Investigating the Use of Politeness Strategies in Expressing Disagreements Among Saudi EFL Teachers on Twitter

Rowida Ali Al Ghamdi

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INVESTIGATING THE USE OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN EXPRESSING DISAGREEMENTS AMONG SAUDI EFL TEACHERS ON TWITTER

A Dissertation

presented in partial fulfillment of requirements

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in Second Language Studies; Emphasis in Applied Linguistics in

the Department of Modern Languages

The University of Mississippi

by

ROWIDA AL GHAMDI

May 2023
ABSTRACT

This study investigates the politeness strategies employed by Saudi EFL teachers when expressing their disagreements on Twitter. It examines the factors affecting Saudi EFL teachers' choice of politeness and disagreement strategies. It compares Saudi EFL teachers' disagreement expressions with those of American ESL teachers on Twitter. Four instruments were utilized to collect the data: retrieving the corpus of tweets, observing the thread of tweets (for Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers), using an open-ended questionnaire, and follow-up interviews (for Saudi EFL teachers). This study finds that the on-record strategy was the most frequently used among Saudi EFL teachers, as found in the corpus and thread of tweets. However, Saudi EFL teachers employed negative politeness more than positive politeness strategies in the corpus of tweets. At the same time, they utilized positive politeness more than negative politeness strategies in the thread of tweets. The main factors influencing Saudi EFL teachers when expressing their disagreements on Twitter are the severity of the topic, linguistic proficiency, and the differences in cultural norms between their first and target languages. Also, this study finds that Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers were similar in their performances of disagreements; they employed aggravated disagreements the most in the corpus of tweets, whereas they frequently used disagreement nor mitigated or strengthened in the thread of tweets. In contrast, Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers differ in their employment of the politeness strategies; Saudi EFL teachers performed positive and negative politeness strategies, while American ESL teachers employed mostly positive politeness and rarely used negative politeness strategies. This study calls for further examination of disagreements to extend the pragmatics literature of disagreement speech
acts across languages and cultures. This study recommends integrating adequate pragmatic knowledge in EFL textbooks in Saudi schools. This study aims to contribute to the fields of sociopragmatics and CMC.

*Keywords: politeness strategies, disagreements, Saudi EFL teachers, American ESL teachers, Twitter.*
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my father, who made great sacrifices by traveling long distances to support me throughout my Ph.D. journey, leaving behind all his other responsibilities. I hope I can make him proud of me; to him, I am greatly indebted.
# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

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<td>CMC</td>
<td>Computer-Mediated Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTAs</td>
<td>Face-Threatening Acts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
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<td>FL</td>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>Second Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Hearer/Addressee</td>
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to present the rationale for this study and briefly discusses how it will extend the literature on pragmatics, sociopragmatics, sociolinguistics, and computer-mediated communication (henceforth CMC). This study investigates the politeness strategies employed by Saudi English as a foreign language (henceforth EFL) instructors and American English as a second language (henceforth ESL) teachers in expressing disagreements on the social media platform 'Twitter.' Nowadays, modern technology has demonstrated its essential contribution to helping individuals communicate in a foreign language (henceforth FL), particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. With the growth of online social media platforms, people can communicate with each other from around the globe. As a result, additional research is needed to address pragmatics of the second language (henceforth L2) within Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) in a growing variety of interactional contexts, such as social media platforms (Blyth & Sykes, 2020).

To have effective communication, it is crucial to comprehend the cultural norms of speech acts in the target language. Kreuz and Roberts (2017) outline that "understanding how context and culture influence communication is critical"(p. 19). Therefore, the current study examines the disagreement strategies in two different cultures, Saudi and American, to extend the knowledge of the pragmatics of speech act of disagreements in different languages. The next section gives a broad image of interactions in computer-mediated communication (CMC).
1.1. Interactions in Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)

Many researchers are interested in examining how language is utilized in online interactions (Herring, 1996-2013; Zappavigna, 2012). Herring (1996) investigates CMC from various aspects, including social, linguistic, and cross-cultural perspectives and describes the CMC as the interactions among individuals through the use of computers. Zappavigna (2012) takes advantage of the accessibility of open access and research on social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook to explore shared words and cultural practices across various languages from a linguistic perspective. She characterizes Twitter users as "familiar strangers" who possess similar interests and qualities but may not be personally acquainted (p.13).

Regarding the language used online, a common type used in CMC is informal, such as abbreviations like 'lol,' which stands for 'laugh out loud' (Zamakhshari, 2018). In addition, the way language is used in online interactions, particularly in asynchronous platforms such as emails and Twitter, is similar to verbal communication in the offline world, where social, contextual, and cultural elements contribute to the variability and difficulty of computer-mediated discourse (CMD) (Herring & Androutsopoulos, 2015). According to Herring (2005, p. 616), the language utilized in online interactions is not as accurate, complicated, and consistent as the language used in formal written language. She argues that there are nonstandard features of language used on social media platforms that are rapidly spread and comprehended by the users, such as "fewer subordinate clauses", "a narrower range of vocabulary", and "mimic spoken language features" (Herring, 2005, p. 617). The best example to describe that is a common practice among Arabs on online platforms when using English numbers to represent certain Arabic letters, such as using "7" and "3" to stand for /ح/ and /ع/, respectively. The next part discusses the general use of Twitter in the Saudi Arabian context.
1.1.1. Twitter and Saudi Arabian Context

Twitter is a microblogging network since each tweet can only be 140 characters long. Twitter users can share debates more than users of Facebook or other social media platforms (Chaudhry, 2014). Twitter is defined by Honey and Herring (2009) as "a web-based microblogging service that allows registered users to send short status update messages to others" (p. 1). Vásquez (2021, p. 44) shows that Twitter is widely recognized as an "event-driven" microblogging platform, with numerous tweets focused on current events and other popular topics, making it the most popular platform of its kind. According to Squires (2015), Twitter ranked as the tenth most popular website in the entire world. Many Saudi EFL teachers utilize Twitter to communicate their opinions in English; they reveal their occupation, qualification, experience, and even research interests in their Twitter accounts' status. Alkarni (2018, p. 70) argues that Twitter is seen by numerous Saudis as a virtual parliament that provides them with more freedom to discuss their concerns than what is permitted by government institutions.

Few recent studies focus on studying different linguistic issues on Twitter in Saudi Arabia (Almutairi, 2021; Zamakhahari, 2018). Also, Aladsani (2018) investigates how female students from a Saudi Arabian university utilize Twitter for educational objectives and how they represent their academic identities on this platform. Previous studies indicate that individuals tend to interact more with unfamiliar or loosely connected acquaintances than with similar interests on Twitter, whereas they utilize Facebook to sustain pre-existing relationships (Oz et al., 2018). Therefore, Almutairi (2021) argues that the platform's nature leads to different uses of disagreement strategies. Consequently, the current study explores further the factors that affect the disagreement implementations on Twitter. The following section provides definitions and examples to clarify the concept of politeness.
1.2. Politeness Theory

Locher (2004, p. 91) provides two definitions of politeness, one for the speaker and the other for the addressee:

Politeness for the speaker:

A polite utterance is a speaker's intended, marked and appropriate behavior which displays face concern; the motivation for it lies in the possibly, but not necessarily, egocentric desire of the speaker to show positive concern for the addressees and/or to respect the addressees' and the speaker's own need for independence (p. 91).

