxims when interacting with the opposite sex. Although the results were very close, the interaction of (male-female) was greater than (female-male), as this was noticeable in the sympathy maxim, where the interaction of (male-female) showed a high mean of 3.2308 compared to the interaction of (female-male) which showed a mean of 2.7308, which is statistically a significant difference as the P-value is 0.005. The question here was about showing their sympathy and concern for their female colleagues in cases of psychological stress during exams and difficult periods. This means that in some situations male students tend to use politeness maxims in their interactions with their female colleagues more than female students do in their interactions with their male colleagues. As for the interaction of (males with males) and that of (females with females), the results showed that females tend to use politeness maxims when they interact with each other more than males do. This is shown in Table (2), where in tact, agreement, obligation of S (speaker) to O (other), and opinion-reticence maxim, females showed a higher mean than males. For instance, in the obligation of S to O, female interactions with each other showed a high mean of 4.3077 compared to male interactions which showed a relatively low mean of 3.5385. The question here was about expressing their gratitude to their female colleagues when providing a service and acknowledging the kindness they have received by responding in kind.

Table (2) Comparing male interactions with female interactions in the first year.

Variable	Group Statistics						
		Sex		N	Mean	t-test	P-value
Tact maxim	Q1-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.7692	0.638	0.498
		Female	Male-female	26	3.9615		
	Q1-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.3077	2.327	0.024
		Female	Female-female	26	4.0000		
Generosity maxim	Q2-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.2308	0.372	0.711
		Female	Male-female	26	3.3462		
	Q2-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.5769	1.467	0.149
		Female	Female-female	26	3.9231		
Approbation maxim	Q3-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.3846	0.652	0.517
		Female	Male-female	26	3.5769		
	Q3-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.5385	1.383	0.173
		Female	Female-female	26	3.9231		
Modesty maxim	Q4-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.2692	0.582	0.563
		Female	Male-female	26	3.4231		
	Q4-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.3846	0.734	0.467
		Female	Female-female	26	3.6154		
Agreement maxim	Q5-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.8462	0.000	1.000
		Female	Male-female	26	3.8462		
	Q5-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.3846	2.143	0.038
		Female	Female-female	26	3.9615		
Sympathy maxim	Q6-1	Male	Female-male	26	2.7308	1.649	0.005
		Female	Male-female	26	3.2308		
	Q6-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.0000	1.860	0.069
		Female	Female-female	26	3.5385		
Obligation of S to O	Q7-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.4615	0.705	0.484
		Female	Male-female	26	3.6538		
	Q7-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.1538	2.219	0.031
		Female	Female-female	26	3.7692		
	Q7-3	Male	Female-male	26	4.0000	0.723	0.473
		Female	Male-female	26	3.8077		
	Q7-4	Male	Male-male	26	3.5385	2.813	0.007
		Female	Female-female	26	4.3077		
Obligation of O to S	Q8-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.3462	1.582	0.120
		Female	Male-female	26	3.7692		
	Q8-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.2308	1.882	0.066
		Female	Female-female	26	3.7692		
Opinion-reticence maxim	Q9-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.6923	0.418	0.678
		Female	Male-female	26	3.8077		
	Q9-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.1538	2.343	0.023
		Female	Female-female	26	3.8462		
Feeling-reticence maxim	Q10-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.4615	0.724	0.472
		Female	Male-female	26	3.6923		
	Q10-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.2692	0.941	0.351
		Female	Female-female	26	3.5769		

