A Study of Language and Power in Persian Workplace Discourse with a Focus on Forms of Address and Politeness Strategies

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Abstract

Terms of address are an important part of "face" (Brown and Levinson, 1987) for colleagues in workplace discourse. This study investigates the ways power relations influence politeness strategies in choosing address terms. In order to determine whether and to what extent the realization of forms of address and the choice of appropriate politeness strategies by Iranian Persian speaking male and female colleagues differ in relation to people with different power status, interactions between English teachers during the fifteen-minute breaks after each class were recorded. Three English teaching institutes were selected to study the effect of gender on applying politeness strategies in addressing the colleagues; male's, female's, and mixed gender workplace. Ten conversations from each institute were transcribed. Using Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model, politeness strategies residing in different forms of address employed by colleagues were identified and analyzed based on the power differences between interlocutors. Also address terms were counted according to the situation in which they were used. The findings of this study provide some evidence for the relation between gender and type of address terms and choice of politeness strategies associated with colleagues with different power status. A person with less power would prefer to use negative politeness strategies whereas a person with more power would tend to use positive ones in addressing colleagues at work.

Key words: politeness;forms of address;workplace discourse;power;gender

1.Introduction

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics studying of the aspects of meaning and language use that are dependent on the speaker, the addressee and other features of the context of utterance.The ability to communicate effectively is the key aspect of utterances incommunication between colleagues in workplace.People usually communicate their ideas through conversation. In having conversation, people are advisable to be careful in using strategy in order to maintain the communication. They also must be aware of the politeness strategy to make their communication more acceptable by the others. Social factors such as solidarity, gender, age, or power can be regarded as the factors which influence the conversation. Liu (2004, p.2) claims that "Language use are affected and constrained by socio-cultural factors, on the one hand; and individual discourse styles and communicative strategies play a role in maintaining or struggling for power, on the other hand".Therefore, in order to acquire politeness in interaction, one should have a through understanding of these social factors. Levinson (1983, p.54) claimed that "the single most obvious way in which the relationship between language and context is reflected in the structure of languages themselves is through the phenomenon of deixis." Among different categories of deixis, terms of address are a social deixis.Forms of address are expressions of politeness. In real life situations, verbal interaction that take place in an institutional talk depend on the use of appropriate terms of address to open up the communication. The male and female colleagues feel the importance of opening up a proper conversation as it has a very serious influence on their relationships at work.

So the present study tries to answer following questions:

1. What is the relationship between power and politeness strategies in terms of forms of address in Persian workplace?
2. What politeness strategies do Persian male and female colleagues mostly employ?
3. What address terms do Persian male and female colleagues mostly employ?
4. How do male colleagues differ from female colleagues in expressing address terms?

2. Review of Related Literature

Interest in the socio-cultural phenomenon of politeness and the ways in which it is realized in language usage has certainly grown since Brown and Levinson's seminal article in 1978.In English politeness is characterized as"someone who is polite, has good manners and behaves in a way that is socially correct and not rude to other people" (Cobuild English Dictionary for Advanced Learners, 2001).Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that the concept of face is "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself".They characterize two types of face in terms of participant wants rather than social norms: *negative face* and *positive face*. Negative faceis defined as "the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction — i.e., to freedom of action and freedom from imposition" and positive face as "the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants."(p. 61).

Brown and Levinson (pp. 65-67) defined face-threatening acts(FTAs) according to two basic variables: (1) Whose face is being threatened (the speaker's or the addressee's), and(2) Which type of face is being threatened (positive- or negative- face).The use of forms of address as expressions of politeness is a growing area of research nowadays (Spiers, 1998).The use of different forms of address which are linked to the introduction of a face-threatening act is strategically done to soften the acts (Iragiliati, 2006).In real life situations, verbal interactions that occur in an institutional talk rely on the use of proper terms of address to open up the communication.Brown and Yule (1989, p.54) argue that "in different social contexts different terms of address will be used." For example the terms of address used by a social inferior to a social superior may be different from those between peers (Lyons, 1977).Terms of address serve as an indicator of the social relationship between interlocutors in terms of status and social distance. They are a kind of emotional capital, which may beinvested in putting others at ease, and a means of saving one's face (Akindele, 2008).Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that a speaker must determine the seriousness or weightiness of a particular FTA in terms ofthe degree of imposition, the relative power of the hearer, and the socialdistance between the speaker and the hearer.When performing specific FTAs, politeness strategies try to alleviate some way the threat to positive and negative public self-image.Utilising the notion of "face", "politeness" is regarded as having a dual nature: "positive politeness" and "negative politeness".

