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### An Exploratory Study of Face-Saving Strategies in Performing Face-Threatening Speech Acts: Evidence from English and Persian

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#### ABSTRACT

Building on theories of face and politeness, a considerable portion of studies in interpersonal and interlanguage pragmatics have focused on threats to interlocutors' face and the strategies to mitigate them. However, a thorough understanding of facework mechanisms and face-saving strategies, warrants further investigation. To contribute to this line of research, the present qualitative study adopted a descriptive approach to extract and formulate the face-saving strategies used by English native speakers, Iranian Persian speakers, and Iranian EFL learners. For this purpose, four inherently face-threatening speech acts of refusal, request, persuasion, and advice were studied by triangulating data from conceptual literature review, corpus analysis, and ethnographical observation. The results of hybrid thematic analysis revealed that face-saving strategies can be postulated into four global categories of *Emotional Appeal* (with 11 sub-strategies listed), *Avoidance/Distraction* (24), *Elaboration* (38), and *Direct* (12). It was also demonstrated and concluded that while these global strategies and sub-strategies are by no means mutually-exclusive, often the distinction between them is blurred and definitions are slippery. These findings are hoped to provide a workable coding scheme for future studies in cross-cultural pragmatics and pragmatic transfer in applied linguistics and EFL research.

## 1. Introduction

In everyday interactions, individuals are not only exchanging communicative messages, but they are constantly negotiating and co-constructing their identity, relative power status, and interpersonal relations (Arundale, 2010; Labben, 2017; Lyu & Yuan, 2023). As pioneering works, such as the classical studies by Goffman (1967) and Brown and Levinson (1987)

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famously established, individuals come to a conversation with a sense of self-image, respect for oneself and the other party involved, and a need for recognition as well as boundary, security, and privacy within the contextual, cultural, linguistic, and sociopragmatic norms governing the conversation, that is, “face”. There is growing evidence that Goffman’s concept of face is closely related to social-psychological concept of identity (Kinnison, 2017; Labben, 2017, 2018; Spencer-Oatey, 2007). However, more often than not, threats, challenges, and rivalry jeopardize the satisfaction of individuals’ needs for face in terms of face-threatening speech acts (FTAs) or otherwise-ordinary speech acts gone wrong. In that case, facework practices and face-saving strategies could be summoned by a pragmatically-competent user to alleviate or moderate the effects of such threats and enhance the face of the interlocutors.

Although an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary concept, in Applied Linguistics facework can be studied from a pragmatics perspective. The study of pragmatics focuses on the intricate nature of inter-personal communication by studying the role of context and social dynamics in interaction (Bardovi-Harlig, 2013; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Cohen, 2008; Eslami-Rasekh, 2005). Pragmatic competence involves grasping how forms of language relate to context, allowing us to express or interpret intended meanings accurately and appropriately through speech acts (Murray, 2010). However, as mentioned above, performing these speech acts is not always a straightforward and simple task as they might pose threats to either the speaker or hearer’s face by jeopardizing or challenging their social image, self-image, personal boundaries, privacy, assets and resources, comfort, credit, etc. Therefore, arguments such as Goffman’s (1967) well-known theory of face, as well as Brown and Levinson’s (1987) postulation of politeness theory have tried to form a solid basis for studying face-threatening speech acts and the face-saving strategies speakers employ in order to either sound socially polite, pleasant, and acceptable, or protect their stance on their face. Goffman defines face as the public persona that individuals strive to project and preserve.

Given the inherent challenges in fully avoiding actions that may threaten one’s social identity, individuals often adopt communication strategies to mitigate such risks; these strategies employed to minimize potential damage to an individual’s social image are known as face-saving strategies (Agustina, 2021). Therefore, employing proper politeness and face-saving strategies is indispensable for tackling FTAs and safeguarding the interlocutors’ dignity (Song, 2012).

This qualitative study addresses the gap in research regarding the realization of four specific speech acts—persuasion, refusal, request, and advice—each of which is inherently

face-threatening. While it is acknowledged that all speech acts may pose a threat to the face of either the speaker or the hearer, these four speech acts are particularly sensitive in nature, as they involve direct or indirect challenges to the social identity and face needs of the interlocutors. Although previous research has explored face-threatening acts (e.g., Bu, 2010; Darwish, 2018; Jiang, 2015; Lin, 2021; Rahman, 2020; Wannaruk, 2008), a comprehensive examination of these particular speech acts, especially persuasion and advice, and a systematic postulation of the face-saving strategies language users employ to mitigate their undesirable effects remain underexplored. Given their potential to cause challenges to face, social discord or misunderstanding, further investigation into how speakers mitigate these threats through politeness strategies is essential. Therefore, the following research questions were formed for the purpose of this study:

1. What face-saving strategies are used by native English speakers while performing inherently face-threatening speech acts including refusal, request, persuasion, and advice in English?
2. What face-saving strategies are used by native Persian speakers when performing these speech acts in Persian?
3. What face-saving strategies are used by Iranian EFL learners when performing these speech acts in English?
4. What global face-saving strategies are discernable in reference to two languages of English and Persian?

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Face and Face-saving in Pragmatics**

Individuals in a society possess a common quality referred to as “face” and to protect this face during social interactions, especially if it is in a foreign language, it is crucial for them to exercise politeness and sensitivity to the self-image of interlocutors (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The idea of “face” originates from Goffman (1955). As Brown and Levinson (1987) explained, face represents the public persona that every individual in a society seeks to present and maintain. Face in sociolinguistics and pragmatics is an essentially language-related concept with emotional and identity factors, which could be diminished, preserved, or enhanced. During conversations, speakers aim to uphold their social image by depending on the shared face (Brown & Levinson, 1987). One way of being polite and saving the face of the hearer in case of face-threatening speech acts, is to use mitigations (Scaunasu, 2013) as

well as other face-saving strategies, classified as “facework” practices. Goffman (1955) defines “facework” as the efforts a person makes to align their actions with their desired social image and to address situations that potentially damage that image. Also, Goffman proposes that an individual maintains two perspectives: one aimed at defending their own social image, and another focused on safeguarding the social image of others.

The notion of face encompasses two aspects of positive face and negative face (Scanasu, 2013). Both positive and negative face center on the concept that each individual has its own specific desires or requirements that need to be fulfilled through dialogic collaboration. The notion of positive face has been defined as what every individual in the society tries to pertain to the favorable and stable self-perception or character that they claim for themselves, involving a critical wish for this self-image to be valuable and accepted (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Positive face is described as the wish of every person for their desires to be appealing to at least a few other people, or, a person’s wish to be seen in a positive way, to be admired, respected, and regarded as a “good” individual.

On the other hand, negative face revolves around the fundamental right to personal space, control over one’s environment, and the liberty to act without interference which embodies the desire of every adult to conduct their activities without being hindered by others (Brown & Levinson 1987). It can be further defined as a person’s wish to evade any obligation or pressure, in relation to the idea of “face”. Therefore, face-threatening speech acts can be seen as those which threaten the positive face and those threatening the negative face. From another perspective, such acts can pose a threat to either the listener’s or the hearer’s face.

Although the bulk of literature in facework has focused on a limited number of apparently face-threatening speech acts, such as apology, request, and complaints, fewer studies have directed their attention to less common speech acts such as advice, persuasion, and dissuasion. However, a growing body of literature has recently focused on less-explored areas, including Promises (Lyu & Yuan, 2023), failed humor (File & Schnurr, 2019), and strategic embarrassment in business settings (Chang & Haugh, 2011). Also, several studies have linked the concept of face to individuals’ identity from a social-psychological perspective, seeing face as a fundamentally cultural concept. For instance, Kinnison (2017) depicted that Chinese concept of face incorporates three facets of moral/honor, favor/relation, and image/mask, while Labben (2017, 2018) showed how the salience of face in Tunisian Arabic is achieved through compliance with normative cultural values. Tawilapakul (2022) demonstrated how Thai speakers used two feminine polite particles in a very sensitive

context-dependent manner to manage face. Alroumi (2025) focused on interruptions in Saudi Arabic interactions and the following facework performed to maintain interlocutors' face in this cultural context.

Finally, with the recent prevalence of digital communication, a number of studies have focused their attention on facework practices in cyber settings, including the use of emojis in Computer-Mediated Communication (Togans et al., 2021), code-switching on Facebook (Chau & Lee, 2021), and virtual performatives on Twitter (Virtanen, 2022), which signals a very promising line of research.

## **2.2 Politeness**

The concept of face is closely affiliated with politeness (Slman & Betti, 2020). Song (2012) suggests that selecting the right politeness strategies is essential to manage face-threatening acts and protect the dignity of the listener. Mills (2003) also ties politeness to face, stating that it involves the interlocutors' efforts to minimize the impact of actions possibly challenging someone's face. Politeness is achieved through four strategies: positive politeness, negative politeness, off-record politeness, and bald on record politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Positive politeness focuses on supporting the listener's positive social image, using strategies that are typical in interactions between close individuals. These strategies include showing interest and appreciation for each other's character, suggesting common desires and knowledge, and subtly acknowledging mutual obligations or similar needs (Kalu, 2018). Brown and Levinson also noted that positive politeness aims at reinforcing the positive self-image of the person being addressed. Strategies of positive politeness emphasize that the speaker shares similar emotions with the listener and is attentive to everything concerning the listener (Ghaisani & Haristiani, 2021).

Negative politeness, on the other hand, targets the listener's negative face, which refers to their desire to maintain their freedom to act without restriction and to have their focus undisturbed (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In off-record politeness, the speaker communicates in an unclear manner, leaving it up to the listener to interpret what has been said (Ghaisani & Haristiani, 2021). Finally, in Bald on Record politeness, the speaker clearly states their intention, possibly leading to feelings of being taken back or embarrassed by the directness of the speaker's words in the listener (Ghaisani & Haristiani, 2021). As it involves straightforward communication, this strategy is typically employed by speakers and listeners who are already intimate and share a strong relationship.

### 3. Method

The present descriptive qualitative study, intended to explore and classify the face-saving strategies employed when performing face-threatening speech acts, used a number of qualitative approaches, including library research, corpus study, and ethnographical observation to collect data. These will be discussed in more details in the following sections, while for the sake of readability and avoidance of reiterations, descriptions of instruments and data collection procedure are integrated.

It is also notable that the present study purposefully focused on four speech acts of *refusal*, *request*, *persuasion*, and *advice* for several reasons. First of all, all these speech acts are inherently face-threatening as they might endanger the face of either the speaker or hearer. Second, while refusals and requests are frequently studied in the literature, the two speech acts of persuasion and advice are among the less-explored areas in pragmatics, partially due to the difficulties of distinguishing them from neighboring speech acts, including suggestion. Therefore, in the present study, these two speech acts are studied in juxtaposition with well-explored ones, in order to ensure that classification of face-saving strategies covers a broad range of possibilities. Evidence was collected from both English and Persian languages.

#### 3.1. Library Research Phase

As the first phase of data collection, previous research on face-saving strategies in performing the four targeted speech acts underwent a conceptual review. For this purpose, the literature on the performance of these speech acts and the pertaining face-saving strategies was systematically perused in three categories: *native English speakers performing in English* (Allami & Naeimi, 2011; Aristotle, 1967; Beebe et al., 1990; Belyaeva, 1996; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Ghazanfari et al., 2013; Jiang, 2015; Khamkhein, 2022; Husna, 2018; Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011; Yazdanfar & Bonyadi; 2016), *native Persian speakers performing in Persian* (Aliakbari & Changizi, 2012; Allami & Naeimi, 2011; Ghazanfari et al., 2013; Izadi & Zilaie, 2014; Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011; Shahrokhi, 2012; Yazdanfar & Bonyadi, 2016), and *native Persian speakers performing in English as EFL learners* (Babaie & Shahrokhi, 2015; Hariri & Raouf Moini, 2020; Jalilifar & Hashemian, 2011; Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011; Saadatmandi et al., 2018; Sahragard & Javanmardi, 2011; Shishavan & Sharifian, 2016; Yazdanfar & Bonyadi; 2016).

The extracted face-saving strategies were then organized in tables for comparison purposes. To ensure the trustworthiness of the approach, the organization of the information

in the emerging tables underwent multiple revisions by three experts in the field to ensure clarity, consistency, and ease of interpretation. Each revision was aimed at improving the organization and presentation of the data, ensuring that the information was both accessible and logically structured. In addition, the content of the tables was thoroughly re-checked by the researchers against the existing literature.