8.2. Comparing Interaction among Fourth Years based on Sex

Concerning fourth-year students, in general, the results showed that males in their interaction with their female colleagues (male-female) tend to use maxims of politeness more than females do when interacting with their male colleagues (female-male). This is shown in Table (3), where in tact, approbation, modesty, and feeling-reticence maxims, males showed higher results in their interaction with their females. For instance, in modesty maxim, (male-female) interaction showed a high mean of 3.4231 compared to (female-male) interaction, which showed a mean of 2.4400. The question was about avoiding bragging and excessive praise of their personal or academic achievements in front of their female colleagues and showing humility in their dealings instead. Also, in the feeling-reticence maxim (male-female) interaction showed a high mean of 3.6923 compared to (female-male) interaction, which showed a mean of 2.7200. The question was about their tendency to avoid expressing negative feelings such as sadness and anger when communicating with their female colleagues. This analysis underscores that male students are keen to be tactful in their dealings with their female colleagues to maintain positive interaction among them. When it comes to females interacting (female-female) with each other and males interacting (male-male) with each other. In general, the results showed that the rate of interaction of females with each other (females-females) is somewhat similar, with a slight difference from the rate of interaction of males with each other (males-males), except in their use of some maxims that were tact, generosity, and obligation of S to O, where the rate of females' interaction with each other was significantly higher than the rate of males' interaction with each other. For instance, in the generosity maxim, the interaction of females (female-female) showed a high mean of 4.1923 compared to males, which showed a mean of 3.2400. The question here was about providing help and support generously without waiting to be asked for. So, female interaction gained a high rate in avoiding missing words or behaviors that might hurt their female colleagues providing help and support generously without waiting to be asked for, and expressing their gratitude to their female colleagues when providing a service, compared to males' interaction with each other who obtained a lower rate.

Table (3) Comparing male interactions with female interactions in the fourth year.

Variable	Group Statistics						
	الفقرات	Sex		N	Mean	t-test	P-value
Tact maxim	Q1-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.4800	2.994	0.004
		Female	Male-female	26	4.1538		
	Q1-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.2000	2.437	0.018
		Female	Female-female	26	3.9615		
Generosity maxim	Q2-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.4400	0.074	0.941
		Female	Male-female	26	3.4615		
	Q2-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.2400	2.719	0.009
		Female	Female-female	26	4.1923		
Approbation maxim	Q3-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.0800	2.775	0.008
		Female	Male-female	26	3.8846		
	Q3-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.3600	1.012	0.316
		Female	Female-female	26	3.6923		
Modesty maxim	Q4-1	Male	Female-male	26	2.4400	3.602	0.001
		Female	Male-female	26	3.4231		
	Q4-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.1600	0.200	0.842
		Female	Female-female	26	3.2308		
Agreement maxim	Q5-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.4400	0.079	0.937
		Female	Male-female	26	3.4615		
	Q5-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.6400	1.353	0.182
		Female	Female-female	26	3.2692		
Sympathy maxim	Q6-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.1600	1.194	0.238
		Female	Male-female	26	3.4615		
	Q6-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.5200	0.642	0.524
		Female	Female-female	26	3.7308		
Obligation of S to O	Q7-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.1200	1.562	0.125
		Female	Male-female	26	3.6154		
	Q7-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.1200	1.171	0.247
		Female	Female-female	26	3.4615		
	Q7-3	Male	Female-male	26	3.6800	1.603	0.115
		Female	Male-female	26	4.1154		
	Q7-4	Male	Male-male	26	3.4800	2.581	0.013
		Female	Female-female	26	4.2308		
Obligation of O to S	Q8-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.3200	0.534	0.596
		Female	Male-female	26	3.4615		
	Q8-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.6800	1.473	0.147
		Female	Female-female	26	3.2692		
Opinion-reticence maxim	Q9-1	Male	Female-male	26	3.3600	0.232	0.817
		Female	Male-female	26	3.4231		
	Q9-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.4800	0.179	0.859
		Female	Female-female	26	3.5385		
Feeling-reticence maxim	Q10-1	Male	Female-male	26	2.7200	3.175	0.003
		Female	Male-female	26	3.6923		
	Q10-2	Male	Male-male	26	3.3200	0.816	0.419
		Female	Female-female	26	3.0385		