Positive politeness aims at supporting the addressee's positive face, whereasnegative politeness is defined asa redressive action directed to the addressee's negative face and their freedom from imposition.Brown and Levinson (1987, p.77) assert that "[p]ower is anasymmetrical social dimension of relative power".Despite the difference of power between interlocutors, they suggest that speakers with higher-status may use more politeness strategies in their speech compared withlower-status participants.Theypredict that in an asymmetrical relationship, a subordinate addressing a superior would rationally choose strategies of negative politeness, while a superior addressing a subordinate would use positive politeness.Locher (2004) explains that power and politeness are linked in that politeness is often used as a strategy or toll to soften or redress the display of power.Fairclough (1989) argues that power in discourse is to do with "powerful participants controlling and constraining the contributions of non-powerful participants" (p.46).Workplace interactions are frequently asymmetrical (Heritage 1997), that is there may be differences in the distribution of institutional power or expert knowledge between the participants.

Kamiya (2005) used six Japanese movie scripts and six American ones to compare their use of address terms. Kamiya analyzed the number and the roles of address terms which appear when there are no need to get the interlocutors' attention, and concluded that the address terms have the following functions; expression of intimacy/friendship at the scene of greeting, polite request, accentuation of request, polite rejection, expression of dominating position, accentuation of question, softener for treading the hearer's privacy, accentuation of apology, and accentuation of thanking. He also looked at the Oral Communication I textbooks for the address terms, and found that textbooks had address terms in the following situations; greeting, request, question, apology suggestion, report, thanking, and statement.

Dontcheva-Navratilova (2005) in the paper "Politeness strategies in institutional speech acts" investigated the performative speech act in UNESCO resolutions with a particular view to relating the semantic analysis of directive and expressive speech act verbs to politeness strategies. This study presented that negative politeness was expressed by

the use of indirect directive speech acts with a speech act verb mitigating the illocutionary force of the utterance, while positive politeness markers were used in expressive speech acts and are confined to the choice of speech act verbs marked for high degree of formality and the use of pre-modifying adjectives for intensifying positive stance.

Iragiliati (2006) in "Politeness, forms of address and communicative codes in Indonesian medical discourse" looked at forms of address as communicative codes used in Indonesian medical discourse in the teaching hospital as related to local values. It was found that positive face was achieved through closeness by the use of intimate forms of address and negative face was achieved through impersonal forms of address.

Yuka (2009) provided a description of address terms in Oral Communication I textbooks, which are high school English textbooks approved by Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Spots, Science and Technology. The paper was based on the famous claim that Japanese has been categorized as "negative politeness language". It is, therefore, essential for the learners of English to know the difference and to acquire the skills to use positive politeness strategies when necessary.It was concluded that it is essential to provide information about positive politeness and the strategies in the textbooks in order to achieve one of the main goals of the subject; to foster a positive attitude toward communication.

Peterson (2010) made use of elicited request speech act data in Finnish to view variability of personal perspective and T/V forms across a variety of situations. It was found that the combination of a low rate of imposition and familiarity resulted in the use of straightforward use of a second-person perspective and a T-form in nearly all of the requests. The results showed that if a V-variant was used, it was most favored in a situation where power was equal, but where there was social distance between the speaker and addressee.

Although empirical studies have provided insights into these concepts in numerous cultures, up to the present day, alimited number of studies in Iranian, Persian workplace have considered these areas.