### **3.2. Corpus**

In order to triangulate the data collected in the library research phase and due to lack of access to naturalistic data from native English speakers, a corpus analysis phase was run to extract further information on face-saving strategies in English. In order to cover a wide range of naturalistic spoken English, two categories of corpora were targeted; three sets of officially-available corpora and a recent American TV series. The natural data corpora included:

- Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE), senior thesis study group, transcript ID: SGR999SU146, highly interactive, 4 speakers, word count 1400, date: March 28, 2001
- Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE), dissertation defense, transcript ID: DEF500SF016, mostly interactive, 5 speakers, word count 11676, date: May 20, 1998
- Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE), academic advising, transcript ID: ADV700JU047, highly interactive, 8 speakers, word count 26065, date: November 12, 1998

These bodies of corpora included naturalistic and interactive academic spoken English in three different contexts, in which use of the targeted speech acts and face-saving strategies was ensured. In order to broaden the coverage of contexts, a recent American TV miniseries, namely *Maid* (Netflix, 2021), including 10 episodes, was also included. Conducting a purposive within-case sampling, the researchers selected the series based on a number of criteria: a drama-realism featuring real life situations and reflecting current social dynamics; packed with naturalistic, interactive dialogues; recent, contemporarily-relevant, popular, high-ranking, and award-winning; manageable in terms of volume. The choice was hoped to reflect realistic human interactions in a variety of social contexts, further supporting the study's focus on authentic communication patterns. Coding of 10 percent of both sets of corpora (approximately 4,000 words from MICASE and one episode of *Maid*) were

conducted by both researchers and compared to ensure inter-coder consistency and the trustworthiness of the coding scheme. A briefing session was subsequently held to discuss any inconsistencies and agree upon a finalized version of the coding framework.

### **3.3. Ethnographical Observations**

For natural data collection in Persian, ethnographical approaches were used for direct observation of Iranian speakers' performance of persuasions, refusals, requests, and advice. As prior consent was not taken from the potential informants, audio-recordings were not possible and field notes were used instead to record data. This observational approach was specifically chosen to ensure that the data reflected authentic, spontaneous linguistic interactions, thereby minimizing the potential biases associated with self-reported data or laboratory settings. For this purpose, the second researcher observed people's responses and reactions while producing the four speech acts in everyday life contexts, such as workplace, university, home, or any other setting where there was a chance of the occurrence of these speech acts. The recorded responses in field notes were subsequently organized and tabulated for thematic analysis. This method allowed for the identification of patterns in language use, offering a clear representation of how these speech acts are typically performed in natural settings.

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

Due to the descriptive design of the present qualitative study, along with corpus analysis, hybrid thematic analysis was conducted on the collected data in order to list, cluster, organize, reorganize, and finalize the categorization of the face-saving strategies employed in performing the targeted speech acts. The hybrid model was opted since the core coding was conducted deductively, based on prior categorizations from the literature, while any distinct codes and themes emerging were inductively categorized. Inter-coder and intra-coder consistency checks were also performed on the corpus data. The findings will be presented in the next section.

## **4. Findings**

The results of the conceptual literature review, corpus study, and thematic analysis of the naturalistic data, intended to address the research questions will be presented in forms of tables in the following subsections. For the sake of space economy, only the data collected for the purpose of this study (corpus and natural data) will be presented in this section in full, while the detailed results of the conceptual literature review will be offered in the appendices.

#### 4.1. Face-Saving Strategies Used by Native English Speakers

In order to address the first research question of the study, the collected data from the pertaining literature and the sets of corpora, as described earlier, were organized based on the detailed strategies used in each of the four face-threatening speech acts of refusal, request, persuasion, and advice. Table 1 below summarizes the strategies extracted from the literature, while a detailed list of these strategies along with the reference and examples as used in the main source is provided in Appendix A. The table provides a comprehensive overview of all the specific strategies mentioned, highlighting the patterns of pragmatic behavior observed

**Table 1**  
*Face-Saving Strategies in English, Extracted from Literature*

<b>Speech Act</b>	<b>Face-saving Strategies</b>
Refusal	Suggestion/Alternative; Statement of solidarity; Explicit refusal (direct); Elaboration; Removal of negativity (indirect); Return invitation / suggestion (indirect); Ask question; Address term (indirect); Wish (indirect); Joke (indirect); Repetition / repetition of part of request (indirect); No (direct); Statement of empathy (adjuncts); Blame the interlocutor (indirect); Criticize the offer / suggestion (indirect); Criticism / criticize the request or requester (indirect); Guilt trip (indirect); Hedge/hedging (indirect); Avoidance by hedging; Request for information; Silence (indirect); Hesitation (indirect); Physical departure (indirect); Do nothing (indirect); Postponement (indirect); Lack of enthusiasm (indirect); Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request (indirect); Topic switch (indirect); Unspecific/indefinite reply (indirect); Self-defense (indirect); Negative willingness/ability (direct); Statement of Apology/Regret (indirect); Excuse/Reason/Explanation (indirect); Set condition/Set condition for future or past acceptance (indirect); Promise of acceptance / promise of future acceptance; Pause fillers (adjuncts to refusals); Gratitude/Appreciation (adjuncts to refusals); (Statement of) Principle (indirect); Philosophy/statement of philosophy (indirect); Dissuade (indirect); Acceptance which functions as Refusal (indirect); Verbal postponement; (Non-verbal) Avoidance (indirect); Threat or statement of consequence / threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester; Off the hook (indirect); Mitigated refusal (indirect); Self-defense (indirect); Request; Statement of negative feeling or opinion; Statement of positive opinion, feeling, or agreement (adjuncts); Performatives (direct); Hedged performatives (direct); Non-Performative statements / nonperformative (direct)
Request	Suggestion/Suggestory formulae Strategy (conventional indirect); Language-specific Suggestory Formula / suggestive formula; Want (Direct); Need/demand strategy; Obligation/necessity strategy (direct); Strong hint (nonconventional indirect); Mild hint (nonconventional indirect); Checking on availability (external modifier); Getting a pre-commitment (external modifier); Grounder (external modifier); Sweetener (external modifier); Disarmer (external modifier); Cost minimizer (external modifier); Downgraders (internal modifier); Upgraders (internal modifier); Hint; Wishes strategy; Query (conventional indirect) / query preparatory; Mood derivable (direct); Ability/Willingness Strategy; (Explicit) Performatives strategy (direct); Imperatives strategy; Reference to preparatory conditions; Scope stating; Locution derivable (direct); Hedged Performative (direct)
Persuasion	Strong hint (non-Conventionally Indirect); Mild hint (non-Conventionally Indirect); Ethos (Appeal by ethics); Pathos (Emotional appeal); Logos (Appeal by reason)
Advice	Suggestion; Need (conventionalized form); Obligation/necessity; Performatives (direct); Express uncertainty; Challenge the advisee's future action; Imperatives (direct); Evaluation phrases including a better course of action; Hypothetical statements; Opinion; Question; Let's; Modals; Wh-questions; Conditionals (conventionalized form); Performatives; Pseudo clefts; To clause; Yes-no question; Imperatives

As evident in table 1 above, although some of the listed strategies in the literature clearly overlapped, the original wordings and examples from each source are retained as distinct entries for later reference. In order to supplement this data with information from the corpora, including the three sets of MICASE and the series (Maid), the extracted information is presented in table 2 below. Examples are also provided along with the source.

**Table 2**  
*Face-Saving Strategies in English, Extracted from Corpora*

Speech Act	Face-Saving Strategy <sup>a</sup>	Source	Example <sup>b</sup>
Refusal	Suggestion/Alternative	Maid E5	<i>Can you take a look, please? Cause it reeks of mold. I'm pretty sure that it's in the wall.</i> + <i>Well, listen all you got to do is just open those windows up.</i>
		Maid E6	<i>I can knock maybe 100 off the security deposit.</i> + <i>What about a barter? I could clean for half and pay half.</i>
	Wish (indirect)	Maid E1	<i>I wish I could take you home but ...</i>
	No (direct)	MICASE DEF500SF016	<i>No, I don't think it's general knowledge / Well, no he makes an evalu- he makes a very s- he makes a normative claim / Well I I th- no, I think it's fairly clear Western thinking is better.</i>
		Maid E3	<i>You can come tomorrow, if you want.</i> + <i>No, thank you. I'm good.</i>
	Postponement	Maid E3	<i>Maybe do a show with a group of local artists at some point in the future.</i>
	Lack of enthusiasm	Maid E2	<i>Maddy, do you want to watch frozen?</i> + <i>She is very afraid of the snow creature.</i>
	Topic switch	Maid E2	<i>Can we get out of here now?</i> + <i>So, you distract him and I look around.</i>
		Maid E4	<i>What do you write about?</i> + <i>What do you make films about?</i>
	Unspecific reply	Maid E1	<i>Do you want to call the cops now? It's not too late.</i> + <i>And say what? That he didn't hit me?</i>
Maid E4		<i>Can you take a look at my wall today? It's getting worse.</i> + <i>Yeah, it's been raining a lot.</i>	
Negative willingness/Negative ability (direct)	Maid E6	<i>What was my dad saying to you?</i> + <i>Nice to see you too.</i>	
	Maid E1	<i>I can't take Maddy there.</i>	
	Maid E5	<i>I don't want to be a part of stealing.</i>	
	Maid E5	<i>I need her phone number.</i> + <i>I can't give it to you.</i>	
	Maid E6	<i>I can't take TBRA voucher.</i>	
	Maid E6	<i>We are doing a family get-together at the park.</i> + <i>You don't want to do it here?</i> <i>... you guys are being super generous already; I don't want to take advantage of you.</i>	
	Maid E7	<i>I will never live here again.</i>	
	Maid E8	<i>Come to bed.</i>	

		<i>+ I'm good out here.</i>	
	Maid E8	<i>You have got to get me out of here. + I don't think I can, mom.</i>	
	Maid E10	<i>I can't do that.</i>	
Excuse/Reason/ Explanation (indirect)	MICASE DEF500SF016	<i>But I was under the im- oh I was also a bit surprised about the wording. because it seems that, I mean even encouraging debate, um, would not necessarily get you.</i>	
	Maid E3	<i>You know what a fan I am but...</i>	
	Maid E5	<i>Can you watch Maddy tomorrow? + I'm working a double.</i>	
	Maid E6	<i>If you really wanted to help you could let me use your address in the form. + That is mail fraud.</i>	
	Maid E6	<i>(I can't take TBRA voucher) cause we are not zoned for an apartment back here so we actually have to keep this under the table.</i>	
	Maid E6	<i>what about a barter? I could clean for half and pay half. + You know, we already have Marta, and she is like family to us.</i>	
	Maid E6	<i>We are doing a family get-together at the park. + You don't want to do it here? We love the park.</i>	
	Maid E7	<i>I want to take you to a movie. + You are a really good guy, I mean that. But I am your charity case.</i>	
	Pause fillers (adjuncts to refusals)	MICASE DEF500SF016	<i>But um ...</i>
	Gratitude/ Appreciation (adjuncts to refusals)	Maid E5	<i>You are invited. + I really appreciate it.</i>
Maid E6		<i>We are doing a family get-together at the park + You don't want to do it here? ... you guys are being super generous already.</i>	
Principle (indirect)	Maid E3	<i>So, can you help me tomorrow? + I really don't think you should do that, honey. You don't leave a good man when he is trying.</i>	
Acceptance as refusal (indirect)	Maid E7	<i>I wish that you would let me help you. + You are helping me so much.</i>	
Mitigated refusal (indirect)	MICASE DEF500SF016	<i>I'm not quite sure that actually addresses the question.</i>	
Request	Suggestion/ Suggestory formulae Strategy (conventional indirect)	MICASE DEF500SF016	<i>Maybe it's a good idea, to tell, us and, actually the reader, right off the bat what you mean by an unspecified interactionist, naive theory because I I'm not sure that that's general kno- [S2: alright] general knowledge. is that the case?</i>
	Want (direct)	MICASE DEF500SF016	<i>I think I might want to want clarification and or comment on certain things.</i>
		Maid E7	<i>I want to take you to a movie.</i>
	Need/Demand strategy	Maid E1	<i>Can I crash here with you until I figure out what I am doing?</i>
		Maid E3	<i>I just need you to fill in these forms, mom.</i>
		Maid E4	<i>Can I get your Wi-Fi password?</i>
		Maid E5	<i>I need her phone number.</i>
	Obligation/ Necessity strategy (direct)	Maid E8	<i>You have got to get me out of here.</i>
	Strong hint (non-	MICASE	<i>I'm still curious why, um, you wanted to do the, thing</i>