Politeness for the addressee:

Addressees will interpret an utterance as polite when it is perceived as appropriate and marked; the reason for this is understood as the speaker's intention to show positive concern for the addressees' face and/or the speaker's intention to protect his or her own face needs (p. 91).

Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that politeness presents social order and facilitates human cooperation. They argue that politeness is a crucial element of human interaction that is universally recognized and can be observed in how people use language. It is worth mentioning that Culpeper (2011, p. 1) outlines that politeness was an "esoteric topic" in pragmatics; however, now it has a "multidisciplinary nature" which contributes to socio-pragmatics, anthropology, cultural studies, literary studies, and so on.

The current study primarily depends on two crucial theoretical frameworks in pragmatics: Politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and Speech Acts (Austin, 1962).

Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness framework clarifies how people utilize language to show politeness in social interactions. According to them, people use strategies to mitigate the potential offense or threat on the interlocutors' faces to communicate appropriately. These strategies include avoiding disagreement, utilizing indirect speech acts, and claiming common ground with the addressee. A brief review of their interpretation of politeness theory is provided below.

Brown and Levinson's (1987) work is crucial in discussing politeness theory. Brown and Levinson (1987) outline that: "The kernel idea of our politeness theory, that some acts are intrinsically threatening to face and thus require ‘softening’, finds ratification in microcosm in the domain of honorifics” (p. 42). The Face Threatening Act (henceforth FTA), which linked to the politeness theory, is defined as "those acts that by their nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or of the speaker" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 70). They claim that the politeness phenomena is a universal principle of human interaction and reflected in language by their nature. For them, while the concept of 'face' is universal, what is considered as an action to be threatening the face is different from one society to another. They assume that politeness involves showing interest in other people's "face wants", which contain two desires: the negative face needs to be mitigated or unimpeded, while the positive face needs to be promoted or appreciated. They argue that although the content of face will vary across cultures, the concept of "public self-image" and the need to present oneself in a certain way in social interactions are universally understood and practiced across cultures (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 62).

Brown and Levinson's (1987) concept of "face" has its roots in Goffman's (1967) definition of the term and the everyday English phrase that associates 'face' with feelings of shame,
embarrassment, or the anxiety of "losing face" (p. 61). They define the notion of ‘face’ as: "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (p. 61). Brown and Levinson (1987) present three crucial social factors that affect determining the politeness level among a speaker (Henceforth S) and a hearer/adressee (Henceforth H). These are 1) "the relative power" (Henceforth P) that a hearer has over a speaker, 2) "the social distance" (Henceforth D) between the interlocutors, and 3) the "ranking of the imposition" (Henceforth R) associated with performing the FTA (p. 15). It will refer to a speaker as (S), an addressee as (H), and a face-threatening act as (FTA) throughout the paper.

Brown and Levinson demonstrate that there are two forms of politeness: negative and positive. The speaker tries to reduce the pressure on the addressee's face for negative politeness; for instance, when speakers provide a request, they may use hedges to soften their request to refrain, such as "Would it be possible for you to...". On the other hand, positive politeness refers to those strategies utilized to maintain and support the interlocutor's face. For instance, when the speaker wants to disagree with others, they attempt to soften the expression of disagreement to boost the addressee's face, such as the utterance of partial agreement "I agree but ..." or using hedges; "I think", "I would agree if...", "maybe". One of these politeness strategies appears to be more valued in some cultures than others.

In general, politeness in communication is showing respect and concern for the other person to avoid causing any potential harm. While Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that politeness is universal and applies to all cultures, Culpeper (2011, p. 3) claims that politeness is influenced by the social context, implying that each society has specific social conventions that facilitate communication between speakers. In addition, Miller (2000) notes that some scholars, such as Gu (1990) and Janney & Arndt (1993), argue that politeness is specific to certain cultures.
For example, Gu (1991) discovers that some of Brown and Levinson (1987) views were not applicable to explaining Chinese data (Gu, 1991, p. 240).

Many cultures have different interpretations of politeness, which leads to the choosing of strategies depending on their distinct cultural standards (Yan, 2016, p. 244). Thus, if culture determines politeness, what is considered as polite in one community may be perceived as impolite in another. Many examples have been found in Kreuz and Roberts (2017), which explained how speech acts are interpreted differently in different cultures. An example is the speech act of invitation; in Arabic culture, the insistence of invitation may refer to hospitality, while in other cultures viewed as an inappropriate and strange action. Furthermore, another example of how politeness significantly differs in the way of accepting a gift; for instance, in Chinese culture, when somebody receives a gift, he/she must pretend to refuse it at first to be seen as polite; otherwise, it seems impolite if the receiver accepts it directly. In contrast, unwrapping gifts in front of others is considered polite in Eastern culture, while it seems odd and inappropriate in other cultures (Kreuz & Roberts, 2017).

1.3. Speech Act

The speech act theory was proposed by Austin in 1962. The speech act theory refers to "the uttering of a sentence is or is part of an action within the framework of social institutions and conventions" (Huang, 2014, p. 119). Unfortunately, Austin left his theory incomplete due to his early death, and his American pupil Searle (1969) developed an elaborate speech act taxonomy. Searle demonstrates that speech act theory has three components: locution, illocution, and perlocution acts. The locution act is the exact words of the speaker's message; the illocution act is the intention of the saying, while the perlocution force is the influence of the saying on the listener. The illocutionary act contains different components such as assertive (convey information),
commissive (make a commitment), directive (make a request), declaration (create a new state), and expressive (express an emotion). The speech acts can be expressed directly or indirectly.

LoCastro (1986) shows that Blum-Kulka (1983) disagrees with Fraser (1978; 1982), who believes that speech act strategies are universal (LoCastro, 1986, p. 2). For the former, the second language learners mostly fail to use the speech acts in the target language since they have insufficient knowledge of the cultural appropriateness norms. In contrast, for the latter, the L2 learners only need to acquire the linguistic norms to convey their speech.

In the previous literature, there are many examples of politeness strategies in communicating different speech acts in different languages. For instance, Kobayashi and Viswat (2010) find that Japanese students perceive direct disagreement as a rude strategy and attempt to hide their disagreements, with phrases such as "probably" and "I'll think about it". While Americans perceive those Japanese students' disagreement strategies when they were indirect and silent as ineffective and may be misinterpreted, they prefer to be direct and provide reasons when they utter their disagreements and consider this way acceptable in American culture in the classroom context, such as "I do not agree with that because ...". While Japanese students justify being vague and indirect when performing disagreement as it is disrespectful to disagree explicitly with their teachers; for this reason, they prefer to be vague in their disagreement performances (Kobayashi & Viswat, 2010, pp. 4-6).