8.3. Comparing Politeness Strategies between Fourth-Year and First-Year Students

Student transition between academic levels influences their use of politeness strategies, such as the transition from high school to university and even from the first year to the fourth year of college. In this regard, comparisons of interaction were conducted to investigate the developments and changes in their use of these maxims over the years of study. Concerning the interaction of a female with her male colleague (female-male) in the first and fourth academic years. The result showed a slight change in the rate of use of politeness maxims by females when interacting with their male colleagues in the fourth year compared to the females in the first year when interacting with their male colleagues. Although there was a slight difference, the rates of using these maxims of politeness in the first year were higher than in the fourth year, meaning that using these maxims decreased slightly in the fourth year, especially in modesty and feeling-reticence maxims. This is shown in Table (4) and Figure (1), where modesty maxim, (female-male) interaction in the fourth year showed a mean of 2.42 compared to the first year which showed a high mean of 3.27. The question was about avoiding bragging and excessive praise of their personal or academic achievements in front of their male colleagues and showing humility in their dealing instead. In addition, female fourth-year students also showed a low use rate of the feeling-reticence maxim, where they showed a mean of 2.65 compared to the females in the first year, which showed a high mean of 3.46. The question was about their tendency to avoid expressing their negative feelings such as anger and sadness when communicating with their male colleagues and instead focus on the positive side. As for whether there is a development in the use of these maxims, we can notice there is a slight development in the use of generosity and sympathy maxims.

Table (4) Comparison between female-male first-year interaction and female-male fourth-year interaction.

Variable		Sex	Year	Mean	T-test	P-value
Tact maxim	Q1-1	Female-Male	First	3.77	0.979	0.332
		Female-Male	Fourth	3.50		
Generosity maxim	Q2-1	Female-Male	First	3.23	0.864	0.392
		Female-Male	Fourth	3.50		
Approbation maxim	Q3-1	Female-Male	First	3.38	0.853	0.398
		Female-Male	Fourth	3.12		
Modesty maxim	Q4-1	Female-Male	First	3.27	3.350	0.002
		Female-Male	Fourth	2.42		
Agreement maxim	Q5-1	Female-Male	First	3.85	1.500	0.140
		Female-Male	Fourth	3.42		
Sympathy maxim	Q6-1	Female-Male	First	2.73	1.556	0.126
		Female-Male	Fourth	3.19		
Obligation of S to O	Q7-1	Female-Male	First	3.46	1.334	0.189
		Female-Male	Fourth	3.04		
	Q7-3	Female-Male	First	4.00	1.162	0.251
		Female-Male	Fourth	3.69		
Obligation of O to S	Q8-1	Female-Male	First	3.35	0.000	1.000
		Female-Male	Fourth	3.35		
Opinion-reticence maxim	Q9-1	Female-Male	First	3.69	1.051	0.298
		Female-Male	Fourth	3.38		
Feeling-reticence maxim	Q10-1	Female-Male	First	3.46	2.421	0.019
		Female-Male	Fourth	2.65		

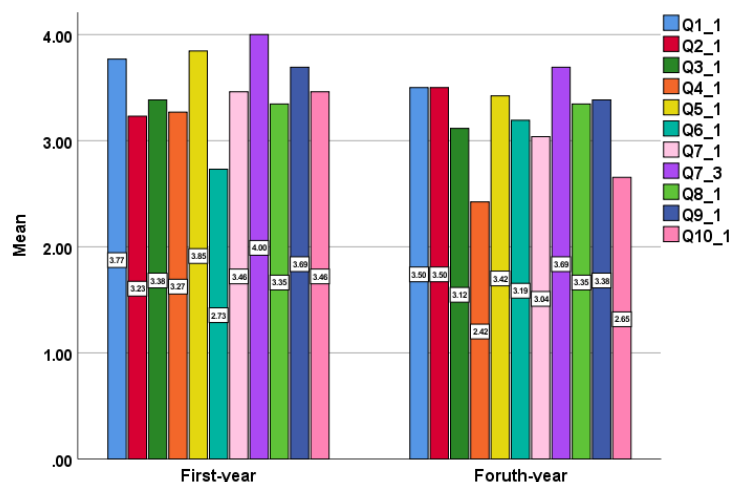


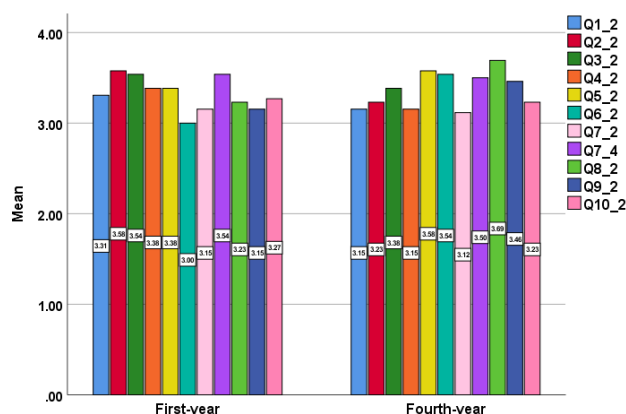
Figure (1) The difference between female-male first-year interaction and female-male fourth-year interaction.