	conventional indirect)	DEF500SF016	<i>you brought up just at the end.</i>
	Hint	Maid E10	<i>So, am I still invited to Montana?</i>
		MICASE DEF500SF016	<i>I'd love to hear from you.</i>
	Wishes/Desire strategy	Maid E3	<i>I would really love to use her furniture and I would really love your truck.</i>
		Maid E6	<i>I wonder if I could call you.</i>
		Maid E7	<i>I wish that you would let me help you.</i>
		MICASE DEF500SF016	<i>Could you maybe push that up uh the uh, the the light part does it work?</i>
	Query (conventional indirect)	MICASE SGR999SU146	<i>... if Frank if I could be like oh, Frank will you just write it? or something like that you know. / Could you email it to her or something?</i>
		Maid E1	<i>Can I crash here with you until I figure out what I am doing?</i>
		Maid E3	<i>Can I use your truck or not mom?</i>
		Maid E1	<i>Would you mind pulling over real quick and let me run to the dollar store?</i>
	Ability/Willingness Strategy	Maid E5	<i>I think I have awesome grandpa potential if you let me get it right with Maddy.</i>
	Imperatives strategy	MICASE DEF500SF016	<i>Wait for the others.</i>
		Maid E10	<i>Help me protect Maddy, write a testimonial.</i>
	Strong hint (non-conventionally indirect)	Maid E5	<i>I am taking (stealing) her TV. + You don't think the Realtor's going to notice that the TV is gone?</i>
	Ethos (appeal by ethics)	Maid E1	<i>We just have to reschedule. + I can be done at 4 ma'am. I'm fast and I'm good.</i>
		Maid E6	<i>I can knock maybe 100 off the security deposit. + What about a barter? I could clean for half and pay half. I am a professional maid.</i>
	Logos (appeal by reason)	Maid E6	<i>-I can talk to Brady's pre-school and just see if they have an extra spot open for Maddy + That's all right. Thank you though. -No honestly. They are great. They do ceramics with the kids and they grow herbs and other pretentious things.</i>
		Maid E7	<i>- You use Value Maids cleaning service, right? + Yeah, they're coming this afternoon, why? - My name is Alex and I would like to clean your house instead. I'll do it for ten dollars an hour cash. You are going to get a much better clean at a much cheaper rate and I'm going to get some cash in hand.</i>
	Suggestion	Maid E5	<i>If you want, we can watch her again tomorrow.</i>
		Maid E8	<i>You've got to nap when the baby's down. It is the only way.</i>
	Need (conventionalized form)	MICASE DEF500SF016	<i>It isn't enough; you need to encourage it if you want.</i>
		Maid E8	<i>You just need a nap.</i>

	Maid E8	<i>You need to get yourself to the meeting.</i>
	Maid E9	<i>They need space to grow.</i>
Obligation	Maid E5	<i>You got to move out.</i>
Opinion	MICASE DEF500SF016	<i>... it would seem to me that in situations, where you are in effect, inventing a term, it might, make more sense, to start out right at the very beginning, th-saying what it is you mean, [S2: right] and then get into the content...</i>
	Maid E3	<i>I really don't think you should do that honey.</i>
Question	MICASE DEF500SF016	<i>Why would you not take the Bayesian tack?</i>
	Maid E9	<i>Would you rather go to my house?</i>
Modals	MICASE ADV700JU047	<i>You can do a double major.</i>

a. All strategy titles are directly borrowed from the source suggesting them.

b. All examples are reproduced without changes from the listed sources.

Reflecting on the data presented in tables 1 and 2, it is observable that the distribution of strategies across the four speech acts is not balanced. This information, as summarized in table 3 below, indicates that refusals are not only the most broadly-studied speech acts in the literature among these four, but also, they appear more frequently in natural interactions. In that regard, refusal is followed by request, advice, and persuasion, in that order.

**Table 3**

*Frequency of the extracted Face-saving Strategies in English performed by English Speakers*

<b>Speech Act</b>	<b>Freq. of Strategies in Literature</b>	<b>Freq. of Strategies in Corpora</b>
Refusal	54	14
Request	26	10
Persuasion	5	3
Advice	20	6

#### **4.2. Face-Saving Strategies Used by Native Persian Speakers**

The second research question focused on the facework Iranian native speakers of Persian frequently employ in performing the four inherently face-threatening speech acts targeted in the present study. For this purpose, data obtained from the literature on Persian pragmatics and ethnographical observation of natural data were triangulated. Table 4 below presents a summary of the face-saving strategies in Persian as extracted through conceptual literature review, while the detailed list is presented in Appendix B.

**Table 4**

*Face-Saving Strategies in Persian, Extracted from Literature*

<b>Speech</b>	<b>Face-saving Strategies</b>
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<b>Act</b>	Statement of alternative/alternative; Wish (indirect); Silence; Statement of solidarity; Elaboration; Ask question; Let off the hook; Statement of consequence/threat; Guilt trip; Criticize (the request/requester)/criticism; Unspecific reply/indefinite reply; Topic switch; Joke; Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping (holding) the request / request; No; Refusing directly; Postponement (indirect); Hedging/hedge; Swearing; Define relationship; Statement of Apology/Regret (indirect); Excuse/Reason/Explanation (indirect); Statement of alternative (indirect); Set condition for future or past acceptance (indirect) / conditional acceptance/set condition; Promise of future acceptance (indirect); Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement (adjuncts to refusals); Statement of empathy (adjuncts to refusals) (indirect); Pause fillers (adjuncts to refusals) (indirect); (expression of) Gratitude/Appreciation (adjuncts to refusals) (indirect); (statement of) Principle (indirect); Philosophy (indirect); Dissuade/Attempt to dissuade the interlocutor(indirect); Acceptance (that function) as refusal (indirect); Avoidance (indirect); Negative ability/Negative willingness (direct); Lack of enthusiasm (indirect); Self-defense (indirect); Repetition of part of request (indirect) / repetition; Returning the invitation/offer; Ask for more information; Nonverbal avoidance; Statement of regret; Performatives (direct); Non-Performatives (direct)
<b>Refusal</b>	
<b>Request</b>	Suggestory formulae; Language specific suggestory formula; Want (statement); Need/Demand; Obligation statement; Reference to preparatory condition; Query; Mood derivable/mood derivative; Challenging ability; Explicit performative; Locution derivable/obligation statement; Hedged performative; Scope stating; Performatives strategy/explicit performative; Strong hint; Hint
<b>Persuasion</b>	Strong hint (non-conventionally indirect); Mild hint (non-conventionally indirect)
<b>Advice</b>	Let's; Modals; Wh-question; Conditionals; Performatives; Pseudo clefts; To clause; Yes-no question; Imperatives

Table 5 displays a classification of Persian face-saving strategies observed in the natural data.

**Table 5**

*Face-Saving Strategies in Persian, Extracted from Natural Language Data*

Speech Act	Face-Saving Strategy <sup>a</sup>	Example <sup>b</sup>
Refusal	Suggestion/Alternative	+ بریم باغ ایرانی - بریم سینما به جاش؟
	Wish (indirect)	+ میتونی بهم پو قرض بدی؟ - ای کاش میتونستم.
	Direct no	نه <sup>c</sup> ، من تو موقعیت شغلی که توش برنامه نویسی نباشه کار نمیکنم.
	Repetition	+ میای بریم بیرون؟ - بریم بیرون؟
	Criticism	+ بریم بیرون قدم بزنیم - تو این هوای بارونی اصلا منطقی نیست.
	Postponement	+ مقاله رو آخر این ماه تحویل بدین - حداکثر تا دو ماه دیگه تکمیل میشه.
	Lack of enthusiasm	+ من میخوام برم بدنسازی - من اصلا علاقه ای به بدنسازی ندارم.
	Topic switch	+ فردا تولدمه میای؟ - راستی مامانت حالت خوبه؟
	Unspecific reply	+ این آخر هفته میای بریم کافه؟ - حالا تا ببینم چی میشه.
	Negative willingness/ability (direct)	ولی من به طور دیگه بیشتر دوست دارم.
	Statement of Apology/Regret (indirect)	+ میخوام امشب پیام خونتون - معذرت میخوام ما مهمون داریم بعدا خودم باهات هماهنگ میکنم.
	Excuse/Reason/Explanation (indirect)	+ یک ماهه به من سر نزدی - سرکار سرم خیلی شلوغه وقت نکردم.
	Set condition for future or past acceptance (indirect)	+ بیا ببینمت - ده روز دیگه دفاع کردم میام پیشت.
Promise of future acceptance	قول میدم هفته دیگه منم باهاتون پیام بیرون.	

	(indirect)	
	Pause fillers (adjuncts to refusals)	+ نهار خورشت کرفس بذارم؟ - اوووم ....
	Gratitude/Appreciation (adjuncts to refusals)	+ با هم بریم کتابخونه درس بخونیم؟ - مرسی که بهم گفتی.
	Principle (indirect)	+ قرار ملاقاتتو جابجا کن به جاش امروز با هم بریم بیرون - من هیچوقت برنامه هامو عوض نمیکنم.
	Acceptance as Refusal (indirect)	نه، من تو موقعیت شغلی که توش برنامه نویسی نباشه کار نمیکنم. + جزوت رو میدی من بخونم؟ - فعلا خودم لازم دارم، نمیدونم کی بتونم بدمش بهت.
	(Non-verbal) Avoidance (indirect)	+ میای با هم بریم شمال؟ - حالا ببینم چی میشه.
	Statement of consequence	+ بیا امشب با هم بریم سینما - اگه بریم ممکنه امتحان فردا رو بیوفتیم.
	Performatives (direct)	+ امروز نهار تو درست میکنی؟ - من امتحان دارم نمیتونم انجام بدم.
Request	Suggestion/Suggestory formulae Strategy (conventional indirect)	نظرت چیه کتابتو از رو میز برداری؟
	Want (Direct)	ازت میخوام ظرف غذا تو بشوری.
	Need/Demand strategy	ازت میخوام درستو جدی تر بخونی.
	Obligation/Necessity strategy (direct)	اگه میخوای مهاجرت کنی باید مقاله بنویسی.
	Strong hint (nonconventional indirect)	لباسات همه کف اتاقه.
	Mild hint (nonconventional indirect)	هوا سرده (به درخواست بستن پنجره)
	Hint	من جلسه قبلی به کلاس نرسیدم (درخواست جزوه)
	Wishes/desire strategy	کاش میتونستی باهام بیای مسافرت.
	Query (conventional indirect)	میشه لپ تابتو بدی بهم؟
	Ability/Willingness Strategy	میتونی پول رستوران امشبو تو بدی؟
	(Explicit) Performatives strategy (direct)	ازت خواهش میکنم دیگه تو ظرف من غذا نخور.
	Reference to preparatory conditions	میشه لپ تابتو از رو میزم برداری؟
	Imperatives strategy	درستو بخون.
Persuasion	Strong hint (non-Conventionally Indirect)	غذا خیلی شوره، یه چیزی از بیرون سفارش بدیم.
	Mild hint (non-Conventionally Indirect)	حوصلم سر رفت (یه فیلم دیگه نگاه کنیم).
	Ethos (Appeal by ethics)	تو منو قبول داری؟ پولی که داری رو سکه بخر.
	Pathos (Emotional appeal)	خواهر قشنگم اگه دوستم داری همیشه لباسمو برام آویزون کنی.
	Logos (Appeal by reason)	پارسال اینموقع عصر راه افتادیم سمت شمال موندیم تو ترافیک امسال صبح زود راه بیوفتیم.
Advice	Suggestion	پیشنهاد میکنم دخترتو نفرستی اون دانشگاه.
	Need (conventionalized form)	لازمه یکم موهاشو کوتاه کنی.
	Obligation	باید تا آخر هفته این کتاب رو تموم کنی.
	Performatives (direct)	اگه جونتو دوست داری از اون رستوران غذا نگیر. (من همیشه با مادرم در این رابطه دعوا داریم، دوستم این نصیحت را کرد) اتاقتو خودت خونه تکونی کن.
	Imperatives (direct)	تمرینای زیانتو انجام بده. تلویزیون رو خاموش نکن وقتی طولانی مدت میری سفر (بقیه فکر کنند کسی توی خونه هست).
	Negative imperative (direct)	

Evaluations	ورزش کردن برای سلامتیت خیلی خوبه بهتره بیشتر ورزش کنی.
Hypothetical statements	اگه من جای تو بودم همین امسال برای مهاجرت اقدام میکردم.
Opinion	بنظرم این لباس قشنگ نیست.
Hint (indirect)	شنیدم روزه برای دیسک کمر خوب نیست.
Question	چرا برای دکترا اقدام نمیکنی؟
Let's	بیا از فردا با هم درس بخونیم.
Yes-no question	میخواهی بیای تو شرکت ما کار کنی؟
Should (conventionalized form)	بهتره تا دیر وقت بیدار نمونی.
Possibility/probability (conventionalized form)	میتونی وقتی هوا بهتر شد بری بیرون.

a. All strategy titles are directly borrowed from the source suggesting them.

b. All examples are reproduced without changes from the listed sources.

c. Some of the examples represent more than one strategy. The target part has been highlighted and underlined.