3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

It is generally believed that power relations influence politeness strategies in employing different forms of address in workplace. To investigate Iranian colleagues' use of politeness strategies and power relations when expressing forms of address, the workplace discourse was recorded and analyzed later.

3.2. Participants

The current research project was conducted in Tehran, Iran. The study included a real life context; therefore, participants were chosen from Persian male and female native speakers. All of the subjects were English teachers working in three language teaching institutes. The teachers are referred to as colleagues in this research project. In the first institute all the teachers were female, in the second one all the colleagues were male, and in the third one there were both male and female teachers. By this I mean that the effect of gender on applying politeness strategies in addressing the colleagues, the same sex or the opposite sex, could be studied. Data which were in the form of conversations were chosen randomly from lots of various recorded interactions in institutional setting during the fifteen-minute breaks after each class. Those interactions in which forms of address had been employed were regularly selected.

3.3. Design

The research design of this study is based on the objective of the study on describing the use of forms of address as expressions of politeness in workplace discourse in institutional setting. It is a descriptive study as it was based on the viewpoint of the type of information sought. Analyzing data inductively was carried out in this study starting from the data of the spoken workplace discourse of teachers with each other, which was supported by information gathered on the process of interaction.

3.4. Instruments

To collect data for this study, which was a discourse analysis research, using any special material like a test or questionnaire was irrelevant. The only instrument was a MP3 player for recording the speakers' voice, a small one so that it would not be visually intrusive.

3.5. Data collection procedure

Prior to the actual data collection, for further validation a pilot study was done on three conversations recorded in three contexts to see if the results were reliable. After this stage, data collection started. Three language teaching institutes were selected in order to study the effect of gender on choosing forms of address. In the first institute there were only female, in the second one male, and in the last one there were both male and female colleagues. The interactions between colleagues were recorded in the fifteen-minute breaks after each class. The data were recorded by the participants in my absence. The recording of interactions was carried out from August 2011 until October 2011, five days a week.

The interactions were listened to by the researcher and from each institute/context ten conversations were selected and transcribed for further analysis. The selection of these conversations was made based on some criteria. First, those conversations in which both participants employed a term of address were selected and the parts that no term of address had been adopted were omitted. Second, it was tried to collect forms of address that were used by colleagues in different situations, like "greeting", "request" and etc.

3.6. Data analysis

Data analyses were done as follow. The first step for data analysis was recognizing the power differences between interlocutors and labeling them as the person with more, less power, and equal in terms of power. This recognition was achieved based on two reliable sources; the notes taken in the process of data collection and the address terms employed by colleagues. The second step was identifying and explaining the politeness strategies residing in different forms of address employed by colleagues. The taxonomy of politeness strategies by Brown and Levinson (1987) was applied for counting and analyzing the politeness strategies.

Figure 1. Five Politeness Strategies (Brown & Levinson 1987, p.69)
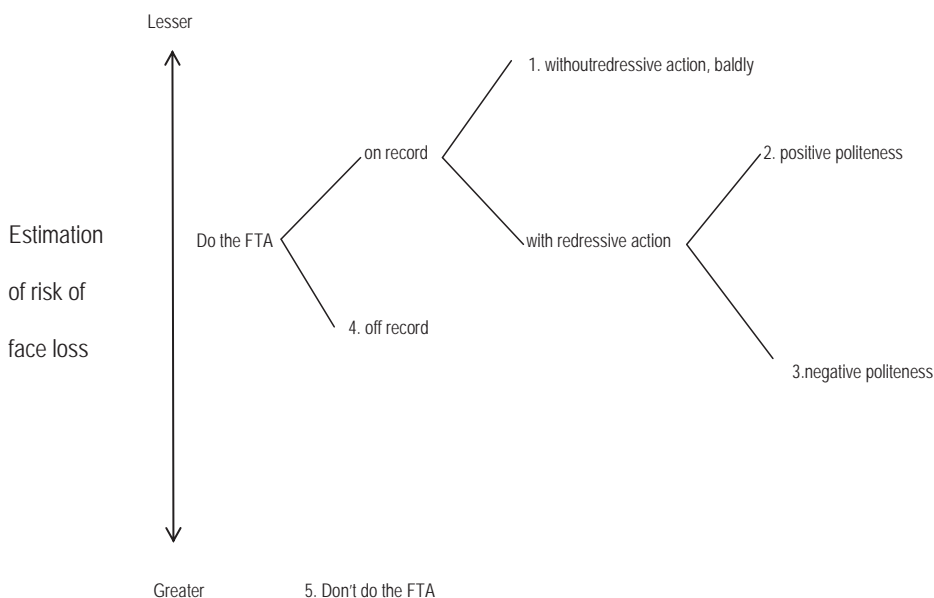
The third step was categorizing and counting address terms according to the situation in which they were used, using Yuka's (2009) model on examination of address terms appear in high school English textbooks.