1.3.1. Speech Act of Disagreement

Sifianou (2012) describes disagreement as "the expression of a view that differs from that expressed by another speaker" (p. 1554). In the previous literature, many studies refer to disagreement as argumentative, leading to hostility, dis-preferred because of the consideration of face and face threatening acts, so it must be evaded or softened (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Leech,
However, others show disagreement as preferred action and a sign of sociality and may strengthen the relationships among interlocutors and lead to intimacy instead of hostility (Angouri & Tseliga, 2010; Kakavá, 1993; Locher, 2004). Disagreement is not necessarily negative or undesirable (Locher, 2004, p. 100). In Greek culture, disagreement is often seen as a way of being sociable and is considered to be a way of solidarity rather than causing hostility (Kakavá, 1993).

In our daily lives, it is unavoidable that we encounter disagreements and debates in which people express opposing views. Angouri and Locher (2012) assume that the level of acceptance and disagreement act varies depending on the context. Therefore, examining how people express disagreements is seminal for understanding the various strategies used in different contexts and cultures.

Brown and Levinson (1987) show that disagreement is a positive politeness strategy that must be mitigated to encourage and maintain the speaker’s face. Regarding conversation analysis, Brown and Levinson refer to preference organization and explain preferred response as explicit, brief, straightforward, and goal oriented. On the other hand, a dispreferred response is implicit, detailed, and postponed (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 38). They consider disagreement a dispreferred response type since it is an FTA, while an agreement is a preferred type.

According to Maíz-Arévalo (2014), the disagreement speech act has not been extensively studied compared to other speech acts like requests or agreements, particularly among non-native English speakers.

1.4. Research Gap in The Literature

Many studies have investigated the use of politeness strategies within speech acts in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom context (e.g., Estaji & Nejad, 2021; Hussein &
Albakri, 2019; Lopez-Ozieblo, 2018). Recently, a growing number of studies have concerned politeness and different speech acts within Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) in different online platforms (Alenzi, 2019; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011; Harb, 2016; Hariri, 2017; Mahzari, 2017; Maros & Rosli, 2017; Savić, 2018). These studies provide evidence in favor of examining the use of politeness and speech acts via online platforms. However, most of these studies have examined politeness strategies in performing different speech acts via emails (Hariri, 2017; Savić, 2018; Savić, 2019), Facebook (Harb, 2016; Mahzari, 2017), and WhatsApp (Flores-Salgado & Castineira-Benitez, 2018). In Saudi Arabia, few studies have addressed politeness within linguistic contexts on online platforms (Almutairi, 2021; Alzahrani, 2021; Zamakhshari, 2018). Thus, yet very few studies have been done on Twitter to investigate the use of politeness strategies in producing speech acts, especially in Saudi contexts.

The main reason for choosing Saudi EFL teachers as study participants in my investigation is that they are supposed to have good linguistic proficiency, which enables them to understand and use the politeness strategy of the L2 appropriately. In order to examine the factors that affect the Saudi EFL teachers’ pragmatic competence, the teachers will be chosen according to their years of teaching experience (beginner and more experienced) and will also examine if other factors affect their awareness of L2 pragmatics.

By examining the pragmatic knowledge used among Saudi EFL teachers in an online context, my study seeks to contribute to cross-cultural pragmatics, sociopragmatics, interlanguage pragmatics, Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), and second language studies (SLS). This study investigates how participants communicate appropriately in producing their disagreements on the faceless/online platform Twitter. My study endeavors to be significant in comprehending the concept of politeness strategies and speech acts in new social media.
1.5. Statement of the Problem

My study assumes that the lack of pragmatic knowledge in EFL textbooks and classrooms affects Saudi EFL teachers’ understanding of the pragmatics of the target language (González-Lloret, 2019; Ren & Han, 2016). Especially many EFL teachers may not have the same opportunity for language exposure, such as visiting a foreign country, studying, or working abroad, or watching mass media such as Netflix; all these factors may affect understanding of the target culture. Consequently, years of EFL teaching may not entail pragmatic knowledge among Saudi EFL teachers. From my personal experience as an EFL teacher in Saudi Arabia, there is little focus on understanding the target language's culture in EFL textbooks. Thus, most teachers pay attention to how they use and teach the language correctly rather than appropriately. Hence, the importance of this study comes to affirm that pragmatic knowledge has the same importance as linguistic knowledge. This study seeks to investigate EFL teachers' politeness strategies in expressing their disagreements in English as the target language. If this study discovers that teaching experience alone does not entail pragmatic competence, then it is crucial to prepare EFL teachers with adequate pragmatic knowledge in addition to EFL textbooks.

1.6. Significance of The Study

The present study is significant for two reasons. First, this study may find that the lack of pragmatic knowledge in EFL textbooks is an essential factor contributing to the teachers' misunderstanding of the target language's culture. In that case, the current study highlights the need to focus on and reconsider many academic issues concerning teachers' training and syllabus design. Secondly, the results of this study may help Saudi EFL teachers understand the importance of pragmatic knowledge to enhance their usage of politeness and speech acts in particular and their
teaching in general. Also, this study seeks to contribute to cross-cultural pragmatics by exploring the different strategies of disagreements in Saudi and American cultures.

Shum and Lee (2013) point out that "the study of politeness and disagreement in computer-mediated communication (CMC) is a burgeoning area of study in pragmatics" (p. 52). Consequently, my study examines politeness strategies used on Twitter by Saudi EFL teachers in performing the speech act of disagreement. It also explores how Saudi EFL teachers apply the Face Threatening Act (FTA) in expressing their disagreements in the faceless communication that is Twitter. Moreover, the present study compares the politeness strategies used by Saudi EFL teachers and Native English American teachers. For this purpose, American ESL teachers were examined in how they use politeness strategies to express their disagreements. The significance of this study lies in the importance of understanding the pragmatics of English as the target language. This study focuses on how pragmatics is as crucial as the linguistic system of the language. Few studies have compared the use of the first language (L1) politeness strategies with speech acts and those of the second language (L2) (Bataineh & Bataineh, 2008). By extension, my study addresses this lack by comparing the politeness strategies in producing disagreements between the native Saudi culture and the target English American culture.

1.7. Research Questions and Purpose of The Study

The aim of this study is to investigate how Saudi EFL teachers use L2 politeness strategies in expressing their disagreements on Twitter. This study addresses the following questions:

RQ 1. What are the politeness strategies used in performing disagreements on Twitter by Saudi EFL teachers?