When it comes to the males' interaction with each other, the results of the comparison between the first and fourth years did not show a noticeable change in the use of politeness maxims. In general, the rate of use of politeness maxims by male students among themselves in the fourth year is less than in the first year. This means there was no development in using these maxims of politeness by male fourth-year students compared to male first-year students. This is shown in Table (5) and Figure (2), although the first-year student showed slightly higher rates than the fourth-year students, the development and change occurred in the maxims of agreement, sympathy, obligation of O to S, and opinion-reticence maxim, where males' interaction increased significantly during the fourth year compared to the initial year. For instance, in the sympathy maxim, males in the fourth year showed a high mean of 3.54 compared to the first year, which showed a mean of 3.00. The question was about showing their sympathy and concern for their male colleagues in cases of psychological stress during exams and difficult periods.

In addition, fourth-year males became more polite in their response to their male colleagues' apologies to maintain positive communication between them (obligation of O to S), in reducing the intensity of their opinions when interacting with their male colleagues on a certain topic (opinion-reticence maxim), and in politely agreeing with the opinions of their male colleagues (agreement maxim). On the other hand, their use of the maxims of tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, obligation of S to O, and feeling-reticence has decreased slightly.

Table (5) comparison between male-male first-year interaction and male-male fourth-year interaction.

Variable		Sex	Year	Mean	T-test	P-value
Tact maxim	Q1-2	Male -Male	First	3.31	0.447	0.657
		Male -Male	Fourth	3.15		
Generosity maxim	Q2-2	Male -Male	First	3.58	1.048	0.300
		Male -Male	Fourth	3.23		
Approbation maxim	Q3-2	Male -Male	First	3.54	0.448	0.656
		Male -Male	Fourth	3.38		
Modesty maxim	Q4-2	Male -Male	First	3.38	0.660	0.512
		Male -Male	Fourth	3.15		
Agreement maxim	Q5-2	Male -Male	First	3.38	0.652	0.517
		Male -Male	Fourth	3.58		
Sympathy maxim	Q6-2	Male -Male	First	3.00	1.613	0.113
		Male -Male	Fourth	3.54		
Obligation of S to O	Q7-2	Male -Male	First	3.15	0.136	0.892
		Male -Male	Fourth	3.12		
	Q7-4	Male -Male	First	3.54	0.120	0.905
		Male -Male	Fourth	3.50		
Obligation of O to S	Q8-2	Male -Male	First	3.23	1.543	0.129
		Male -Male	Fourth	3.69		
Opinion-reticence maxim	Q9-2	Male -Male	First	3.15	0.901	0.372
		Male -Male	Fourth	3.46		
Feeling-reticence maxim	Q10-2	Male -Male	First	3.27	0.104	0.918
		Male -Male	Fourth	3.23		

**Figure (2) mean of the difference between male-male first-year interaction and male-male fourth-year interaction.**

As for comparing the interaction of males with females (male-female) in the first year with the fourth year, the results showed a change and improvement in the use of politeness maxims by the male students in the fourth year when interacting with their female colleagues. The development was in using tact, generosity, approbation, sympathy, and obligation of S to O maxims. This is shown in Table (6) and Figure (3), where male fourth-year students showed improvement and development in avoiding

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misusing words or behaviors that might hurt their female colleagues, and in providing help and support generously to their female colleagues without waiting to be asked for, in recognition of their female colleagues' achievements in the class or university activities and expressing appreciation for their efforts, and in showing their sympathy for their colleagues during the exams and difficult periods. For instance, in approbation maxim, (male-female) interaction in the fourth year showed a high mean of 3.88 compared to the first year, which showed a mean of 3.58. On the other hand, the use of agreement, obligation of O to S, and opinion-reticence maxims decreased in the fourth year by male students when interacting with their female colleagues. In addition, the results also showed identical means for both the first and fourth years, as in modesty at 3.42 and feeling-reticence maxims at 3.69, where the mean for both years was the same. For the comparison, there is a slight increase in the means of the fourth year, but the (P-value) indicates that this increase is not statistically significant.