4. Results and Discussion

In this part the findings of the study will be presented and discussed.The forms of address used by colleagues will be discussed and compared separately for each context. Using Brown and Levinson's (1987) definitions of politeness strategies about forms of address, it was found that politeness strategies and forms of address may be used differently in the high and low levels of stratified societies.

Three contexts in three English teaching institutes are considered. The first ten conversations have been chosen from the interactions among female colleagues, who are English teachers. The second ten conversations have been chosen from the interactions among male colleagues. And the third and last ten conversations have been chosen from the interactions among male and female colleagues. All of these contexts were grouped according to the power and distance among interlocutors by analyzing the politeness strategies and forms of address employed by colleagues.

Politeness Strategies in Power Contrasts

In order to identify the type and frequency of politeness strategies applied by colleagues across power differences the data were analyzed using Brown and Levinson's (1987) taxonomy. Two kinds of relationship were noticed in Iranian workplace, those in which there is a power asymmetry and those in which no power asymmetry exists. The classification of participants as powerful, powerless, and equal in power was based on the observations done and notes taken while recording interactions in the setting. Also the terms of address themselves are a very reliable source for determining the power status of interlocutors. This analysis involved both qualitative and quantitative examination of data. The frequency of occurrence of these components as used by colleagues is presented in tables for each context.

Female's Workplace

In an institute in which there were only female colleagues, the politeness strategies obtained by analyzing different forms of address employed by colleagues were categorized according to relative power status among interlocutors. Table 4.1.presents the type and frequency of politeness strategies applied by female colleagues.

Table 4.1. Positive and Negative Politeness Strategies Used in Power Contrasts in Female' Workplace

Outcomes of power	The person with less power			The person with more power			Equal power		
Politeness strategies	Positive politeness	Negative politeness	Total	Positive politeness	Negative politeness	Total	Positive Politeness	Negative politeness	Total
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
3	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
4	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
6	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
7	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
8	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
10	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Total	0	5	5	4	1	5	10	0	10

The only available strategy for colleagues with less power was negative politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 77) connect great power differences with giving deference, which in turn is categorized as a strategy of negative politeness. In Iranian workplace although a friend may be close in terms of familiarity, though not in terms of social similarity (rank), which leads us to differences in relative power. Negative politeness is used when social distance varies. The person with

less power does not want to put herself in risk of threatening the colleague in higher power. The best way for achieving this aim is choosing negative politeness strategies.

On the other hand, the females in higher power employed positive politeness rather than negative politeness in addressing the powerless colleagues. It seems that these colleagues were less concerned with the face needs of the other interlocutors. Table 1 also shows that Brown and Levinson's model predicts that in an asymmetrical relationship, a subordinate addressing a superior would rationally choose strategies of negative politeness because risk of "face loss" to a superior is relatively serious (5 for negative politeness as against 0 for positive politeness), while a superior addressing a subordinate would use positive politeness because risk of "face loss" to a subordinate is relatively unimportant (4 for positive politeness as against 1 for negative politeness). (1) is a typical example of the address term used among interlocutors with unequal power status:

(1)زن 1: <u>خانم احمدی</u> شرمنده...ببخشید...میشه اون کتابتونو بدین به من؟

زن2: بله <u>الهه جون</u>. بردار <u>عزیزم</u> توکمدمه.