1.1 How do Saudi EFL teachers apply (FTA) in performing disagreement?

1.2 What is the perlocutionary effect of tweets on Saudi EFL teachers?
RQ 2. What factors influence Saudi EFL teachers’ use of politeness strategies in expressing disagreements?

RQ 3. What are the different politeness strategies used in expressing disagreements by Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers?

1.8. Instruments of the Study

Four instruments are employed to address these research questions:

- A thread of tweets is observed for two months among 10 Saudi EFL teachers and 10 American ESL teachers.
- An investigation of a Twitter corpus is carried out (the corpus of tweets collected for this study consists of the most recent 2500 participants’ tweets, including disagreements, opinions, and arguments).
- Open-ended questionnaires are distributed to Saudi EFL teachers.
- The follow-up interviews are conducted with Saudi EFL teachers.

1.9. Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses are developed:

1- Saudi EFL teachers are not familiar with the politeness strategies of American English culture.

2- Saudi EFL teachers may tend to be direct and impolite linguistic and non-linguistic forms such as (emojis) in their disagreements due to the nature of the online context and language differences. This hypothesis follows Maros & Rosli’s (2017) statement that "88 percent of participants agreed that people are less polite when using social media; 75 percent of the users witness online conflicts and arguments." (p. 132).
3- Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers use different politeness strategies when applying their disagreements.

4- The years of EFL teaching experience do not guarantee pragmatic competence among Saudi EFL teachers.

5- Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers may express their disagreements more severely regarding cultural background, beliefs, identity, and personal involvement topics.

My study aims to contribute to the field of sociopragmatics and cross-cultural pragmatics if my hypotheses are confirmed. Otherwise, my investigation will suggest other areas of research if the hypotheses are disconfirmed.

1.10. Definition of Terms

**Computer mediated communication (CMC):** "communication that takes place between human beings via the instrumentality of computers" (Herring, 1996, p. 1)

**Pragmatic competence:** "the ability to use language effectively in order to achieve a specific purpose and to understand a language in context." (Thomas, 1983, p. 92).

**Perlocutionary effect:** the effect of an utterance on an interlocutor. (Austin, 1962)

**Politeness:** "any behavior including verbal behavior of an interlocutor to maintain his or her face and that of the individuals he or she is interacting with."(Huang, 2014, p.142).

**Twitter:** "a popular social media service which allows people to share updates, news, and information." (Maros & Rosli, 2017, p. 1).
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to present an overview of politeness theories and previous research on disagreement strategies in verbal and online communication across cultures. It discusses two theoretical frameworks, politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and speech act (Austin, 1962). Moreover, this chapter demonstrates examples of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies framework, Miller's (2000) disagreement taxonomies, and Locher and Watts' (2005) relational work since these works are the foundations for the data analysis. Additionally, it reviews previous literature on politeness strategies, both in oral communication and CMC, in American English to compare to the Arabic context. Finally, it provides a summary of the main findings from relevant studies.

2.1. Politeness Theories (the First and Second Orders Theories)

Numerous scholars have been interested in studying politeness, either in the first-wave perspective that focuses on the speaker (Brown & Levinson, 1978; 1987; Lakoff, 1973; Leech, 1983) or the approach of the second wave which considered both the speaker and listener (Mills, 2002; 2003; Spencer-Oatey, 2000; Watts, 1989; 1991; 1992; 2003). A brief overview of politeness theories will be presented, beginning with the first-wave theorists, and then moving on to the second-wave post-modern theorists. These theories have significantly impacted politeness research. Then, this study will provide an elaborated overview of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory since it is the foundation of the data analysis of the current study.
The first-wave theorists Lakoff (1973) and Leech (1983) establish their interpretations of the politeness theories on Gricean maxims of cooperative principle (CP). Grice’s (1957) maxims of conversation, namely the maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner, fall under the category of positive politeness strategies since the speakers may share the common ground or try to consider others’ values. The maxim of quantity pertains to the amount of information one must be as informative as required and no more. On the other hand, the maxim of quality indicates that it is essential to refrain from making statements that are untrue or based on insufficient knowledge. In comparison, the maxim of relation implies that staying on topic and discussing matters related to the conversation is essential. The maxim of manner requires one to communicate clearly, concisely, and without confusion (Grice, 1975, pp. 45-46).

In her 1973 work, Lakoff suggests two principles of pragmatics: "1. Be clear. 2. Be polite" (p. 196). She claims that if the primary goal of speaking is to communicate a message effectively, one should strive to be as straightforward as possible to avoid confusion about their intention. (p. 296). She provides these pragmatic rules since she believes that the aim was not to be clear but rather to demonstrate politeness by recognizing the various statuses of the people in the discussion. She further produces three rules of politeness: "1. Do not impose, 2. Give options, 3. Make A feel-good - be friendly" (p. 298). She states that the 'Do not impose' principle means not interfering in other people's affairs. (ibid). Hence, Lakoff suggests getting permission before asking a personal question, such as "May I ask how much you paid for that vase?" (p. 298). For rule 2, 'Give options,' Lakoff illustrates it as allowing the addressee to make their own choices and keeping their options open (p. 299). For instance, "I guess it's time to leave" (ibid). Regarding rule 3, 'Make A feel-good - be friendly,' she explains it as making others feel that they are valuable and important and as a friend to them (p. 304).
Furthermore, Leech (2014) states that while grammar follows the rules, pragmatics is guided by principles. Leech (1983) proposes six standards of politeness: 1) Tact-maxim, which was interpreted as attempting to reduce the cost to others and maximize the advantage to them; 2. Generosity maxim meant reducing the advantage to oneself and increasing the cost to oneself; 3. Approbation maxim indicates avoiding criticism of others and praising them instead; 4. The modesty maxim was explained as refraining from praising oneself and instead being self-deprecating; 5. The agreement maxim refers to striving for agreement between oneself and others rather than disagreement. Lastly, 6) Sympathy maxim, which implies attempting to create a feeling of sympathy between oneself and others rather than antipathy.

In the above section, the first-wave theorists of politeness have been viewed (e.g., Lakoff, 1973; Leech, 1977). However, Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory was overviewed earlier in chapter I (section 1.4) and will be discussed in detail in the next part. The following part represents the second-wave theorists of politeness (the postmodern theories of politeness) (e.g., Locher, 2006; Mills, 2002; Spencer-Oatey, 2000; Watts, 1989; 1991; 2003).