In general, we can say that there are some slight changes in the means between the first and fourth years, but these changes are not statistically significant (i.e. P-value > 0.05). This means the differences observed may be due to chance and do not reflect a real development in the use of these maxims by the male students in the fourth year.

Table (6) comparison between male-female first-year interaction and male- female fourth-year interaction.

Variable		Sex	Year	Mean	T-test	P-value
Tact maxim	Q1-1	Male-Female	First	3.96	0.837	0.407
		Male-Female	Fourth	4.15		
Generosity maxim	Q2-1	Male-Female	First	3.35	0.399	0.692
		Male-Female	Fourth	3.46		
Approbation maxim	Q3-1	Male-Female	First	3.58	1.169	0.248
		Male-Female	Fourth	3.88		
Modesty maxim	Q4-1	Male-Female	First	3.42	0.000	1.000
		Male-Female	Fourth	3.42		
Agreement maxim	Q5-1	Male-Female	First	3.85	1.594	0.117
		Male-Female	Fourth	3.46		
Sympathy maxim	Q6-1	Male-Female	First	3.23	0.896	0.374
		Male-Female	Fourth	3.46		
Obligation of S to O	Q7-1	Male-Female	First	3.65	0.139	0.890
		Male-Female	Fourth	3.62		
	Q7-3	Male-Female	First	3.81	1.148	0.256
		Male-Female	Fourth	4.12		
Obligation of O to S	Q8-1	Male-Female	First	3.77	1.255	0.215
		Male-Female	Fourth	3.46		
Opinion-reticence maxim	Q9-1	Male-Female	First	3.81	1.543	0.129
		Male-Female	Fourth	3.42		
Feeling-reticence maxim	Q10-1	Male-Female	First	3.69	0.000	1.000
		Male-Female	Fourth	3.69		

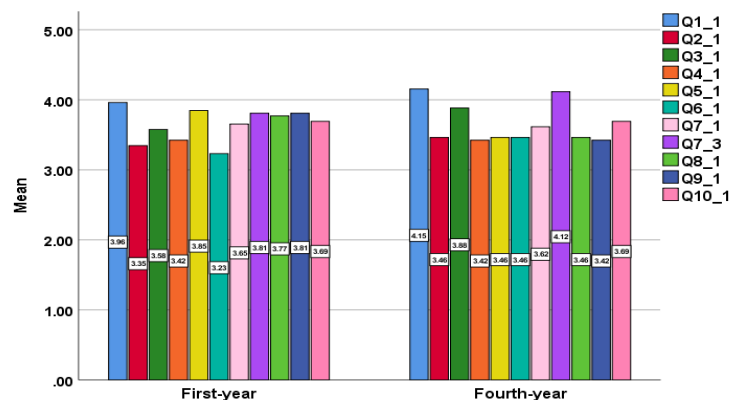


Figure (3) Difference between male-female first-year interaction and male-female fourth-year interaction.