(1) Woman (1): So sorry...<u>Ms.Ahmadi</u>...would you pass that book to me?

   Woman (2): Sure <u>dear Elaheh</u>. It is in the locker my dear. You can take it.

A title term was employed by the first speaker, general honorific title plus last name خانماحمدی /khânomAhamadi/ (Mrs. Ahamadi). That is a negative politeness strategy to give deference. But the second speaker in return addressed her colleague by a term of intimacy as an in-group marker,جونالهه/ ElahehJoon/ (dear Elaheh), which is a positive politeness strategy to convey in-group membership. In this context a power asymmetry exists between interlocutors. The second speaker was in a higher power and status than the first speaker. The second speaker adopted a negative politeness strategy to indicate respect for the addressee.

The last group of participants was those that there was no power inconsistency between them. Table 1 shows that when no power asymmetry existed between the interlocutors the preferred politeness strategy was positive politeness. Example (2) presents this context:

(2) زن1: راستی <u>شبنم جون</u> کتابو آوردی؟

زن2: کدوم کتابو؟

زن1: همون کتابی که هفته پیش داده بودم بهت !

زن2:ایوای....به خدا من شرمندم <u>الهه جون</u>...!

(2) Woman (1): By the way <u>dear Shabnam</u>, did you bring the book?

   Woman (2): Which one you mean?

   Woman (1): The one I gave you last week!

   Woman (2): Gosh...terribly sorry <u>dear Elaheh</u>...!

The first interlocutor preferred to address her colleague by first name which is a sign of positive politeness. However, by adding a term of intimacy to her first name, جونشبنم /Shabnamjoon/ (dear Shabnam), she tried to adopt an in-group identity marker. Regarding the relative power and status difference between interlocutors, speaker considered the power between herself and the addressee to be small and claimed solidarity. Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that social distance is assessed by means of the interlocutors' frequency of interaction. The theory assumes that regular interaction displays a sign of social closeness. In cases of social closeness, Brown and Levinson claim that positive politeness is likely to be used as it is recognized as an intimate address form that signifies reciprocity.

Regarding the context, workplace, it seems that some Iranian female colleagues after establishing a close friendship with their colleagues always make use of positive politeness. Positive politeness is considered as the best way for showing intimacy and solidarity. There is no concern about mitigating FTAs because the interlocutors already communicate that one's own wants are in some respects similar to the addressee's wants.

Table 1 suggests that 10 conversations out of 20 occurred between interlocutors who were not in the same power position and 10 conversations out of 20 were done by interlocutors who were equal in terms of power.

Iranian females really concern about the relative power that exists between them in workplace. They try to choose appropriate politeness strategy and as a result suitable forms of address to match the power inconsistency in order to respect and save each others' face needs.

Male's Workplace

Ten conversations were selected from male's interactions in workplace .Then they were categorized according to the relative power differences among interlocutors. Afterwards, the politeness strategies applied by colleagues in picking the proper terms of address were classified. Table 4.2.below summarizes the results of this analysis.

Table 4.2.Positive and Negative Politeness Strategies Used in Power Contrasts in Male's Workplace

Outcomes of power	The person with less power			The person with more power			Equal power		
Politeness strategies	Positive politeness	Negative politeness	Total	Positive politeness	Negative politeness	Total	Positive Politeness	Negative politeness	Total
1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
4	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
5	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
6	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
7	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
10	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Total	0	4	4	4	0	4	8	4	12