The second-wave theorist Spencer-Oatey (2000) develops a sociopragmatic framework that builds on Brown and Levinson's (1987) concept of face and extends it to include rapport management. Her model conceptualizes face and rapport. Spencer-Oatey (2000) examines rapport management and differentiates between two kinds of face: quality face (referred to as positive face by Brown and Levinson) and identity face. She defines 'quality face' as the worth we assign to our own personal characteristics. In contrast, she refers to the 'identity face' as the fundamental need of individuals to acknowledge and maintain their social identities and roles, like being close friends or group leaders. She clarifies that 'quality face' pertains to our individual self-respect, whereas 'identity face' is linked to our social value (Spencer-Oatey, 2000, p. 14).
In addition, Watts (1989; 1991; 1992; 2003) argues that politeness theory must be adapted to consider impoliteness strategies further. Watts proposes a distinction between (im)politeness and politic behavior. Watts et al. (1992) claim that politeness is determined by a speech community’s social and cultural characteristics, which are seen as more than being ‘politic’. (ibid). After that, Locher and Watts (2005) claim that the concept of politeness is related to discourse, ‘i.e., the discursive concept,’ so politeness could not be equated with FTA mitigation. More details of Locher and Watts’ (2005) relational work are discussed later in this chapter in (section 2.3).

After examining some works of scholars from the first and second orders of politeness theories, the following part presents the overview of Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory.

2.2. Brown and Levinson’s (1987) Politeness Theory and FTA

According to Brown and Levenson (1987), politeness can be seen as a rational approach to managing face-threatening acts. They believe determining the severity of a face-threatening act (FTA) is crucial in choosing the appropriate politeness strategy. Brown and Levinson assume a face is universal and rational across cultures; hence certain acts threaten negative or positive faces in verbal and non-verbal communication.

Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 96) claim that the speaker will consider three wants/desires when speaking: (a) the want to convey the message of FTAs, (b) the want to be quick or efficient, and (c) the want to preserve H’s face to some extent.

Brown and Levenson (1987) claim that politeness forms are motivated and not arbitrary. Kreuz and Roberts (2017) state that "politeness is codified in all languages of the world. Because there are widely varying expectations about what it means to be polite across cultures, it is virtually impossible to define politeness in such a way as to capture all senses of the word" (p. 54).
The following section reviews Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness strategies that have been offered to manage the FTA.

2.2.1. Politeness Strategies

Brown and Levinson (1987) present specific strategies to mitigate the face-threatening act: 1.1) bald on-record without redressive action, 1.2) on-record with redressive action: 2) positive politeness or 3) negative politeness, and 4) off-record strategies (see Figure 1). According to them, a face contains rational agent will likely use strategies that minimize the risk of losing the participants' faces based on a rational evaluation of the situation.

**Figure 1**

*Politeness strategies for doing FTAs*

(Adapted from Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 97)

2.2.1.1. On Record Strategy

2.2.1.1.1. Bald on-record without Redressive Action

The strategy of being bald on-record without any redressive occurs when the speaker clearly and directly expresses their intention, such as saying ‘Watch out!’ or ‘Leave!’ without ambiguity or mitigation (Maros & Rosli, 2017, p. 3). Brown and Levinson refer to this strategy when there is no attempt from a speaker (S) to mitigate the threat to the addressee’s face. This
approach involves the speaker expressing their desires straightforwardly, which could involve issuing a direct command or committing, such as saying, ‘I pledge to be there tomorrow’ (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 96). This strategy may occur if a speaker has power over a hearer or between close friends or family members. Brown and Levinson claim that the on-record strategy is the least appropriate politeness strategy. (Pattrawut, 2014).

There are two kinds of bald on-record usage: one where the face is neglected or disregarded and another where face threats are implicitly softened. For example: ‘Help!’ compared to the less urgent ‘Please help me, if you would be so kind’ or ‘watch out!’ (p. 96). Examples of a bald on-record without a redressive strategy are shown in Table 1:

**Table 1**

*Bald on-record without redressive action*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bald on-record without redressive action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. In cases of great urgency or desperation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Cases of channel noise, or where communication difficulties exploit pressure to speak with maximum efficiency such as in calling across a distance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Task-oriented: in this kind of interaction face redress will be irrelevant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. S’s want to satisfy H’s face is small, either because S is powerful and does not fear retribution or non-cooperation from H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. S wants to be rude without risk of offending, so S does not care about maintaining face.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sympathetic advice or warnings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Granting permission for something that H has requested.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Maros & Rosli, 2017, p. 134)
2.2.1.1.2. On-Record Strategy with Redressive Action

On-record strategy with redressive action means that the speaker gives a face to the addressee. As mentioned earlier (in section 2.1.1), S recognizes his or her, and the H's negative face wants to be unviolated, or their positive face wants to be supported (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 13). Also, by conducting this strategy, no direct threat is intended. Hence, the positive and negative strategies are associated with this strategy. On the one hand, when the speaker tries to lessen the threat to the addressee's negative face wants, he/she employs the negative strategy. For example, apologize before the request, such as 'I am sorry to bother you, but would you mind closing the door?' On the other hand, when S tries to enhance H's positive face, he/she applies a positive strategy—for example, using a tag question or discourse marker "please" or even using jokes to establish a common ground. In the following sections, the positive and negative politeness are explained.

2.2.1.1.2.1. Positive Politeness

The positive politeness strategy is directed toward the hearer's (H) positive face, "the positive self-image he claims for himself" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 98). In this strategy, S recognizes that H and himself have the same rights and importance. An excellent example of a positive strategy that shows solidarity between interlocutors is 'we are all in this together'. There are 15 positive politeness strategies provided by Brown and Levinson, as shown in Table 2. The language used to express positive politeness is often like how close friends communicate, involving shared desires and knowledge and regularly exchanging implicit requests for mutual obligations or common wants (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 101).
However, since the current study investigates the politeness strategies employed when expressing disagreement, the ‘avoiding disagreement’ strategy is discussed in detail below. The other strategies are listed in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Positive Politeness Strategy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Politeness Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Notice, attend to H (his interests, wants, needs, goods)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Exaggerate (interest approval, sympathy with H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intensify interest to H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Use in-group identity markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Seek agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Avoid disagreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Presuppose/raise/assert common ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Jokes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Assert or presuppose S’s knowledge of and concern for H’s wants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Offer, promise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Be optimistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Include both S and H in the activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Give (or ask for) reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Assume or assert reciprocity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 102)

Brown and Levinson suggest 15 positive politeness strategies; ‘avoid disagreement’ is strategy number 6. They present four positive politeness under this strategy that speakers might use to redress or avoid the disagreement utterance, such as ‘token agreement,’ ‘pseudo-agreement,’ ‘white lies,’ and ‘hedging opinions,’ as shown in Figure 2.
Brown and Levinson (1987) regard the disagreement speech act as positive politeness in which an addressee has to avoid disagreement to find common ground with the speaker. The explanation and examples of each sub-strategies under the super-strategy ‘avoid disagreement’ are given below.