Regarding the comparison of the interaction of females with each other in the first year with the fourth year, the results showed a general trend that there was a decrease in the use of most politeness maxims, highlighting statistically significant differences between the first and fourth years in their use of the maxims of agreement, obligation of O to S, and feeling-reticence, where the P-value is less than 0.05. As for the rest of the maxims (tact, approbation, modesty, obligation of S to O, opinion-reticence) no statistically significant differences were shown except for a slight decrease. This means the interaction between females in the first and fourth years did not change or develop significantly in those maxims. This is shown in Table (7) and Figure (4), where in agreement, obligation of O to S, and feeling-reticence maxims, females in the fourth year showed lower means than first-year. This means the use of these maxims in the fourth year has decreased significantly. We can say that females in the fourth year were not tactful enough in situations requiring them to agree with their female colleagues' opinions politely, and in their response to their female colleagues' apologies to maintain positive communication between them. In addition to situations that require them to avoid expressing their negative feelings when interacting with their female colleagues such as anger, sadness, or anxiety about a certain subject focusing instead on positive aspects. For instance, in agreement maxim, females in the fourth year showed a mean of 3.27 compared to females in the first year which showed a high mean of 3.96. The question here was about politely agreeing with the opinions of their female colleagues. The results also revealed an improvement in the use of two maxims, generosity and sympathy maxims, by female fourth-year students. For instance, in generosity maxim females in the fourth-year showed a high mean of 4.19 compared to females in the first-year which showed a mean of 3.92 in providing help and support to their female colleagues generously without waiting to be asked for.

Table (7) comparison between female-female first-year interaction and female-female fourth-year interaction.

Variable		Sex	Year	Mean	T-test	P-value
Tact maxim	Q1-2	Female-Female	First	4.00	0.150	0.882
		Female-Female	Fourth	3.96		
Generosity maxim	Q2-2	Female-Female	First	3.92	1.061	0.294
		Female-Female	Fourth	4.19		
Approbation maxim	Q3-2	Female-Female	First	3.92	0.915	0.365
		Female-Female	Fourth	3.69		
Modesty maxim	Q4-2	Female-Female	First	3.62	1.238	0.222
		Female-Female	Fourth	3.23		
Agreement maxim	Q5-2	Female-Female	First	3.96	2.788	0.007
		Female-Female	Fourth	3.27		
Sympathy maxim	Q6-2	Female-Female	First	3.54	0.696	0.489
		Female-Female	Fourth	3.73		
Obligation of S to O	Q7-2	Female-Female	First	3.77	1.098	0.278
		Female-Female	Fourth	3.46		
	Q7-4	Female-Female	First	4.31	0.336	0.739
		Female-Female	Fourth	4.23		
Obligation of O to S	Q8-2	Female-Female	First	3.77	1.988	0.049
		Female-Female	Fourth	3.27		
Opinion-reticence maxim	Q9-2	Female-Female	First	3.85	1.134	0.262
		Female-Female	Fourth	3.54		
Feeling-reticence maxim	Q10-2	Female-Female	First	3.58	1.998	0.045
		Female-Female	Fourth	3.04		

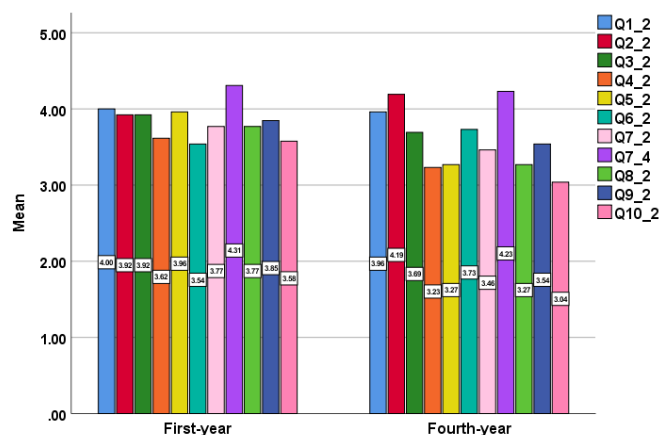


Figure (4) mean of the difference between female-female first-year interaction and female-female fourth-year interaction.

9. Conclusions

Based on data analysis, the following conclusions were derived:

- Both first and fourth-year students have positive attitudes toward the politeness principle. However, there were statistically significant differences in the use of these maxims. Certainly, the reason behind that was due to the sex of the addressee as the results showed, where there was an increase in the use of this principle by one sex and a decrease by the other. Concerning the first-year, female students showed a higher mean of using the politeness principles in their interaction with their male and

female colleagues more than male students did in their interaction with their male and female colleagues. Regarding fourth-year, male students showed a higher mean of using politeness principles in their interaction with their female colleagues more than females did.