By investigating the politeness strategies employed by interlocutors with less power, it was made absolutely clear that power less people preferred to choose negative strategies in addressing their powerful colleagues in workplace. Table 4.2.also shows that Brown and Levinson´s model predicts that in an asymmetrical relationship, a subordinate addressing a superior would rationally choose strategies of negative politeness because risk of "face loss" to a superior is relatively serious (4 for negative politeness as against 0 for positive politeness).
Iranian male colleagues do not neglect the power asymmetry which exists almost in every interaction in society. In workplace regarding the formality of the setting, male colleagues never want to lose their face.
On the other hand the male colleagues with more power favored positive politeness strategies in addressing their colleagues in lower power status. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) a superior addressing a subordinate would use positive politeness because risk of "face loss" to a subordinate is relatively unimportant (4 for positive politeness as against 0 for negative politeness). (3) is a typical example of this kind of relationships:

(3)   مرد1: میشه درو ببندي <u>محسن</u> ؟ سرده!
مرد2: بله <u>آقای رضایی</u>. میخواین بیاین بشین کناره شوفاژ؟

(3) Man (1): <u>Mohsen</u>, can you close the door? It's cold in here!
 Man (2): Of course <u>Mr.Rezayi</u>. Do you want to come and sit near the heater?

The first speaker preferred to call his colleague by first name. No term of respect or intimacy was added to the first name. But the second speaker addressed his colleague by a title term, generic honorific, plus last name, آقایرضایی/âghâyeRezaei/ (Mr. Rezaei). The address terms applied in this conversation show the power inconsistency between interlocutors. The first speaker, who is in a higher power position, chose positive politeness, while the second speaker, who is in a lower power position, chose negative politeness in addressing his colleague. Negative politeness strategies emphasize distance by accentuating the hearer's right to freedom from imposition.
Iranian male colleagues who are in higher power position than others do not concern about the possible risk of losing face of lower colleagues. Being in a higher power status due to different reasons such as age or senior rank, gives the right to these people to make use of any politeness strategy they like.
Table 4.2.suggests that male colleagues with no power asymmetry in their relationships used positive politeness rather than negative politeness in addressing each other (8for positive politeness as against 4 for negative politeness).Example (4) represents this equality:

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(4)   مرد1 : میگم <u>علی</u> بعد کلاس بریم شام!

مرد2: نه <u>عزیز</u>، باید زود برم خونه!

(4)   Man (1): <u>Ali</u> lets go out for dinner after the class!

Man (2): No <u>dear</u>, I gotta go home!

In this conversation the first speaker called his colleague by first name and the second speaker addressed his colleague by a pet name, عزیز /dear/. Both of these intimate address terms were used positively. Positive politeness strategies emphasize solidarity with the hearer and based on the assumption of closeness between speaker and hearer. Due to familiarity, the risks of damage to face are minimal. Solidarity creates reciprocal exchanges of address forms; reciprocal exchange means that the relationship is equal (Brown & Gilman, 1960).

Although the colleagues, who considering the formality of workplace, followed the conventions and called their equal co-workers by titles or honorifics, were addressed back by the same strategy.

Iranian male colleagues pay less attention to the formality of the setting, which is workplace, when no power differences exist in their relationships. They attempt to establish solidarity and indicate in-group membership in calling their equal partners. Males in Iran's workplace are given the freedom to apply strategies that highlight their specific team to which they belong. However, in order to claim for common ground with the colleague in equal status the person addressed by negative politeness, chooses negative politeness strategy too.

Mixed Gender Workplace

Table 4.3.below presents the politeness strategies used by male and female colleagues when addressing each other in workplace.

Table 4.3. Positive and Negative Politeness Strategies Used in Power Contrasts in Mixed Gender Workplace

Outcomes of power	The person with less power			The person with more power			Equal power		
Politeness strategies	Positive politeness	Negative politeness	Total	Positive politeness	Negative politeness	Total	Positive Politeness	Negative politeness	Total
1			0			0	0	2	2
2			0			0	0	2	2
3			0			0	0	2	2
4			0			0	0	2	2
5			0			0	0	2	2
6			0			0	0	2	2
7			0			0	0	2	2
8			0			0	0	2	2
9			0			0	0	2	2
10			0			0	0	2	2
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20

From the results it can be deduced that there was no power asymmetry in male's and female's relationships. All the participants were categorized as equal in power status. On the other hand the only available strategy for colleagues to address their opposite sex partners were negative politeness. It was mentioned before that in order to detect the power differences in relationships two sources were relied on. One was the notes taken during the process of recording interactions and the other one was the address terms themselves which were a trustworthy origin. Regarding this context these both the notes and the address terms led to the assumption of equality of power. (5) is a typical example of this context:

(5) زن: آقای <u>همتی</u> میشه لطفا کتابامو بذارین کمدتون؟ کلیدمو نیاوردم!