As evident in tables 4 and 5 above, the distributive frequency of the face-saving strategies in the four pertaining speech acts seems to almost repeat the pattern of English data. For comparison with table 3 above, a similar summary of these frequencies is presented in table 6 below.

**Table 6**

*Frequency of the extracted Face-saving Strategies in Persian performed by Persian Speakers*

Speech Act	Freq. of Strategies in Literature	Freq. of Strategies in Corpora
Refusal	44	21
Request	16	13
Persuasion	2	5
Advice	9	15

It should be noted that although the frequency count in the library research phase was not conducted based on unique and distinct strategies, but based on the mentions in the literature, the distributional pattern still suggests that first of all, there has been a broader focus on refusal and request speech acts in the literature, and second, the occurrence of speech acts such as persuasion and advice, and hence, the variety of pertaining strategies, are less frequent in daily social interactions.

### 4.3. Face-Saving Strategies in English Used by Iranian EFL Learners

A summary of the face-saving strategies reported in the EFL literature focusing on Iranian EFL learners performing English, along with their frequencies is presented in table 7 below, while the full data can be found in Appendix C.

**Table 7**

*Face-Saving Strategies in English as Performed by Iranian EFL Learning, Extracted from Literature*

<b>Speech Act</b>	<b>Face-saving Strategies</b>	<b>Freq.</b>
Refusal	Alternative (indirect); Wish (indirect); Excuse / reason (indirect); Refusing directly/Explicit refusal; Let interlocutor off the hook; Regret (indirect)/ Statement of Apology; Excuse/Reason/Explanation (indirect); Conditional acceptance / condition for future acceptance (indirect); Promise of future Acceptance (indirect); Empathy (indirect); Pause fillers (indirect); Gratitude (indirect); Appreciation; Statement of principle / principle (indirect); Philosophy (indirect); Dissuade (indirect); Acceptance as refusal (indirect); Avoidance (indirect); Positive Opinion (indirect); Negative ability/Negative willingness (direct); Performatives (direct); Hedging; Non-Performatives (direct)	24
Request	Want; Query; Mood derivable; Performative; Hedge; Obligation; Want statement; Suggestory; Preparatory; Strong hints; Reference to preparatory condition; Mild hints	12
Persuasion	Mild hint; Strong hint	2
Advice	Mood (direct); Performative (direct); Hedge (direct); Obligation (direct); Want (direct); Suggestory (conventionally indirect); Preparatory (conventionally indirect); Strong hint (non-conventionally indirect); Mild hint (non-conventionally indirect)	9

#### **4.4. Global Face-saving Strategies**

The fourth research question of the study was intended to create a categorization of global face-saving strategies with reference to English as a native language, English as a foreign language, and Persian as a native language. For this purpose, a collective thematic analysis of the findings reported in the first three research questions was conducted with the goal of identifying and unifying all overlaps, reorganizing the strategies, and clustering them into major themes. The emerging themes were iteratively checked and reorganized to form the most efficient coding scheme and briefing sessions were held between the researchers to ensure a systematically accurate organization. Table 8 below reflects the final theme clusters, while a comprehensive list of global face-saving strategies and their descriptions, based on language forms and functions, is presented in Appendix D.

**Table 8**

*Sub-levels of Face-Saving Strategies Based on Functions*

<b>Global Speech Act Strategy</b>	<b>Sub-levels</b>
<b>Emotional appeal (Pathos)</b>	Define relationship
	Guilt trip
	Statement of empathy
	Request for help, empathy and assistance by dropping or holding the request
	Statement of positive opinion, feeling or agreement
	Statement of negative feeling or opinion
	Scope stating

	Gratitude/appreciation
	Statement of solidarity
	Need
	Want
	Promise of future acceptance/future promise
	Acceptance as refusal
	Conditional acceptance
	Avoidance by hedging
	Address term
	Removal of negativity
	Off the hook
	Swearing
	Wish
	Topic switch
	Repetition of part of request
	Unspecific reply
<b>Avoidance/distraction</b>	Pause fillers
	Physical departure
	Non-verbal avoidance
	Avoidance by hedging
	Do nothing
	Silence
	Alternative
	Postponement
	Hesitation
	Humor/joke
	Express uncertainty
	Suggestion
	Logos (appeal by reason)
	Ethos (appeal by ethics)
	Possibility / probability
	Ability/willingness strategy
	Mitigated refusal
	Downgraders
	Checking on availability
	Getting a pre-commitment
	Grounder
	Sweetener
<b>Elaboration</b>	Disarmer
	Cost minimizer
	Challenge the advisee's future action
	Dissuade
	Challenging ability
	Criticism
	Criticize the request or requester
	Criticize the offer / suggestion
	Blame the interlocutor
	Threat or Statement of (negative) consequence

	Reference to preparatory conditions
	Principle
	Hypothetical statements
	Returning the invitation / suggestion
	Philosophy
	Query
	Lack of enthusiasm
	Opinion
	Hint
	Strong hint
	Mild hint
	Statement of apology/regret
	Excuse, Reason, Explanation
	Self-defense
	Ask for more information
	Evaluation
	Evaluation phrases including a better course of action
	Negative willingness / ability
<b>Direct</b>	Need (pity) / demand
	Want
	Hedge(d) performative
	Hedging
	Locution derivable
	Upgraders
	(Explicit) performatives
	Explicit refusal
	Non-Performatives
	Mood derivable
	Obligation/necessity
	Imperatives

As evident in table 8, the findings of the present study suggest that, based on data from English and Persian, language users tend to employ four global categories of face-saving strategies when performing the face-threatening speech acts of refusal, request, persuasion, and advice. Of course, this classification can be still relevant in case of other face-threatening speech acts. These strategies include Emotional Appeal (with 11 sub-strategies), Avoidance/Distraction (with 24 sub-strategies), Elaboration (38 sub-strategies), and Direct, (12 sub-strategies) which will be discussed in more details in the discussion section.

## **5. Discussion**

The present qualitative study first set out to descriptively explore the face-saving strategies employed by native English speakers, native Persian speakers, and Iranian EFL learners, while triangulating data from a conceptual literature review and a corpus study. To address

the first three research questions, aggregated lists were produced covering the strategies as reported in the pertaining literature, supplemented with data from a hybrid thematic analysis of corpus and naturalistic data. Several interpretations can be drawn from this initial phase. First, there is considerable conceptual overlap between these face-saving strategies in English and Persian. However, it must be noted that users' preferences, interpretations, and nuanced strategy applications might be different in different languages as the present study did not focus on usage patterns. Second, while refusal and request speech acts are broadly studied in the literature, there has been a remarkably more limited attention to speech acts such as persuasion and advice. This led to a smaller variability in the strategies listed for these speech acts, particularly for persuasion. A similar pattern also occurred in corpus and natural data, yielding a limited number of strategies in persuasion and advice. However, these findings certainly do not mean that language users display more limited pragmalinguistic resources when performing these speech acts; rather, the pattern can be attributed to 1) the lower frequency of persuasion and advice speech acts as compared with refusal and request in users' daily interactions, and 2) the nuanced and occasionally confusing distinction between them and neighboring speech acts, such as suggestion and request. Third, although Iranian EFL learners also follow similar patterns in performing these speech acts, the literature consistently reports a smaller variability in their facework options. Aside from the limited number of these studies, this can be attributable to the pragmalinguistic limitations experienced by EFL learners, especially at lower levels of proficiency.

The fourth research question of the study focused on the global face-saving strategies discernable from literature, corpus, and natural data, with reference to English and Persian. Four major face-saving strategies were inferred from hybrid thematic analyses, including *Emotional Appeal*, *Avoidance/Distraction*, *Elaboration*, and *Direct* along with a total of 85 sub-strategies.

Emotional Appeal refers to a set of facework strategies in which the user tries to mitigate, downgrade, or alleviate the degree of imposition or severity of a threat to the face of either the speaker or hearer by expressing or invoking a plethora of positive or negative emotions including feelings of empathy, sympathy, pity, compassion, supportiveness, guilt, solidarity, intimacy, social distance, debt, and emotional, moral, or social obligation. A simple illustrative example can be the expression "*Hey, what are friends for?*", which could be used for making a request, persuading, offering help, offering an unsolicited piece of advice, etc., all of which can be face-threatening.

Avoidance/Distraction refers to a set of strategies used to refrain from or postpone direct confrontation, responsibility, conflict, commitment, personal involvement, or (immediate) action with the goal of easing the feelings of potential discomfort for either or both of the interlocutors. Examples include, “*Not now*”, “*Let’s not talk about it right now*”, “*That’s a long story*”, “*I don’t feel very well today* (instead of addressing a question)”, etc. This group of facework strategies are particularly intricate to trace and record due to their evading nature, especially considering the higher occurrence rates of topic shifts, non-verbal responses, emotional bursts (e.g., crying), and silences.

Elaboration, displaying the highest range of variability among these facework strategies with 38 sublevels, covers a range of techniques in which interlocutors verbalize some form of explanation, excuse, logic, argument, opinion, hint, promise, inquiry, details, doubt, threat, etc., in order to save faces. In fact, except for appeals to emotions categorized under the first strategy, any sort of extra information intended to mitigate the threat to either one of the interlocutors, for instance, promise of future action, can be count as Elaboration. For example, in the following exchange, the respondent’s reply, simultaneously expressing some sort of (personal) principle and negative ability, can be classified as Elaboration:

- A: *How about studying together for the exam next week?*
- B: *I can’t really concentrate when I’m not alone.*

Finally, Direct category includes a subset of face-saving strategies in which the expression of intent occurs rather directly. Although this might sound less than preserving in case of face-threatening speech acts, Direct strategies can be actually used to save face for several reasons. First of all, in many cases, direct strategies act as a preface to a more mitigating strategy. The following exchange, in which a Direct strategy is combined with two Elaboration ones (excuse and apology) demonstrates how this works:

- A: *Are you free for a drink after work?*
- B: *Not really, I have tons of work to do, sorry.*

Second, Direct strategies do not always add to the face-threat. Take the following example from the corpus of the present study (Maid, E10), in which an imperative is used as a Direct strategy in combination with an Emotional Appeal, for request and persuasion:

- *Help me protect Maddy [my daughter], write a testimonial.*

Third, as is the case with a variety of sub-strategies listed in this paper, it must be noted that face-saving strategies are not always focused on saving the face of the hearer (or even the speaker for that matter) by mitigating the impact of potential negative social dynamics. Occasionally, facework is performed to preserve an individual's face by drawing lines, establishing boundaries, signaling independence and personal principles, clearing the air, and in simple words, putting one's foot down. To showcase the argument, the following exchange exemplifies a case of direct refusal supplemented with an Elaboration strategy:

- A: *Are you free for a drink after work?*
- B: *Sorry, no. I don't go out with colleagues.*

In general, it must be noted that, similar to speech acts, the four identified strategies are neither mutually exclusive nor show a one-to-one correspondence with the listed forms; the latter case is evident from the repetition of a number of sub-strategies across more than one global category. In fact, rarely do these strategies occur in isolation and in many cases, they overlap or cooccur with others. Take the following example from Husna's (2018) data in Appendix A:

- *So, I need you to be responsible till your mom gets home.*

In this case of request, a Direct strategy of expressing need/demand is used in combination with Emotional Appeal by both eliciting assistance in time of need and implying responsibility. Another example is translated from the natural data in Table 5:

- *Do you trust me? Invest your money on gold.*

In this case, both advice and persuasion speech acts are being performed while a Direct strategy of "imperatives" is combined with Emotional Appeal, featuring the sub-strategies of "defining relationships", "guilt trip", and "solidarity" (intimacy). In another example, take the following exchange from the corpus data in table (Maid, E5):

- A: *I am taking [stealing] her TV.*
- B: *You don't think the Realtor's going to notice that the TV is gone?*

In this case, speaker B is performing a persuasion –or rather, dissuasion– speech act, employing Elaboration strategies of "strong hint", "appeal to logic", "criticism", and "threat/statement of negative consequence", along with the Avoidance strategy of "humor". Therefore, as evident in these illustrations, pinning a single sub-strategy or even global

strategy onto a dialogic exchange is not always simple and they should not be regarded as mutually exclusive.