**2.2.1.1.2.1.1. Token Agreement**

In this strategy, Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 113) assume that the speakers twist their tongues to pretend to agree. One example is when a speaker twists their disagreement to unimpeded or pretends to agree, such as "yes, but ...." instead of directly uttering 'no' (Sacks, 1973 'American data,' as found in Brown and Levinson, p. 113). Another is when an addressee shows agreement with a speaker and then states a contrary opinion to the speaker's utterance (Albert, 1972, as found in Brown and Levinson, p. 113). Moreover, irony is another example of token agreement, which contains a superficial agreement with the previous statement without truly acknowledging it (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 114).

**2.2.1.1.2.1.2. Pseudo Agreement**

Brown and Levinson provide examples of this strategy in English, such as the words 'then' and 'so' which are used as a "conclusory marker", which indicates a prior agreement while there
is no or fake prior agreement. For example, "so when are you coming to see us?" and "I'll be seeing you then" in response to an offer or request when the speaker is under pressure to accept it (p. 115).

2.2.1.2.1.3. White Lies

Brown and Levinson suggest that this social 'white lie' is "the positive politeness desire to avoid disagreement" (p. 115). An instance of this strategy is when a speaker prefers to lie when he/she must tell his/her opinion instead of threatening an addressee's positive face. For example, when someone asks to borrow a radio, the addressee responds, "Oh, I cannot. The batteries are dead" (p. 116). In this instance, Brown and Levinson claim that both the interlocutors may comprehend that it is untrue; however, the addressee's face is maintained by not receiving direct refusals for his/her request.

2.2.1.2.1.4. Hedging Opinions

According to Brown and Levinson, this strategy occurs when a speaker wants to express his/her disagreement vaguely and indirectly to not be seen as disagreeing. They assume that hedges are usually features of negative politeness, but some have positive politeness, such as in English: 'sort of; kind of; like, in a way'. For example, "I really sort of think ...." and "I don't know, like I think people have a right to their own opinions" (p. 116). They argue that using these hedges claims a common ground between a speaker (S) and a hearer (H), in which H may use his/her shared knowledge to understand S's perspective.

2.2.1.2.2. Negative Politeness

Brown and Levinson describe negative politeness as "redressive action addressed to the addressee's negative face: his want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded" (p. 129). Using the negative politeness approach, the speaker aims to redress and
relieve any potential harm on the hearer's negative face, such as the word 'please'. This strategy involves using apologies, hedging the impact of the saying, and impersonalizing mechanisms (like passives) to minimize the threat that could harm the hearer's face (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 99). Brown and Levinson propose ten negative politeness strategies, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Negative Politeness Strategy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Politeness Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Be conventionally indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Question, hedge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Be pessimistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Minimize imposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Give deference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Apologize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Impersonalize S and H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. State the FTA as general rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Nominalize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Go on record as incurring debt, or as not indebting H</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 131)

Brown and Levinson provide many examples of these ten subcategories of negative politeness strategies. For example, in the 'be pessimistic' strategy, Brown and Levinson clarify that the speaker aims to lessen the threat on the addressee's negative face by openly uttering uncertainty about whether the circumstances are appropriate for S's speech act. An example is using the subjunctive form in English, such as "could you do X?" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 173).

Another example of the strategy 'be conventionally indirect': which involves using the word "please" when asking for something, such as in the request, "Can you pass the salt?" This statement
is conventionally perceived as a polite order rather than an inquiry about the individual's ability to pass the salt.

In the current study, any politeness strategies observed above in the data will be discussed in Chapters IV (Data Analysis) and V (Discussion and Results).

2.2.1.3. Off-Record Strategy

The last politeness strategy Brown and Levinson (1987) offer is an off-record, an indirect speech act such as providing hints and clues. For instance, the utterance 'it is cold in here' implies that the addressee should close the window. Off-record strategies involve using metaphor, rhetorical questions, irony, tautologies, and understatement, hints in which the speaker has implied his/her message without stating it directly, making the interpretation open to discussion (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 97). According to Kreuz and Roberts (2017), "off-record statements have a literal meaning, as well, but they also have some other meaning (or perhaps multiple meanings) buried inside them" (p. 62).

Brown and Levinson identify 15 off-record strategies, as displayed in Table 4. They assume that when speakers employ off-record strategies, they violate the four conversational maxims proposed by Grice (1957).
Table 4

*Off Record Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Off Record Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Give hints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Give association clues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Presuppose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Understate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Overstate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Tautologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Contradictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Be ironic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Use metaphors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Use rhetorical questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Be ambiguous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Be vague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Over-generalize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Displace H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Be incomplete, use ellipsis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 214)

Brown and Levinson provide examples for each of these strategies. For example, in the strategy of 'understate,' the following example, "that house needs a touch of paint," indicates that it requires a large amount of work. Furthermore, they argue that off-record strategies entail ambiguity, as found in the example of strategy contradictions; the utterance "well yes and no" has an unclear opinion. Brown and Levinson assume that 'using the rhetorical questions' can be regarded as an off-record strategy if the statement implies criticism, for example, 'how many times do I need to tell you...?' indicating that they are numerous. (Brown & Levinson, 1987, pp. 213, 226).
After representing the politeness theories in the first and second order and explaining Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies, the following part displays Locher and Watts' (2005) relational work to reconsider politeness and im/politeness.

2.3. The Relational Work

Locher and Watts (2005) propose their 'Relational Work' model for analyzing communicative behavior in terms of im/politeness/ and in/appropriateness, not as in Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness framework, which tackles only politeness. Their relation work is shown in Figure 3. They assume that behavior or interaction is sometimes not considered polite or impolite but only appropriate. They use the term "relational work" instead of "facework" since people do not always communicate by minimizing the face-threatening of others.

**Figure 3**

*Relational Work*

(Adapted from Watts, 2005, p. xliii)
Locher and Watts (2005) criticize Brown and Levinson's (1987) approach of politeness and claim that it does not deal with politeness itself but rather the softening of face-threatening acts (FTAs). According to Locher and Watts, Brown and Levinson's perspective on politeness involves using a system to reduce the FTA, with only two categories of behavior: polite and impolite. Locher and Watts (2005, p. 9) demonstrate that relational work relates to work in which individuals exert effort in negotiating relationships with others, including impolite, polite, or just appropriate behavior. This concept establishes a valuable way of examining the discursive conflict regarding politeness. For them, it is not accurate to assume that politeness is only employed to lessen the threat of Face Threatening Acts (FTAs); politeness is a discourse concept beyond FTA mitigation. They assume that instead of predicting what is regarded as polite or impolite, analysts must concentrate on the discourse between interlocutors and how they identify the type of communication behavior. Consequently, Locher and Watts (2005) argue that politeness is a discursive concept based on how interlocutors perceive and judge the interaction exchanges instead of only focusing on the FTA.