مرد: حتما. گذاشتم اینجا <u>خانم محمدی</u>.

(5) Woman: Would you please put my books in your own locker <u>Mr.Hemmati</u>? I forgot my keys!

Man: Sure. I put them here <u>Mrs.Mohammadi</u>.

The man addressed his female colleague by a generic honorific plus last name and the woman addressed back her male colleague by the same form. There was no power asymmetry between interlocutors, but due to social distance between them they both employed negative politeness strategy.

In all formal settings in Iran, like workplace, men and women prefer to pick an address term that indicates deference toward the opposite sex. These beliefs are part of Iranian's culture and conventions. It is interesting to note that they always consider the gender differences between men and women. The conventions of the society never let them be as close friends as they can be with their colleagues of the same sex. By employing negative politeness they limit themselves to the protection of the face needs of the addressee. These face needs are dictated by customs. Although by observing the other societies, especially western ones, people notice other options for addressing their colleagues of the opposite sex, most of them are willing to follow the traditional customs.

4.2. Number and Distribution of Address Terms

Female's Workplace

Using the model applied by Yuka (2009) for analyzing the forms of address appeared in high school English textbooks, Oral Communication I, the researcher sorted the address terms as follows. First, they were categorized and counted according to the situation in which they were used. Second, the situations were divided into two: ones with imposition to the hearer, and ones without imposition. The categorization was made to separate the functions of address terms more clearly. If an address term was used in a situation without any imposition to the hearer, the term was used to express an accentuate intimacy/ friendship, and if used in a situation with imposition, it was used as a softener for the imposition. Greeting, thanking, praising, apology, congratulating, intimacy, and obedience belonged to the first category, "without imposition". Question request, suggestion, rejection, and disagreement were put in the second category, "with imposition" (Yuka, 2009).Table 4.4. below shows the total number and the variety of the address terms employed by female colleagues.

Table 4.4. Numbers and Variety of Address Terms in Female's Workplace

Text	Positive politeness							Negative politeness						
	greeting	thanking	intimacy	apology	obedience	congratulating praising	subtotal	question	rejection	disagreement	suggestion	request	subtotal	Total
1		1	1				2						0	2
2			1				1	1					1	2
3							0		1			1	2	2
4							0	1	1				2	2
5							0			1	1		2	2
6				1		1	2						0	2
7					1		1					1	1	2
8					1		1					1	1	2
9	2						2						0	2
10				1			1	1					1	2
Total	2	1	2	2	2	1	10	3	2	1	1	3	10	20
%	10	5	10	10	10	5	50	15	10	5	5	15	50	100

"Question" and "request" are the most frequent situations of employing different kinds of forms of address.

It is demonstrated that diverse forms of address were expressed by female colleagues in a wide range of situations, some of them as intensifier or positive politeness and some of them as softener or negative politeness. As a whole the number of forms of address as intensifier (50%) equals the number of forms of address as softener (50%) in females' workplace discourse. The female colleagues prefer to make use of forms of address in addressing each other to express an appreciation of the interlocutor's self-image or to indicate respect for the address's right not to be imposed on.

Male's Workplace

Table 4.5.below indicates the variety and frequency of situations in using forms of address in male's workplace. 40% of the total number of address terms occurred in some situations, such as "greeting", as intensifiers. While 60% of the total number of address terms employed in situations, such as "question", as softeners. "Question" situation included the address terms most, 6 address terms out of all 20, which is 30% of the total number.