The findings of the present study can be situated within Goffman's (1967) facework framework, Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, and Arundale's (2010) face constituting theory. Particularly, the results support Arundale's (2013) call for studying facework outside the politeness theory. They also confirm Lyu and Yuan's (2023) conclusion that in face-threatening interactions, individuals not only make or recognize the efforts to save their faces, but also interpret one's messages with the knowledge of such efforts. The findings are also in line with Labben's (2017) results in that while face is closely related to identity, it is sensitive to culture-specific values.

The findings of this study supplement those of some previous research trying to categorize face-saving strategies beyond the boundaries of Brown and Levinson's (1987) postulation of politeness theory; for example, Ramada (2020) showed that two categories of mitigation and boosting can be used for face-protection; the former to prevent changes in interlocutor's idea of the speaker and the latter to cause such changes. Also, some of the previous findings were not reflected in the data collected for the purpose of this study; for instance, code-switching as a facework strategy (Chau & Lee, 2021) was not located in the present set of data.

## **6. Conclusion**

The present exploratory study first set out to formulate descriptive lists of face-saving strategies employed by native English speakers, Iranian Persian speakers, and Iranian EFL learners through conceptual literature review, corpus analysis, and ethnographical observations. Drawing on this data, it also sought to offer a global categorization of face-saving strategies employed when performing face-threatening speech acts, with reference to English and Persian. It was concluded that these strategies can be postulated under four categories of "Emotional Appeal", "Avoidance/Distraction", "Elaboration", and "Direct". Sub-strategies within each group were defined and illustrated using examples from the data. It is also concluded that these strategies are by no means mutually exclusive, there is not always a clear-cut boundary between them, and tracing or coding them requires meticulous, iterative, and constantly cross-examined processes of analysis.

Although far from perfect, the findings of the present study can form or inspire a coding scheme for researchers in the field of interpersonal pragmatics and interlanguage pragmatics for studying facework patterns. Particularly, these findings offer a unique

perspective in categorizing and defining global face-saving strategies, which can be directly adopted or adapted for making sense of complex naturalistic or laboratory data in pragmatics. While the present study took a descriptive stance and delimited its scope to exploring and categorizing these strategies, future research can benefit from this framework in designing DCTs to elicit and compare language users and learners' preferences of face-saving strategies across cultures. The present findings are hoped to pave the way for studies of actual pragmalinguistic behaviors and decisions based on local and cross-cultural sociopragmatic norms.

The scheme can also be used as a foundation for developing multiple-choice DCTs (MDCTs) to study facework, following frameworks such as Nemati et al. (2014), which can be challenging without a unified, streamlined, and condensed classification of these strategies. However, future researchers might also wish to elaborate on the framework by verifying, revising, updating, or expanding it. Furthermore, EFL researchers may extend the scope of this line of research into studying the transfer and interference of pragmalinguistic resources and sociopragmatic norms from learners' L1, in order to inform language teaching practices. Finally, with advances in commercially-available Large Language Models (LLMs), future research might benefit from the virtually endless options offered by AI in analyzing and coding data in this line of research. Also, while the library phase of the present study was delimited to a conceptual review, future studies can adopt systematic review methodologies or meta-analyses in order to supplement and expand the information offered in this study. The present study was also delimited to English and Persian only, while insights from other contexts can add to the richness of these findings. Aside from these delimitations, the study also experienced limitations in collecting naturalistic data from native English speakers and in the size of the corpus studied. Future research might wish to expand this scope by conducting ethnographical observations in English-speaking contexts or analyzing an extended variety of corpora.

#### **Bio-data**

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## **Declarations**

### **Competing Interests:**

The authors declare that the present study has been conducted in the absence of any conflicting interests.

### **Data availability statement:**

Data will be made available upon reasonable request.

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### **Declaration of generative AI-powered tools in the process of writing:**

The authors declare that GenAI has been consulted in no stage of the present study, including data collection and analysis, as well as the preparation of the present report.

### **Authors' Contribution:**

Both authors were equally involved in all stages of development, execution, analysis, and writing of the present research study.

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## Appendix A: Face-Saving Strategies Used by English Speakers in English as Extracted from the Literature

**Table A**

*Detailed Face-Saving Strategies in English, Extracted from Literature*

Speech Act	Face-Saving Strategy <sup>a</sup>	Source	Example <sup>b</sup>
Suggestion	Suggestion/Alternative	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I will find somebody to help you carry your things. / I will find somebody to help you carrying your things. / I'd rather. . . / I'd prefer. . . / Why don't you ask someone else? / I can buy it later.</i>
		Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Statement of solidarity	Allami & Naeimi (2011)	
	Explicit refusal (direct)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>No way. / it's not possible.</i>
	Elaboration	Allami & Naeimi (2011)	
	Removal of negativity (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I know you always choose the best.</i>
	Return invitation / suggestion (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I suggest you take my food as well.</i>
	Ask question	Allami & Naeimi (2011)	
	Address term (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>Mr. / Professor / Darling</i>
	Refusal	Wish (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)
Ghazanfari et al. (2013)			<i>I wish I could help you.</i>
Joke (indirect)		Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
		Beebe et al. (1990)	
Repetition / repetition of part of request (indirect)		Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
		Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>Monday?</i>
No (direct)		Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>No.</i>
Statement of empathy (adjuncts)		Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I realize you are in a difficult situation.</i>
Blame the interlocutor (indirect)		Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>Why are you so careless?</i>
Criticize the offer / suggestion (indirect)		Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>That's a terrible idea.</i>
Criticism / criticize the request or requester (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)		
	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>It seems to me we're dealing with so many different cultures but we're really overlooking our own.</i>	
Guilt trip (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)		

	Beebe et al. (1990)	Waitress to customers who wants to sit a while: <i>I can't make living off people who just order coffee.</i>
Hedge/hedging (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>Gee, I don't know. / I'm not sure.</i>
Avoidance by hedging	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I don't know what you mean by volunteering.</i>
Request for information	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>What other brands do you have?</i>
Silence (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	
Hesitation (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I don't know if I like it or not.</i>
Physical departure (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	
Do nothing (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	
Postponement (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I'll think about it.</i>
Lack of enthusiasm (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>It is not worthy of mention.</i>
	Beebe et al. (1990)	
Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>This makes your job twice as hard. / I would appreciate if you could help me.</i>
Topic switch (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Beebe et al. (1990)	
Unspecific/indefinite reply (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Beebe et al. (1990)	
Self-defense (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I'm trying my best. / I'm doing all I can do.</i>
Negative willingness/ability (direct)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I can't. / I don't think I can make it.</i>
	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>No, I don't want to. / I can't lend you my dress.</i>
	Allami & Naeimi (2011)	<i>It's not the best thing for my family right now. I will have to turn the offer down.</i>
Statement of Apology/Regret (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>I'm sorry that I don't have enough money to lend you. / I'm really sorry.</i>
	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I'm very sorry.</i>
Excuse/Reason/Explanation (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>I have an exam.</i>
	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I want to leave now. / My children will be home that night. / I have a headache.</i>
	Allami & Naeimi (2011)	<i>I had a prior commitment and since you just told me now, and my shift usually ends at seven, I probably can't stay late this evening.</i>
	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I will find somebody to help you carrying your things. / I'd rather. . . / I'd prefer. . . / Why don't you ask someone else? / I have a headache.</i>

	Khamkhein (2022)	<i>Sorry. I can't help you. I am not good at this subject.</i>
Set condition/Set condition for future or past acceptance (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>If I had enough money, ...</i>
	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I can help you tomorrow after final exam. / If you had asked me earlier, I would have. . . / I will come and help you if I finish early.</i>
Promise of acceptance / promise of future acceptance	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I'll do it next time. / I promise I'll. . . / Next time I'll. . .</i>
	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>I'll do it next time.</i>
Pause fillers (adjuncts to refusals)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>Uhh... / well... / oh... / uhm...</i>
	Khamkhein (2022)	<i>Emm, Umm, Oh.</i>
Gratitude/Appreciation (adjuncts to refusals)	Allami & Naeimi (2011)	<i>I appreciate the opportunity, and I would like to take it. But ...</i>
	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>Thank you.</i>
	Khamkhein (2022)	<i>Thank you. I can go by myself.</i>
(Statement of) Principle (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>I never drink right after dinner.</i>
	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I don't like lazy students who like easy notes taking. / I never do business with friends.</i>
Philosophy/statement of philosophy (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>Excuse is worse than sin. / One can't be too careful.</i>
Dissuade (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	
Acceptance which functions as Refusal (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I don't know when I can give them to you. / it's ok, but I need me notes myself.</i>
Verbal postponement	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>I'll think about it.</i>
(Non-verbal) Avoidance (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	
Threat or statement of consequence / threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I won't be any fun tonight (to refuse an invitation).</i>
Off the hook (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>Don't worry about it. / That's okay. / You don't have to.</i>
Mitigated refusal (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I don't think it's possible. / I wouldn't be able to attend.</i>
Self-defense (indirect)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>You should have attended the class.</i>
Request	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
Statement of negative feeling or opinion	Beebe et al. (1990)	
Statement of positive opinion, feeling, or agreement (adjuncts)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>That's a good idea... / I'd love to...</i>

<b>Request</b>	Performatives (direct)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>I have to decline your request.</i>
		Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I refuse.</i>
	Hedged performatives (direct)	Beebe et al. (1990)	<i>I have to refuse this time.</i>
	Non-Performative statements / nonperformative (direct)	Khamkhein (2022)	<i>I think I cannot join you.</i>
		Beebe et al. (1990)	
		Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>No, No. He is expecting me.</i>
	Suggestion/Suggestory formulae Strategy (conventional indirect)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987)	<i>How about cleaning up? / So, why don't you come and clear up [sic] the mess you made last night!?</i>
		Nailul Husna (2018)	<i>Ramona, Mrs. Meacham is your teacher. You need to listen to her. And she's not that bad.</i>
	Language-specific Suggestory Formula / suggestive formula	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987)	<i>Why don't you get lost?</i>
		Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	
	Want (Direct)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987)	
	Need/demand strategy	Nailul Husna (2018)	<i>So, I need you to be responsible till your mom gets home.</i>
	Obligation/necessity strategy (direct)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987)	<i>You should open your book.</i>
		Nailul Husna (2018)	<i>Sweetie, you should come and celebrate with us.</i>
	Strong hint (nonconventional indirect)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987)	<i>You've left this kitchen in a right mess.</i>
		Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	
	Mild hint (nonconventional indirect)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987)	<i>I'm a nun (in response to the persistent boy)</i>
	Checking on availability (external modifier)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984)	<i>Are you going in the direction of the town? And if so, is it possible to join you?</i>
	Getting a pre-commitment (external modifier)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984)	<i>Will you do me a favor? Could you perhaps lend me your notes for a few days?</i>
	Grounder (external modifier)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984)	<i>Judith, I missed class yesterday, could I borrow your notes?</i>
Sweetener (external modifier)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984)	<i>You have beautiful hand-writing, would it be possible to borrow your notes for a few days?</i>	
Disarmer (external modifier)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984)	<i>Excuse me, I hope you don't think I'm being forward, but is there any chance of a lift home?</i>	
Cost minimizer (external modifier)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984)	<i>Pardon me, but could you give me a lift, if you're going my way, as I just missed the bus and there isn't another one for an hour.</i>	
Downgraders (internal modifier)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984)		