Consequently, Locher and Watts (2005) argue that Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory is not applicable in cases where there are no face-mitigation actions, such as rude, abusive, aggressive, or impolite communicative behavior. Furthermore, they claim that Brown and Levinson's politeness theory excludes social behavior considered 'appropriate,' 'unmarked,' or 'politic' but may not necessarily be perceived as polite. However, Locher and Watts (2005) believe that researchers can still use Brown and Levinson's framework in analyzing the politeness strategies if they examine their proposed strategies by relating them to relational work. According to Locher and Watts (2005, p. 11), relational work encompasses all forms of verbal
communication, ranging from impolite and aggressive to polite interactions, including appropriate/inappropriate social communicative behaviors.

'Politic behavior' is defined by Watts et al. (1992) as "socially appropriate behavior" and to identify and interpret stretches of interaction which include either breakdowns or enhancements" (p. 51). Many factors can influence the kind of 'politic behavior,' such as: 1) the type of social interaction they are involved in (e.g., the setting, purpose, and pre-existing relationships between participants), 2) the type of speech event taking place, 3) how much they share in terms of cultural expectations, 4) how much they agree on the information available to them and, 5) the level of social distance between them (Watts et al., 1992, p. 51). Watts et al. (1992) suggest that marked behavior can be divided into two types: 1) behavior that causes communication problems ("non-politic") and 2) behavior that improves one's image in the eyes of others ("polite") (p. 51).

Locher and Watts (2005) further consider the marked behavior as negatively or positively marked. Positively marked is perceived as polite, appropriate, and politic. On the contrary, negatively marked communicative behavior is perceived as impolite, inappropriate, and non-politic or, in other situations, can be regarded as over-polite, inappropriate, and non-politic. For them, polite, communicative behavior is usually considered 'politic,' whereas what is seen as politic and also can be impolite (p. 12).

Locher and Watts (2005) provide an example of how one's behavior can be interpreted differently relying on the prior relationship among interactants in the communications, e.g., "Oi! Pen!". A native speaker may initially perceive this as rude or impolite, but if the two people have a good relationship, it may be seen as appropriate and good-humored banter; in that context, it is probably seen as totally appropriate. They give another example, "I wonder whether you would be so very kind as to lend me your pen?" This utterance is considered an over-polite language, often
inappropriate, and can be interpreted as ironic or insincere. Even native English speakers may find it negative behavior, yet still perceive it as polite, showing a negative view of politeness (Locher & Watts, 2005, pp. 15–16).

The next part of this chapter provides an overview of the speech act in general and disagreement in particular. Then, Miller's (2000) disagreement taxonomies will be discussed in depth as it serves as the foundation for the data analysis of this research. Additionally, related studies investigating disagreement strategies and politeness in verbal and online contexts in various languages and cultures will be examined.

2.4. Speech Act Theory

Austin (1962) introduced his theory of speech acts in twelve lectures at Harvard University in 1955. In his lectures, Austin distinguishes between 'performative utterances' (to do things) and 'constative' (to make assertions or statements). An example of a performative utterance is "I advise you to do X" (Austin, 1962, p. 46). Regarding constative utterances, Austin explains that the statement 'he is running' is only true because he is actually running. In other words, the truth of this 'constative utterance' relies on the fact that he is in the action of running. In his sixth lecture, Austin (1992, p. 72) clarifies the difference between the performative and constative. The former indicates emotions, e.g., happy or sad, while the latter contains facts, such as real or unreal. In the eighth lecture, Austin demonstrates a three-fold distinction: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, as discussed earlier in chapter I (see section 1.1.5). Austin assumes that an illocutionary act is conventional while a perlocutionary act is causal.

Huang (2014) indicates that indirect utterance is usually linked to politeness, while direct utterance is related to impoliteness. Furthermore, Brown and Levinson (1987), believe that being indirect is more polite than being direct. In this aspect, Holmes (1995, p. 9) sheds light on the fact
that the choice of grammatical structure can affect the level of politeness conveyed. For instance, using modal verbs like "would" and "could" often softens directives. Huang (2014, p. 159) further demonstrates that the level of directness and indirectness in a speech act can vary across different languages and cultures. Regarding politeness strategies, on-record is considered direct action in which there is no attempt to lessen the threat on the addressee's face. In contrast, off-record is indirect, which conveys an intended meaning that could be understood if S and H share the same common ground, i.e., knowledge (Kreuz & Roberts, 2017). Still, few studies provided distinction in employing the speech act of disagreements in different cultures (Patrawut, 2014). Therefore, the current study examines the different expressions of disagreements in Saudi and American cultures.

2.4.1. Speech Act of Disagreement

Kakavä (1993) defines disagreement as "an oppositional stance (verbal or non-verbal) to an antecedent verbal (or non-verbal) action" (p. 36). According to Khammari (2021), different scholars classify disagreement differently. To Austin (1962), disagreement is a commissive speech act in which a speaker is committed to their views or beliefs. However, Searle (1976) classified disagreement as a representative speech act since a speaker is firmly dedicated to ensuring the accuracy of their statement. On the other hand, Leech (2016 p. 104) explains varieties of illocutionary functions and considers disagreement as a conflictive speech in which the aim of illocutionary force of the utterance contrasts with the social objective, such as the disagreement expressions that contain cursing, threatening, scolding, or accusing. However, Brown and Levinson assume that the illocutionary force of disagreement threatens the addressee's positive face. For Sifianou (2012), disagreeing in a conversation does not always have to be recognized as face-threatening or impolite behavior. Hence, the degree of face-threatening or impoliteness in
expressing disagreement can be affected by the context of the conversation and any prior related actions.

Georgakopoulou (2001) argues that any further research on disagreement and other potentially 'face-threatening' or 'dis-preferred' acts must consider the context in order to comprehend how different forms of expressing disagreement vary between local settings, as well as how disagreement is related to the interactional objectives or purposes that may be present. She does not believe that disagreement and indirectness in informal conversations between intimates are necessarily indicative of sociability or motivated by politeness and formality.

Brown and Levinson (1978) perceive the speech act of disagreement as threatening the addressee's positive face; it can harm the addressee's positive face that needs to be maintained and approved. In contrast, Sifianou (2012) suggests that disagreements can multifacetedly impact both parties' faces, potentially indicating hostility and affiliation.

After providing a general overview of speech act theory and the act of disagreement, the following section displays Miller's (2000) disagreement taxonomy, which serves as the basis for analyzing the current study's data, besides Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework.

2.4.2. Miller’s (2000) Disagreement Taxonomy

Many previous studies consult Miller’s (2000) taxonomy to analyze the disagreement strategies (Almutairi, 2021; Harb, 2016; Pourmohamadi, Abaszadeh, and Samar, 2014; Shum & Lee, 2013). Miller (2000) examines the factors of power, severity, and context in determining the use of the linguistic forms of disagreement in an American academic context. Miller focuses on studying the effect of the factors supposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) of power and severity of disagreement. She thinks that studying the influence of power is a good fit in classroom environments since professors have power over students. She neglects the factor of social distance
because nearly all professors and students have a prior relationship and know each other. Also, she examines the effect of the pedagogical context on how disagreements are expressed. She collects the data from a corpus of authentic discussions in educational settings, including classroom talks and academic discussions.