- 2) As students advance and reach the fourth year, an improvement is noticed in the use of politeness principles specifically by male students. This development is due to the social and linguistic maturity of males and their awareness of the importance of these principles in promoting respect in their relationships. In addition, the continuous coexistence of male students with their female colleagues during the three years of university study led to positive development in their behavior and improvement in their use of these principles. The continuous interaction of male students with their female colleagues enhances their awareness of the differences in communication styles, which in turn leads them to improve their behavior to become more polite.
- 3) Usually in their first-year female students are keen to follow the principle of politeness in an attempt to adapt to the new educational environment and interact positively with their colleagues specifically male students, as they come from a single-sex educational environment and are not used to interact with other sex. However, with time and getting used to the coeducational environment, they will feel more comfortable in their interactions, which leads female students to reduce the excessive use of these principles of politeness. So, the change in the use of these maxims was slight, except in certain maxims the reduction in their use was noticeable.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

There are no conflicts of interest

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Appendix A

First and fourth-year questionnaire for females:

1. Tact maxim

Male students show humility and respect in their interactions with their **female** colleagues, avoiding the misuse of words or behaviors that could hurt them when they ask for something or give advice.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Female students show humility and respect in their interactions with their **female** colleagues, avoiding the misuse of words or behaviors that could hurt them when they ask for something or give advice.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

2. Generosity maxim

Male students generously provide help and support to their **female** colleagues who are facing difficulties in their studies or university life, without waiting to ask for it.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Female students generously provide help and support to their **female** colleagues who are facing difficulties in their studies or university life, without waiting to ask for it.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

3. Approbation maxim

Male students acknowledge the achievements of their **female** colleagues in classroom or university activities and express appreciation for their efforts while communicating and interacting with them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Female students acknowledge the achievements of their **female** colleagues in the classroom or university activities and express appreciation for their efforts while communicating and interacting with them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

4. Modesty maxim

Male students avoid bragging and excessive praise of their personal or academic achievements in front of their **female** colleagues and instead show humility in their dealings with them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Female students avoid bragging and excessive praise of their personal or academic achievements in front of their **female** colleagues and instead show humility in their dealings with them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

5. Agreement maxim

Male students politely show agreement with the opinions of their **female** colleagues in their conversations inside or outside the classroom, and when there is a difference of opinion, they show respect for diversity of opinions.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Female students politely show agreement with the opinions of their **female** colleagues in their conversations inside or outside the classroom, and when there is a difference of opinion, they show respect for diversity of opinions.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

6. Sympathy maxim

Male students show understanding and support for their **female** colleagues in psychological stress or tension during exams and difficult academic periods and show sympathy and concern for them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Female students show understanding and support for their **female** colleagues in psychological stress or tension during exams and difficult academic periods and show sympathy and concern for them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

7. Obligation of S to O maxim

Male students express their apologies to their **female** colleagues when they offend them during their conversations or interactions to reduce the severity of abuse.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Female students express their apologies to their **female** colleagues when they offend them during their conversations or interactions to reduce the severity of abuse.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Male students express their gratitude and thanks to their **female** colleagues when they provide them a favor, acknowledging the kindness they have received by responding in kind.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Female students express their gratitude and thanks to their **female** colleagues when they provide them a favor, acknowledging the kindness they have received by responding in kind.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

8. Obligation of O to S maxim

Male students respond to the apology of their **female** colleagues by reducing the importance of the mistake committed or indicating that it is not an important problem to maintain positive communication between them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Female students respond to the apology of their **female** colleagues by reducing the importance of the mistake committed or indicating that it is not an important problem to maintain positive communication between them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

9. Opinion-reticence maxim

Male students soften the intensity of their opinions on a certain subject when they interact with their **female** colleagues by using phrases like (I think ..., it seems that ..., perhaps ...) to maintain politeness in communication. For example (I think you should put more effort into your studies to achieve a better grade.)

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Female students soften the intensity of their opinions on a certain subject when they interact with their **female** colleagues by using phrases like (I think ..., it seems that ..., perhaps ...) to maintain politeness in communication. For example (I think you should put more effort into your studies to achieve a better grade.)