	Upgraders (internal modifier)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984)	
	Hint	Nailul Husna (2018)	<i>Ramona: This is the best day ever!</i> <i>Hewie: Whoo-hoo! Ramona: Yeah. I wish we had a hole in our house.</i> <i>Dorothy: <b>Hey, Ramona let's make a deal. If you can settle down for a few hours I'd see if dad can take us out to dinner.</b> Ramona: Really? Can we go to Macaroni Joe's? Dorothy: There is an inch of dust covering my whole kitchen.</i>
	Wishes strategy	Nailul Husna (2018)	<i>Ramona: Ooh! Customer! Customer!</i> <i>Beezus: <b>Ramona, please, please, please, don't call him over-</b> Ramona: Hey, Henry, you look thirsty.</i>
	Query (conventional indirect) / query preparatory	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987)	<i>Why don't you open your book? / Could you open your book? Would you mind to open your book?</i>
	Mood derivable (direct)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987) Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>Leave me alone / Clean up this mess, please.</i>
	Ability/Willingness Strategy	Nailul Husna (2018)	<i>Could you set the table, please, Ramona?</i>
	(Explicit) Performatives strategy (direct)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987) Nailul Husna (2018) Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>I'm asking you to open your book.</i> <i>I found that picture the other day... and I realized I was exactly your age, so I wanted you to have it.</i>
	Imperatives strategy	Nailul Husna (2018)	<i>Beezus, stop it.</i>
	Reference to preparatory conditions	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>Would you mind moving your car, please?</i>
	Scope stating	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987) Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>I really wish you would stop bothering me.</i>
	Locution derivable (direct)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987) Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>Madam, you'll have to move your car.</i>
	Hedged Performative (direct)	Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987) Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>I would like to ask you to open your book.</i>
<b>Persuasion</b>	Strong hint (non-Conventionally Indirect)	Pishghadam & Rasouli (2011)	<i>The game is boring.</i>
	Mild hint (non-Conventionally Indirect)	Pishghadam & Rasouli (2011)	<i>Are you busy?</i>
	Ethos (Appeal by ethics)	Aristotle (1967)	

	Pathos (Emotional appeal)	Aristotle (1967)	
	Logos (Appeal by reason)	Aristotle (1967)	
Advice	Suggestion	Belyaeva (1996)	<i>You should do x.</i>
	Need (conventionalized form)	Belyaeva (1996)	<i>You need to do x.</i>
	Obligation/necessity	Belyaeva (1996)	<i>You must do x.</i>
	Performatives (direct)	Belyaeva (1996)	<i>I advise / recommend x.</i>
	Express uncertainty	Belyaeva (1996)	<i>May you ought to do x.</i>
	Challenge the advisee's future action	Belyaeva (1996)	<i>Have you ever thought of doing x?</i>
	Imperatives (direct)	Belyaeva (1996)	<i>Do x.</i>
	Evaluation phrases including a better course of action	Belyaeva (1996)	<i>Doing x is good, you'd better do x.</i>
	Hypothetical statements	Belyaeva (1996)	<i>If I were you I'd do x.</i>
	Opinion	Belyaeva (1996)	<i>Maybe you ought to do x.</i>
	Question	Belyaeva (1996)	<i>Why don't you do x/ have you ever thought of doing x? / Do you think it might be a good idea to do x?</i>
	Let's	Jiang (2006)	<i>Let's try...</i>
	Modals	Jiang (2006)	<i>You have to. . . You need to. . . You'd/had better...</i>
	Wh-questions	Jiang (2006)	<i>Why don't you . . .?</i>
	Conditionals (conventionalized form)	Jiang (2006)	<i>If I were. . .</i>
	Performatives	Jiang (2006)	<i>I suggest.../ I propose..., my suggestion is ... / my recommendation is ...</i>
	Pseudo clefts	Jiang (2006)	<i>All you need to do is...</i>
	To clause	Jiang (2006)	<i>It might be difficult to ...</i>
Yes-no question	Jiang (2006)	<i>Have you heard...</i>	
Imperatives	Jiang (2006)	<i>do your best ...</i>	

**a.** All strategy titles are directly borrowed from the source suggesting them.

**b.** All examples are reproduced without changes from the listed sources.

## Appendix B: Face-Saving Strategies Used by Iranian Persian Speakers in Persian as Extracted from the Literature

**Table B***Face-Saving Strategies in Persian, Extracted from Literature*

Speech Act	Face-Saving Strategy <sup>a</sup>	Source	Example <sup>b</sup>
Refusal	Statement of alternative/alternative	Izadi & Zilaie (2014) Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>Chera nemiri az osta:d bepori?</i>
	Wish (indirect)	Izadi & Zilaie (2014) Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>Ka:sh mitunestam bemunam .</i>
		Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Kâs˘ mitunestæm biâm.</i>
	Silence	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	
	Statement of solidarity	Allami & Naeimi (2011)	
	Elaboration	Allami & Naeimi (2011)	
	Ask question	Allami & Naeimi (2011)	
	Let off the hook	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012) Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>Negærân næbâs;˘ to mæjbur nisti puli pærdaxt koni.</i>
		Izadi and Zilaie (2014)	
	Statement of consequence/threat	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012) Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>˘æge in kâro bokoni xeili æsæbâni misæm!</i>
		Aliakbari & Changizi (2012) Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>Dæf˘eye qæbl ke jozvæto khâstæm behem nædâdis!</i>
	Criticize (the request/requester)/criticism	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012) Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>Xodæm behtær midunæm chekâr bâyard bokonæm.</i>
		Izadi and Zilaie (2014) Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Unspecific reply/indefinite reply	Allami & Naeimi (2011)	<i>Xodet baayad dar kelaas sherkat koni.</i>
Aliakbari & Changizi (2012) Izadi & Zilaie (2014) Ghazanfari et al. (2013)		<i>Motmæ ˘en nistæm ke mitunæm biâm yâ næ.</i>	
Topic switch	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)		
Joke	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012) Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>˘enqade xordæm ke dâræm miterkæm!</i>	
	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)		
Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping (holding) the request / request	Izadi & Zilaie (2014) Ghazanfari et al. (2013)		
	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Xâhes˘ mikonæm âqâye ræiis; man nemikhâm in sæhro ˘ tærk konæm.</i>	
No	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Na / na nemitunam.</i>	
	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Næ!</i>	

Refusing directly	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	
	Allami & Naeimi (2011)	<i>Na, nemshe.</i>
Postponement (indirect)	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Hæfte Vâyænde dær xedmætetun hæstæm.</i>
	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
Hedging/hedge	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Momkene hæfte Vâyænde beresæm xedmætetun?</i>
	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	
	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
Swearing	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Be xodâ xodæm lâzemes` dârcæm vægærnæ behet midâdæmes.</i>
Define relationship	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Na mersi azizam.</i>
Statement of Apology/Regret (indirect)	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Ozr mixa:m.</i>
	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Vâqe Væn mote Væssefæm!</i>
Excuse/Reason/Explanation (indirect)		<i>Ye qara:ri da:ram / tavallodet mobarak azizam vali xob man ba:ba:m eja:ze nemideh shaba: birun ba:sham ... Na aslan kolan ejazeh nemide shab birun beram / /Na aslan kolan ejazeh nemide shab birun beram.</i>
	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	
	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Vêlân jozvæm pisæm ~ nist Væzizæm.</i>
	Allami & Naeimi (2011)	<i>?akhe man ham fardaa emtehaan daram. Raiis, man xeyli mixam bemunam vali emruz xunamun mehmunie. baayad zud beram.</i>
Statement of alternative (indirect)	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Chera nemiri az osta:d beporsi?</i>
	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Mitunæm hæfteye dige biyâm. / Cerâ ^ Væz yeki dige nemiporsi?</i>
Set condition for future or past acceptance (indirect) / conditional acceptance/set condition	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>age tunestam.</i>
	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
Promise of future acceptance (indirect)	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Vægær qol bedi komækæm koni miâm.</i>
	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Dafe dige anja:mesh midam</i>
	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement (adjuncts to refusals)	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Qol midæm dæfVæye ba Vd næ næyâræm. Tabrik migam ke emteha:net ro qabul shodi vali . . .</i>
	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Pisnæhâde ~ xeili xubie!</i>
Statement of empathy (adjuncts to refusals) (indirect)	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Xob masa'leh ine ke xub darket mikonam vali . . .</i>
	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Midunæm ke zendegi-ye sæxti dâri.</i>
Pause fillers (adjuncts to refusals) (indirect)	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>E::h, vallah ...</i>
(expression of) Gratitude/Appreciation (adjuncts to refusals)	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Az da`vatetun motshakeram amma . . . / - Help yourself + Merci.</i>
	Aliakbari & Changizi	<i>Az dæ Vvæte sexâvætmeândânætun xeili</i>

	(indirect)	(2012)	<i>mæmnunæm.</i>
	(statement of) Principle (indirect)	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Ma'mulan tanha dars mixunam.</i>
		Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
		Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Mæn kolæn be rezime ~ qæzâii Veteqâd nêdâræm.</i>
	Philosophy (indirect)	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>A:dam nemituneh inhame mova:zeb bashæ.</i>
		Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Qæzâ bælâ bude hætmæn!</i>
	Dissuade/Attempt to dissuade the interlocutor(indirect)	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Bixia:lesh sho.</i>
		Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	
	Acceptance (that function) as refusal (indirect)	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Behet khabar midam.</i>
		Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	
	Avoidance (indirect)	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Mitunam farad: sobh beyaym va in ka:r ro anja:m bedim.</i>
		Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Hærfesæm ~ næzæn lotfæn!</i>
		Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Pisnæhâde ~ xeili xubie!</i>
	Negative ability/Negative willingness (direct)	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Nemitunam.</i>
		Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Nemitunæm dæ Vvætetuno ghæbul konæm</i>
	Lack of enthusiasm (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>Bæram mohem nist.</i>
		Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Rastesho bekhaid tæmayoli be Vænjàme in mo Vâmele nêdâræm!</i>
	Self-defense (indirect)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>Næ, MA bayæd hæva-ye hæmo dashteh bashim</i>
		Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Mæn hæmeye tælâsæmo ~ mikonæm ke væzifæmo be behtærin væjh Vænjàm bedæm."</i>
		Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	
	Repetition of part of request (indirect) / repetition	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Jom Væ sab?</i>
		Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	
		Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Returning the invitation/offer	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	<i>Jom 'e biain samte ma: ...mersi va:lla:h ye xorde gerefta:ram va ella .... SHOMA: biain onvar.</i>
	Ask for more information	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	
	Nonverbal avoidance	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	
	Statement of regret	Izadi & Zilaie (2014)	
	Performatives (direct)	Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>Mæjbooræm khooneh bemoonæm.</i>
		Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Mæjburæm dæ Vvætetuno ræd konæm.</i>
	Non-Performatives (direct)	Aliakbari & Changizi (2012)	<i>Næ! / Nemitunæm dæ Vvætetuno ghæbul konæm.</i>
		Ghazanfari et al. (2013)	<i>Mæn nemitoonæm biyam.</i>
<b>Request</b>	Suggestory formulae	Shahrokhi (2012)	<i>Cheraa aadres ro nemiporsi?</i>
		Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>Bia sa'ay konim be in mas'ale adat konim.</i>
	Language specific suggestory formula	Shahidi Tabar (2012)	<i>میخوای امروز اتاق رو دوتایی تمیز کنیم؟</i>
		Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	
Want (statement)	Shahrokhi (2012)	<i>Mixaastam maashineto baraa chand</i>	

		<i>ssaat qarz-begiram.</i>
	Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>Mixam dige tu zendegim nabashi.</i>
	Shahidi Tabar (2012)	ببین آقا ... ازت (از تو) میخوام تکلیف هفته بعد رو این هفته انجام بدی.
Need/Demand	Shahrokhi (2012)	<i>Man niaz be yek meghdar pul bara pardaxt in ghabzha daram.</i>
	Shahrokhi (2012)	<i>Shomaa majburid safaretun ru aqab-bendaazid.</i>
Obligation statement	Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>Bayad bery.</i>
	Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>Mitunm karte shoma ro dashte basham?</i>
Reference to preparatory condition	Shahidi Tabar (2012)	میشه منم (من را هم) برسونید؟
Query	Shahrokhi (2012)	<i>Mishe labtaabe jadidetu emtehaan-konam?</i>
	Shahrokhi (2012)	<i>Aadres ro az in ?aber bepors ta raah ro peidaa-konim.</i>
Mood derivable/mood derivative	Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>Sabr kon ta xodam behet begam che kar koni</i>
	Shahidi Tabar (2012)	جزوت رو بهم بده
Challenging ability	Shahrokhi (2012)	<i>Begzaar bebinam mitun in naamehaa ru taip-koni / taibe in nameha 5 daghighesh bishtar nist, age tonesti?</i>
Explicit performative	Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>Khahesh mikonam ye kam arum sho.</i>
	Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	
Locution derivable/obligation statement	Shahidi Tabar (2012)	تو باید اتاق رو تمیز میکردی.
	Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>Majburam azat beklam ke hameye harfhai ke zadim pish xodemun bemune.</i>
Hedged performative	Shahidi Tabar (2012)	باید ازت بخوام که انجام بدی.
Scope stating	Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	
	Shahrokhi (2012)	<i>Mixaastam azat darxaast-konam jozvato be man qarz-bedi.</i>
Performatives explicit performative/strategy	Shahidi Tabar (2012)	از شما درخواست میکنم تکلیف محوله رو این هفته انجام بدی.
	Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	<i>Un nabayad zende bemune.</i>
	Shahidi Tabar (2012)	شما الان دارید خونه میرید؟ (قصد دارد به شنونده بفهماند که او را برساند). امروز سرت خیلی شلوغ بود، مگه نه؟ (قصد دارد به شنونده بفهماند که اتاق تمیز نیست).
Strong hint	Shahrokhi (2012)	<i>Man diruz kelaas ru az-dast-dadam.</i>
Persuasion	Strong hint (non-conventionally indirect)	Pishghadam & Rasouli (2011) <i>The game is boring.</i>
	Mild hint (non-conventionally indirect)	Pishghadam & Rasouli (2011) <i>Are you busy?</i>
Advice <sup>c</sup>	Let's	Pishghadam & Sharafadini (2011)
	Modals	Pishghadam & Sharafadini (2011)
	Wh-question	Pishghadam &