Table 4.5. Numbers and Variety of Address Terms in Male's workplace

Text	Positive politeness							Negative politeness						
	greeting	thanking	intimacy	apology	obedience	congratulating praising	subtotal	question	rejection	disagreement	suggestion	request	subtotal	Total
1							0	2					2	2
2							0	2					2	2
3	2						2						0	2
4							0	1	1				2	2
5	1						1	1					1	2
6							0	1		1			2	2
7		1		1			2						0	2
8					1		1					1	1	2
9						1	1				1		1	2
10					1		1	1					1	2
Total	2	1	1	1	2	1	8	6	2		2	2	12	20
%	10	5	5	5	10	5	40	30	10		10	10	60	100

Mixed Gender Workplace

Table 4.6.shows the total number and the variety of the address terms employed by female and male colleagues. "Request" situation included the address terms most, 4 address terms out of all 20, which is 20% of the total number. 55% of the total number of address terms occurred in some situations, such as "greeting", as intensifiers. While 45% of the total number of address terms employed in situations, such as "request", as softeners. The use of different forms of address which is linked to the introduction of a face-threatening act is strategically carried out to soften the acts.

Table 4.6. Numbers and Variety of Address Terms in Mixed Gender Workplace

| Text | Positive politeness | | | | | | | | Negative politeness | | | | | | |
	greeting	thanking	intimacy	apology	obedience	congratulating	praising	subtotal	question	rejection	disagreement	suggestion	request	subtotal	Total
1	2							2						0	2
2				1				1					1	1	2
3								0		1			1	2	2
4								0	1	1				2	2
5			1				1	2						0	2
6	1							1	1					1	2
7	1				1			2						0	2
8								0		1			1	2	2
9		1	1					2						0	2
10	1							1					1	1	2
Total	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	11	1	2	1	1	4	9	20
%	10	10	10	5	10	5	5	55	5	10	5	5	20	45	100

5. Conclusion

This study was designed to address the important issue of politeness strategies and power relations in realizations of address terms employed by Persian male and female colleagues in workplace, in order to determine whether and to what extent the choice of appropriate politeness strategies and forms of address differs in relation to people with different power status. The present study suggested a mutual relation between the uses of particular kind of politeness strategies in addressing people with different power.

It was found that Persian male and female colleagues may have access to a wide range of forms of address, but they may use just limited number of these forms due to the formality of the context, power status, familiarity, age, gender, social distance, degree of respect, and intimacy between the interlocutors.

It is important to note that, as predicted by politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987), with respect to the variable power, a person with less power would prefer to use negative politeness strategies whereas a person with more power would tend to use positive ones. The essence of negative politeness is deference; this is why a person with less power would normally feel obliged to use negative politeness. On the other hand, the nature of positive politeness is solidarity; a person with more power would normally choose positive politeness.

When it comes to the choice of positively and negatively polite forms in address the addressee's very high social status clearly overrides the distance between the participants and the addressee receives the negatively polite terms. In those cases, however, in which the recognition of status is of less importance, positive politeness becomes the main strategy(Nevala, 2004).

Simpson (1997) stated that the relative social power of interlocutors is a strong determinant of choice of politeness strategy. In asymmetrical encounters, the speaker who holds high relative power need fear little threat to their own face from their interlocutor. Consequently, they can afford to use a less polite strategy. By contrast, the less powerful interactant will need to make use of the more polite strategies, such as negative politeness.

In all three contexts, i.e. female's workplace, male's workplace, and mixed gender workplace, it revealed that colleagues, who are in lower power positions, are more sensitive to the use of politeness strategies in calling their high status colleagues.

Both male and females may prefer to address their colleagues of the same sex positively, when no power asymmetry exist in their relationships. In this case positive politeness plays an important role for forming good interpersonal relationships.In a workplace where there are male and female colleagues, all address terms are employed negatively. The findings show that this strategy is most favored in a situation where power is equal, but there is social distance between the speaker and addressee.

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