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

10. Feeling-reticence maxim

Male students tend to avoid expressing their negative feelings such as sadness, anger, or anxiety about a certain subject while communicating with their **female** colleagues, focusing instead on the positive aspect of the subject.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Female students tend to avoid expressing their negative feelings such as sadness, anger, or anxiety about a certain subject while communicating with their **female** colleagues, focusing instead on the positive aspect of the subject.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Appendix B

First and fourth-year questionnaire for males:

1. Tact maxim

Female students show humility and respect in their interactions with their **male** colleagues, avoiding the misuse of words or behaviors that could hurt them when they ask for something or give advice.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Male students show humility and respect in their interactions with their **male** colleagues, avoiding the misuse of words or behaviors that could hurt them when they ask for something or give advice.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

2. Generosity maxim

Female students generously provide help and support to their **male** colleagues who are facing difficulties in their studies or university life, without waiting to ask for it.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Male students generously provide help and support to their **male** colleagues who are facing difficulties in their studies or university life, without waiting to ask for it.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

3. Approbation maxim

Female students acknowledge the achievements of their **male** colleagues in classroom or university activities and express appreciation for their efforts while communicating and interacting with them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Male students acknowledge the achievements of their **male** colleagues in the classroom or university activities and express appreciation for their efforts while communicating and interacting with them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

4. Modesty maxim

Female students avoid bragging and excessive praise of their personal or academic achievements in front of their **male** colleagues and instead show humility in their dealings with them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Male students avoid bragging and excessive praise of their personal or academic achievements in front of their **male** colleagues and instead show humility in their dealings with them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

5. Agreement maxim

Female students politely show agreement with the opinions of their **male** colleagues in their conversations inside or outside the classroom, and when there is a difference of opinion, they show respect for diversity of opinions.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Male students politely show agreement with the opinions of their **male** colleagues in their conversations inside or outside the classroom, and when there is a difference of opinion, they show respect for diversity of opinions.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

6. Sympathy maxim

Female students show understanding and support for their **male** colleagues in psychological stress or tension during exams and difficult academic periods and show sympathy and concern for them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Male students show understanding and support for their **male** colleagues in psychological stress or tension during exams and difficult academic periods and show sympathy and concern for them in those situations.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

7. Obligation of S to O maxim

Female students express their apologies to their **male** colleagues when they offend them during their conversations or interactions to reduce the severity of abuse.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Male students express their apologies to their **male** colleagues when they offend them during their conversations or interactions to reduce the severity of abuse.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Female students express their gratitude and thanks to their **male** colleagues when they provide them a favor, acknowledging the kindness they have received by responding in kind.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Male students express their gratitude and thanks to their **male** colleagues when they provide them a favor, acknowledging the kindness they have received by responding in kind.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

8. Obligation of O to S maxim

Female students respond to the apology of their **male** colleagues by reducing the importance of the mistake committed or indicating that it is not an important problem to maintain positive communication between them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Male students respond to the apology of their **male** colleagues by reducing the importance of the mistake committed or indicating that it is not an important problem to maintain positive communication between them.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

9. Opinion-reticence maxim

Female students soften the intensity of their opinions on a certain subject when they interact with their **male** colleagues by using phrases like (I think ..., it seems that ..., perhaps ...) to maintain politeness in communication. For example (I think you should put more effort into your studies to achieve a better grade.)

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Male students soften the intensity of their opinions on a certain subject when they interact with their **male** colleagues by using phrases like (I think ..., it seems that ..., perhaps ...) to maintain politeness in communication. For example (I think you should put more effort into your studies to achieve a better grade.)

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

10. Feeling-reticence maxim

Female students tend to avoid expressing their negative feelings such as sadness, anger, or anxiety about a certain subject while communicating with their **male** colleagues, focusing instead on the positive aspect of the subject.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree

Male students tend to avoid expressing their negative feelings such as sadness, anger, or anxiety about a certain subject while communicating with their **male** colleagues, focusing instead on the positive aspect of the subject.

I strongly agree	I agree	Neutral	I disagree	I strongly disagree