	Sharafadini (2011)
Conditionals	Pishghadam & Sharafadini (2011)
Performatives	Pishghadam & Sharafadini (2011)
Pseudo clefts	Pishghadam & Sharafadini (2011)
To clause	Pishghadam & Sharafadini (2011)
Yes-no question	Pishghadam & Sharafadini (2011)
Imperatives	Pishghadam & Sharafadini (2011)

*a. All strategy titles are directly borrowed from the source suggesting them.*

*b. The examples have been taken from the references without any alterations, regarding the Persian transcriptions and Farsi sentences.*

*c. No examples were given in the references.*

**Appendix C: Face-Saving Strategies Used by Iranian EFL Learners in English as Extracted from the Literature**

**Table C**

*Face-Saving Strategies in English Employed by Iranian EFL Learners*

Speech Act	Face-Saving Strategy <sup>a</sup>	Source	Example <sup>b</sup>
Refusal	Alternative (indirect)	Shishavan & Sharifian (2016)	<i>Umm, that's an interesting topic... but so far, I've been interested in topic area X and was thinking of doing that instead. Do you think that would be okay? / I can buy it later.</i>
		Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<i>You know I'm really sorry, I need to study them tonight, it's better to ask someone else.</i>
		Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	<i>...but um::<sup>d</sup> I can probably come earlier tomorrow and finish that by the end of the day. / But you can have a day off next week, is that ok? / You can come in our house and we can study together but I can't give that book to you.</i>
	Wish (indirect)	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	<i>I wish I could give them to you AGAIN. / I really wish I could, but: / I'd really wish I could actually work with you and you know cooperate on some research but... / I really wanted to help you but...</i>
		Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	<i>Um, I'm so sorry but uh I've done my best today you know, but this is actually too loaded.</i>
	Excuse / reason (indirect)	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	<i>I have an appointment with my friend and I have to be there, you know it's already arranged; also, I'm so tired as well and I don't think that uh I can be ready for this or I do the project properly you know. / I'm having two exams this week and uh I haven't studied yet and they are actually vital.</i>
		Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<i>Thank you for your invitation but I was invited somewhere else, so sorry, I have to go there.</i>
	Refusing directly/Explicit refusal	Shishavan & Sharifian (2016)	
		Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<b>No<sup>e</sup></b> , the current financial situation of the bookstore does not let us for that; I'm sorry.
	Let interlocutor off the hook	Shishavan & Sharifian (2016)	
Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)		<b>I'm sorry</b> / I'm so sorry for this time, you know. / Just get ready for the exam, sorry.	
Regret (indirect)/ Statement of Apology	Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<b>Sorry to say that</b> , but it is not possible for us to increase your salary now.	
	Shishavan & Sharifian (2016)	<i>I need to prepare for an exam. / I think I would do a better job if I tackled this in another way. / I have a headache. You know we have employed some new employees; so, it's not possible for the time being. / Sorry, there are lots of financial problems ahead. We need to be more careful in spending money.</i>	
Excuse/Reason/Explanation (indirect)	Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<i>Sorry, because my handwriting is terrible this time. I wrote very quickly that session; so, you will be faced with a lot of problems while reading.</i>	
		<i>I really like to help you, but I'm sorry, I also need the notes for tomorrow's exam. I'm sure others can help you.</i>	
Conditional acceptance / condition for	Shishavan & Sharifian (2016)	<i>I accept provided that I pay the money back later. / I'll come to see you, if I finish early.</i>	
	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)		

future acceptance (indirect)		
Promise of future Acceptance (indirect)	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	
Empathy (indirect)	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	<i>I know you need them [but ...]</i>
Pause fillers (indirect)	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	<i>Um::... / Uh:...</i>
	Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<i>But uhm...</i>
Gratitude (indirect)	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	<i>Thank you for your invitation but I was invited somewhere else so sorry, I have to go there. / that's very nice of you to: consider me as one of the good students and uh: (.) consider me to work with you on this project but...</i>
	Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<i>That's nice of you but, I think it won't work on me.</i>
Appreciation	Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<i>I really appreciate you and I'm quite satisfied with your job but...</i>
Statement of principle / principle (indirect)	Shishavan & Sharifian (2016)	<i>I never do business with friends.</i>
	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	<i>It's better that you don't miss the classes.</i>
Philosophy (indirect)	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	
Dissuade (indirect)	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	<i>No, I won't. I wish I could give them to you AGAIN, I know you need them, um: but tomorrow I have exam too. It's better that you don't miss the classes and <b>you always do that</b> these days. / Um sorry, no you can't, because I'm in a hurry you know. I'm late for my class. <b>Why do you ask me?</b> There is a phone booth right there.</i>
	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	
Acceptance as refusal (indirect)	Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<i>Yes, you're one of the best workers; but frankly saying, this seems to be impossible. I'm also in need of money, sorry.</i>
	Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<i>Of course, you are one of my best workers, but I'm sorry to tell you that I'm not in a proper condition to increase your pay right now.</i>
Avoidance (indirect)	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	
	Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<i>Unfortunately, I don't have my notes with myself now.</i>
Positive Opinion (indirect)	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	
Negative ability/Negative willingness (direct)	Shishavan & Sharifian (2016)	<i>I can't. / I don't think so.</i>
	Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<i>You know we have employed some new employees; so, it's not possible for the time being.</i>
	Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<i>Sorry to say that, but it is not possible for us to increase your salary now.</i>
Performatives (direct)	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	
Hedging	Sahragard & Javanmardi (2011)	<i>We are going to face bankruptcy; so, I'm not sure whether I can help you or not.</i>
		<i>I'm not sure because of the economic problems.</i>

	Non-Performatives (direct)	Hariri & Raouf Moini (2020)	<i>I can't be ready for this or I do the project properly you know. / No, I won't. / I can't give it to you. / I can't accept it.</i>
<b>Request</b>	Want	Saadatmandi et al. (2018)	<i>I want you to ...</i>
	Query	Saadatmandi et al. (2018)	<i>Could you write a recommendation letter for me?</i>
	Mood derivable	Jalilifar & Hashemian (2011)	
	Performative	Jalilifar & Hashemian (2011)	
	Hedge	Jalilifar & Hashemian (2011)	
	Obligation	Jalilifar & Hashemian (2011)	
	Want statement	Jalilifar & Hashemian (2011)	
	Suggestory	Jalilifar & Hashemian (2011)	
	Preparatory	Jalilifar & Hashemian (2011)	
	Strong hints	Jalilifar & Hashemian (2011)	
	Reference to preparatory condition	Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016)	
<b>Persuasion</b>	Mild hints	Jalilifar & Hashemian (2011)	
	Mild hint	Pishghadam & Rasouli (2011)	
	Strong hint	Pishghadam & Rasouli (2011)	
<b>Advice<sup>c</sup></b>	Mood (direct)	Babaie & Shahrokhi (2015)	
	Performative (direct)	Babaie & Shahrokhi (2015)	
	Hedge (direct)	Babaie & Shahrokhi (2015)	
	Obligation (direct)	Babaie & Shahrokhi (2015)	
	Want (direct)	Babaie & Shahrokhi (2015)	
	Suggestory (conventionally indirect)	Babaie & Shahrokhi (2015)	
	Preparatory (conventionally indirect)	Babaie & Shahrokhi (2015)	
	Strong hint (non-conventionally)	Babaie & Shahrokhi (2015)	

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indirect)

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Mild hint (non-  
conventionally  
indirect)

Babaie & Shahrokhi  
(2015)

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- a.** *All strategy titles are directly borrowed from the source suggesting them.*
  - b.** *All examples are reproduced without changes from the listed sources.*
  - c.** *No examples were given in the references.*
  - d.** *Some symbols were used in the main references as the transcription convention.*
  - e.** *Some of the examples represent more than one strategy. The target part has been highlighted and underlined*

## Appendix D: Lists and Descriptions of Global Face-saving Strategies

**Table D1**

*Classification of Global Face-Saving Strategies According to Forms*

Face-Saving Strategy <sup>a</sup>	Description <sup>b</sup>
Let's	Contraction of <i>let us</i> ; used by a speaker to express to suggest that he or she and those being addressed do something (Collins Dictionary).
Modals	Connected with the class of verbs such as <i>can</i> , <i>may</i> or <i>will</i> that are used with other verbs (not modals) to express possibility, permission, intention, etc. (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries).
Wh-question	A question that begins with 'who', 'where', 'when', 'what', 'why', or with 'how' (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries).
Yes-no question	A question to which the answer can be either 'yes' or 'no' (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries).
Conditionals (conventionalized form)	A sentence or clause that begins with <i>if</i> or <i>unless</i> and expresses a condition/the form of a verb that expresses a <u>conditional</u> action, for example <i>should</i> in <i>If I should die...</i> (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries).
Pseudo clefts	A sentence that resembles a <u>cleft</u> sentence by <u>conveying</u> emphasis or <u>politeness</u> through the use of a relative clause, such as <i>what we want is money</i> representing <i>we want money</i> (Oxford Languages).
To-clause	The to-clause gives more information about the headword. Often the main clause containing the headword would have little meaning without the to-clause (Writing Support).
Should	Used to say or <u>ask</u> what is the <u>correct</u> or <u>best</u> thing to do (Cambridge dictionary).
Imperative (direct)	a sentence, word, phrase, or form of a verb that is used for giving an instruction or order (Cambridge dictionary).

a. Strategies of speech act of request have been classified based on "form" as well. These strategies have not been incorporated in the present study.

b. Definitions without any reference have been written by the researcher.

**Table D2**

*Classification of Face-Saving Strategies Based on Language Functions*

Strategy	Definition <sup>a</sup>
<b>Address term</b>	A linguistic expression used by speakers to refer to or address others in communication, reflecting social relationships, politeness, and hierarchies.
<b>Downgraders (internal modifier)</b>	To lessen the impact of face, making it less direct by using words such as: maybe, think, perhaps....
<b>Checking on availability (external modifier)</b>	This refers to a strategy used in communication where the speaker seeks confirmation or an indication of the interlocutor's readiness, willingness, or ability to engage with a proposed action or idea.
<b>Getting a pre-commitment (external modifier)</b>	This strategy involves encouraging the interlocutor to make a commitment or agreement before a proposal is fully presented. It is used as a way of securing preliminary agreement to a plan or course of action, increasing the likelihood of a positive response later.
<b>Grounder (external modifier)</b>	It provides justification or rationale for an action or request. It involves giving reasons, explanations, or additional context to make an offer, request, or proposition more acceptable or reasonable in the eyes of the interlocutor.
<b>Sweetener (external modifier)</b>	designed to make the proposal more appealing or attractive to the interlocutor by complimenting the interlocutor.

<b>Disarmer (external modifier)</b>	It aims to reduce the threat or potential conflict in communication. It is typically used to soften a request, critique, or proposal, often by acknowledging potential concerns or difficulties and presenting solutions in advance.
<b>Cost minimizer (external modifier)</b>	It serves to reduce the perceived cost or effort associated with fulfilling a request or complying with a request.
<b>Criticize the offer / suggestion (indirect)</b>	It refers to expressing dissatisfaction or disagreement with a proposal or idea in a less direct manner
<b>Blame the interlocutor (indirect)</b>	It involves indirectly attributing fault or responsibility to the interlocutor for a negative outcome, usually in a way that avoids confrontation or direct accusations.
<b>Upgraders (internal modifier)</b>	To increase intensity, express urgency, and forcefulness by using words such as: absolutely, urgently....
<b>Removal of negativity</b>	It refers to the linguistic strategies used to neutralize or eliminate negative aspects in communication, often by rephrasing or offering a more positive perspective.
<b>Pause filler</b>	It is a linguistic device used to fill gaps in speech while the speaker gathers their thoughts or organizes their next point.
<b>Express uncertainty</b>	The user expresses ambiguity in fulfilling promise or granting request.
<b>Statement of solidarity</b>	to express alignment or support with the interlocutor's feelings, opinions, or circumstances. It aims to establish common ground, foster cooperation, or demonstrate shared values or beliefs, enhancing the relationship between speakers.
<b>Elaboration</b>	The speaker provides further explanation, details, or clarification to expand upon a previously made statement or idea.
<b>Ask question</b>	Eliciting more information for further information.
<b>Suggestion</b>	The sentence contains a suggestion to X (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987). Suggestory formulae is a request strategy which contains a suggestion to do something (Nailul Husna, 2018). Through Suggestory Formula the illocutionary intent is expressed as a suggestion (Shahrokhi, 2012). This utterance uses the formulae to suggest the hearer to perform something (Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011).
<b>Language-specific Suggestory Formula/suggestive formula</b>	The sentence contains a suggestion to X (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987).
<b>Wish (strategy) (indirect)</b>	In this strategy, the speaker makes a statement of request based on his or her wishes or desires (Nailul Husna, 2018).
<b>(statement of) Alternative (indirect)</b>	Alternatives were used to save face for the interlocutor and to negotiate possibilities to arrive at mutual agreement. Alternatives also indirectly indicated that the speaker was not able or willing to accept the invitation, offer, request, or suggestion (Shishavan & Sharifian, 2016).
<b>Joke (indirect)</b>	In this strategy, the speaker uses humor words and structures to transfer the meaning.
<b>Repetition (as/of a part pf request) (indirect)</b>	Repeating a part or the whole part of the sentence/question in order to refuse a request.
<b>Silence (indirect)</b>	Not saying anything or refusing to respond to a request as refusal.
<b>Swearing</b>	The speaker invokes a deity or a sacred entity, often to emphasize emotion, sincerity, or urgency.
<b>Define relationship</b>	One party explicitly or implicitly establishes the nature, boundaries, or terms of the relationship with the interlocutor. It helps to clarify expectations and roles within the interaction or social context.
<b>Criticism (criticize / criticize the request or</b>	The speaker evaluates or judges the interlocutor's actions, beliefs, or behaviors, typically pointing out flaws or shortcomings.

<b>requester) (indirect)</b>	
<b>Guilt trip (indirect)</b>	The speaker aims to induce feelings of guilt in the interlocutor, often by highlighting the latter's perceived moral obligations or failings. This strategy seeks to influence behavior by appealing to the interlocutor's sense of responsibility or emotional response.
<b>Hedge(d) performative (direct)</b>	Are utterances which the illocutionary force is softening by use of hedging expressions (Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011).
<b>Hedge(ing) (indirect) (direct)</b>	Utterances embedding the naming of the illocutionary force (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987).
<b>Avoidance by hedging</b>	The speaker intentionally softens or qualifies their statements to avoid direct commitment, potential conflict, or responsibility.
<b>(verbal) Postponement (indirect)</b>	To delay or defer an action or response. It often involves providing a temporary excuse, justification, or alternative time frame, allowing the speaker to avoid immediate commitment or action.
<b>Lack of enthusiasm (indirect)</b>	Verbally or indirectly expressing lack of interest to comply with the suggestion or request. / Lack of emotional engagement or interest, often signaled through tone, language, or content. It serves as a strategy to downplay the importance or excitement of an issue.
<b>Topic switch (indirect)</b>	To refuse to do something by a sudden change in the topic.
<b>Unspecific / indefinite reply (indirect)</b>	Giving an unclear answer as a way of refusing a request.
<b>Statement of Positive opinion, feeling or agreement (adjuncts) / positive opinion</b>	Having a positive perception and mindset about doing something.
<b>Statement of negative feeling or opinion</b>	Expressing sadness or dissatisfaction.
<b>Negative Willingness / ability (direct)</b>	Expressing inability or unhappiness of doing something.
<b>Statement of apology/regret</b>	The act of saying sorry for not being able to do something.
<b>Excuse, Reason, Explanation (indirect)</b>	The act of bringing some reason for not being able to do something.
<b>Pause fillers (indirect) (adjuncts)</b>	Using some words without any special meaning such as: umm, uh ...
<b>Gratitude / appreciation (indirect) (adjuncts)</b>	The speaker expresses thankfulness or recognition towards the interlocutor for their actions, contributions, or qualities. It serves to acknowledge value and foster positive social bonds.
<b>(statement of) Principle (indirect)</b>	The speaker articulates a fundamental belief, value, or standard that guides their actions or perspective.
<b>(statement of) Philosophy (indirect)</b>	The speaker articulates a broader worldview, system of thought, or underlying approach to life or specific matters.
<b>Dissuade / attempt to dissuade interlocutor</b>	The speaker attempts to convince the interlocutor not to take a particular action, change their mind, or abandon an idea.
<b>Conditional acceptance (condition for future acceptance) / set condition</b>	The speaker expresses willingness to accept or agree to a proposal, request, or offer, but only under specific conditions or at a future time. This strategy communicates partial agreement while setting prerequisites or indicating that the decision is contingent on certain factors or circumstances.
<b>Acceptance (that/which function) as refusal (indirect)</b>	Refusing as a specific unlike condition in the future.

<b>Promise of (future) acceptance (indirect)</b>	The speaker assures the interlocutor that they will be willing to engage, approve, or accept a proposal or action at a later time. It conveys intention and builds expectation for future collaboration or agreement.
<b>(non-verbal) Avoidance (indirect)</b>	The speaker deliberately refrains from engaging with a particular topic, question, or situation, often to evade discomfort, conflict, or personal involvement.
<b>Threat or Statement of (negative) consequence (to the requester)</b>	The speaker indicates potential negative outcomes or repercussions for certain actions or behaviors.
<b>(let interlocutor/ let) Off the hook</b>	The speaker absolves the interlocutor from responsibility, guilt, or obligation, often to relieve them from pressure or to show understanding.
<b>(Statement of) empathy (adjuncts)</b>	The speaker demonstrates understanding and shared feelings with the interlocutor, often in response to emotional states or distress. It serves to express compassion and solidarity, fostering emotional connection.
<b>Mitigated refusal (indirect)</b>	The speaker denies a request or proposal but does so in a softened or indirect manner, often to reduce potential offense or conflict. This strategy involves using polite language, excuses, or hedging to convey the refusal more gently.
<b>Hesitation (indirect)</b>	A speech act marked by pauses, fillers, or uncertain language, signaling the speaker's reluctance, lack of preparedness, or search for the appropriate response. Hesitation often reflects a desire to buy time or avoid immediate commitment.
<b>Ask for more information</b>	Trying to understand a topic thoroughly.
<b>Physical departure (indirect)</b>	The speaker signals an intention to leave the physical space, signaling disengagement from the interaction.
<b>Do nothing (indirect)</b>	To be neutral.
<b>Request for help, empathy and assistance by dropping (holding) the request (indirect)</b>	To politely ask for help in doing something.
<b>Returning the invitation / offer</b>	The speaker reciprocates an invitation or offer made by the interlocutor.
<b>Self-defense (indirect)</b>	The speaker defends their actions, beliefs, or character.
<b>(explicit) Performatives (strategy) (direct)</b>	The illocutionary force of the utterance is explicitly named by the speakers (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987).
	The illocutionary force in utterances classified as performative is explicitly named (Shahrokhi, 2012).
	Performatives strategy is very direct and usually authoritative (Nailul Husna, 2018).
<b>Non-Performatives (statement) (direct)</b>	Are utterances which the illocutionary force is used in them explicitly (Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011).
<b>Want (statement) (desire) (direct)</b>	Strategies that do not bring about a change in the world or perform an action in themselves, such as statements of belief, observation, or general assertions. They contrast with performative speech acts, which carry illocutionary force and perform an action through the act of saying.
	The utterance expresses desire of the speaker (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987).
<b>Need / demand (strategy) (conventionalized)</b>	This strategy is employed when the speaker expresses his/her desire to be carried out by the hearer (Shahrokhi, 2012).
	Are utterances which include the speaker's needs, desires, wishes, and demands (Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011).
<b>Query (conventionally indirect)</b>	In this strategy, the speaker directly gives request to the hearer (Nailul Husna, 2018).
<b>Query (conventionally indirect)</b>	The utterance carries reference to a preparatory condition (e.g. ability, willingness, or possibility to perform the act) as conventionalized in any particular language (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987).

	They are utterances through which the speaker checks the conditions for the feasibility of the request (Shahrokhi, 2012).
	This category includes the interrogative or an interrogative conditional form (Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011).
<b>Obligation / necessity (strategy / statement)</b>	Illocutionary act is directly stated from the semantic meaning of the utterance (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987).
	The illocutionary intent is directly derivable from the semantic meaning of the locution (Shahrokhi, 2012).
	Statement of obligation and necessity is the strategy of request to make the hearer obligate to the speaker wants or request (Nailul Husna, 2018).
	Are utterances which in them obligation is imposed by the speaker to the hearer to perform the act (Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011).
<b>Hint</b>	In this strategy, the speaker does not want to state his/her intent explicitly. In other word, the speaker hides his request and does not mention the request directly (Nailul Husna, 2018).
<b>Strong hint (non-conventionalized indirect)</b>	Utterance contains partial reference to object or to elements needed for the implementation of the act (directly pragmatically implying the act) (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987).
	Utterances which make partial reference or to the act or may indicate the reason or support for the desired act (Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011).
<b>Mild hint (non-conventionalized indirect)</b>	Utterances that make no reference to the request proper (or any of its elements) but are interpretable through the context as requests (indirectly pragmatically implying the act) (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987).
	Utterances which make no reference to the desired act but it inferred by the context (Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011).
<b>Mood derivable (derivative) / mood</b>	The grammatical mood of the verb in the utterance marks its illocutionary force as a request (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987).
	They include utterances in which the syntactic mood of the verb indicates illocutionary force. The prototypical form is imperative (Shahrokhi, 2012).
	Imperatives are the dominant forms of utterances of this type (Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011).
<b>(negative) Ability/willingness (strategy)</b>	This strategy is used to ask about the hearer's ability in performing the desired act (Nailul Husna, 2018).
<b>(negative) Imperatives (strategy) (direct)</b>	This strategy states that imperatives are the grammatical form directly signaling that the utterance is an order. In this strategy, the speaker has power over the hearer (Nailul Husna, 2018).
<b>Reference to preparatory conditions / preparatory</b>	Utterance contains reference to preparatory conditions (e.g. ability or willingness, the possibility of the act being performed) as conventionalized in any specific language (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987).
<b>Scope stating</b>	The utterance expresses the speaker's intentions, desire or feeling vis d vis the fact that the hearer do X (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987).
<b>Locution derivable (direct)</b>	The illocutionary point is directly derivable from the semantic meaning of the locution (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1987).
<b>Challenging ability</b>	The speaker challenges the hearer's ability in an attempt to urge him to fulfill his request (Shahrokhi, 2012).
<b>Challenge the advisee's future action</b>	Simulating situations in the future and asking about the advisee's opinion.
<b>Ethos (appeal by ethics)</b>	Persuasion through personality and stance (Altikriti, 2016).
	Reliability and credibility of the speaker (Ghazani, 2016).
<b>Pathos (emotional appeal)</b>	Persuasion through the arousal of emotion (Altikriti, 2016).
	Emotional appeal (Ghazani, 2016).
<b>Logos (appeal by reason)</b>	Persuasion through reasoning (Altikriti, 2016).
	Rational argumentation (Ghazani, 2016).
<b>Evaluation/Evaluation phrases including a better</b>	The process of judging or calculating the quality, importance, amount, or value of something (Cambridge Dictionary).

<b>course of action</b>	
<b>Hypothetical statements</b>	Presents a scenario or condition that may or may not be real, often using conditional language ("if...then"). It functions to speculate, suggest, or imagine alternative situations or outcomes.
<b>Explicit refusal / refusing directly</b>	The speaker directly and unequivocally rejects a request, proposal, or offer. It involves clear communication of denial without ambiguity, often serving to set boundaries or assert autonomy.
<b>Possibility / probability</b>	The speaker discusses the potential or likelihood of a particular event or outcome. It often involves speculation or consideration of various scenarios.
<b>Opinion</b>	A thought or belief that something should be done or something is better in a certain way.

a. *Definitions without any reference have been written by the researcher.*