Miller assumes that the taxonomies of disagreements supposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), to some extent, are unsatisfactory in explaining the utterance of disagreements for her study. Miller supposes that Brown and Levinson utilize vague phrases such as direct or on-record as well as indirect or off-record. Instead of utilizing those specific labels proposed by Brown and Levinson, Miller proposes categorizing the language forms themselves and using broader labels, as shown in Figure 4.
In her disagreement taxonomy, Miller (2000) categorized disagreements into three main groups depending on the use of linguistic forms. She identifies how the disagreements are employed; some have softened disagreements, others include strengthened disagreements, and those that contain neither softened nor strengthened disagreements. Following Brown and Levinson (1978), Miller subdivided softened disagreements into positive and negative politeness. As shown in Figure 6, Miller refers to softeners used under the positive politeness category, such as positive comment, humor, inclusive first pronoun (we), and partial agreement. She further
explains that by using these markers, the speaker shares similar desires or belongs to the same community, even if the interlocutors have different opinions. In addition, Miller provides instances of linguistic cues that indicate negative politeness to soften a disagreement. For example, raising questions instead of statements, introducing a statement with phrases like "I think" or "do not know," and using words like "maybe" or "not exactly" to make the disagreement more vague. Additionally, verbs that imply uncertainty, such as "seems" and "may," can also be used to convey negative politeness (p. 1094). Miller claims that the speaker stays clear of interfering with the addressee's autonomy by employing the strategies of self-effacement and distance from the argument.

Miller believes that instances where a speaker expressed 'disagreement neither unmitigated nor aggravated'; by using explicit linguistic forms, are still considered as disagreement because they opposed the previous statement. For instance, some turns have a negative or the words 'yes/no'; in other words, a disagreement involves altering words or intonation to repeat a previous speaker's statement, known as "verbal shadowing". Miller provides further examples of aggravated disagreements, including rhetorical questions, e.g., 'who cares?' intensifiers, e.g., 'totally,' the use of the second personal pronoun, 'you,' with accusatory implications, or using judgmental words. (Miller, 2002, p. 1094).

The finding of Miller's study shows that professors utilize more politeness when they disagree with their students, followed by peers (students to students and professors to professors). In the turns of disagreements between students to professors, students employ the least politeness strategies. Miller assumes that the professors would use direct and unmitigated disagreements while students soften them. On the contrary, Miller finds that professors use more linguistic markers of politeness in their disagreements than their students. Miller argues that this result may
have occurred because the professors may not recognize their students' disagreements as face-threatening but as face-enhancing. She assumes that students' disagreements are raised as inquiries; thus, they share the exact wants of their professors, so they foster a positive face of professors. She discovers that although power and severity are important in influencing how disagreement is expressed, the context in which the disagreements occurred significantly impacts how the disagreement is communicated. Miller claims that the pedagogical contexts (the elicitation sequence) in classrooms and academic talks affect the choice of linguistic markers. In her study, the professors expressed their disagreements to their students in varying ways based on the intention of "the elicitation sequence".

Regarding the severity of disagreements, Miller postulates that it will result in two opposing effects. The first effect would be softened disagreement since the more significant severe disagreement will require more politeness strategies using many mitigators. The second effect would result in aggravated disagreements, such as "preserve self-respect or defend speaker's face" (p. 1099).

The most politeness strategy employed by professors when they softened their disagreements with students is negative politeness at 41% out of 154 turns, followed by positive politeness at 35%, while peers and S to P mainly utilized neither softened nor aggravated strategies in their disagreements of 28% and 24% out of 191 and 118 turns respectively. She finds that when professors disagreed with their students, they largely utilized the inclusive pronoun (we) with 12% and partial agreement with 11%. In comparison, peers and (students to professors) mostly expressed their disagreements by uttering partial agreement with 7% and 12%, respectively.

Miller justifies the ambiguity as Brown and Levinson claims that identifying which strategies interlocutors use is sometimes problematic to the analysts. According to Brown and
Levinson (1987, p. 20), in terms of the FTA, shifting strategies from off-record to positive or negative politeness can cause a challenge for analysts, even if it does not cause any issues for the participants involved in the conversation. This claim supposes that the analyst may misinterpret disagreements while the interlocutors may indicate using another strategy since they are involved in the conversation. Therefore, I interview the participants (Saudi EFL teachers) after their participation on Twitter to examine the illocutionary force of their disagreements and avoid misinterpretation of the data. Furthermore, although this study mainly depends on Brown and Levinson's interpretations of politeness in expressing disagreement, I refer to Miller's taxonomies of disagreements.

2.4.3. Disagreement in Saudi Culture

To the best of my knowledge, only two studies have investigated the disagreement speech act in Saudi culture; one has been done on Twitter (Almutairi, 2021), and another is a comparative study of disagreement employment in Saudi and British culture (Alzahrani, 2021).

In a recent study on Saudis' disagreements on Twitter, Almutairi (2021) examines the use of impoliteness and disagreement expressions employed by Saudis in trendy political and social hashtags on Twitter from 2017-2018. The findings of her study show that Saudis employed eleven disagreement strategies, and the most frequently used are verbal attack followed by act combination, explanation, verbal irony, and counterclaim. In contrast, mitigated disagreements have the lowest frequency, which indicates a high level of impoliteness. Almutairi concludes that the analysis of the corpus of tweets did help in answering her research questions. Therefore, there is a need for additional research to examine the factors that influence Saudis' disagreement utterances on Twitter. In contrast, Alzahrani (2021) finds that the most frequently used strategy among Saudis in verbal communication was positive politeness.
On the other hand, Alzahrani (2021) examines disagreements in Saudi and British cultures in casual conversations. He considers the influence of culture, the discussion topic, and gender on how disagreements are expressed. The data source for the study was conversations between friends in informal settings. He finds that how Saudi and British speakers express disagreement had more similarities than dissimilarities in terms of pragmatic and structural patterns. Regarding gender, male and female disagreements in British were almost identical. In contrast, Saudi females were found to employ more negative politeness strategies by using hedges to mitigate their disagreements than Saudi males. He finds that Saudis employed positive politeness the most, while British speakers implemented more negative politeness strategies.

After reviewing these two studies that have examined disagreement performances in Saudi culture which indicate the lack of documentation of speech acts of disagreement in Saudi culture, the current study endeavors to fill this gap by investigating the politeness strategies employed by Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers on Twitter.

The following section of this chapter addresses the literature that centers on speech acts of disagreement in American society and the contrast between expressions of disagreement in American culture and other languages.

**2.4.4. Politeness and Disagreement Strategies in American culture**

American culture is generally considered individualistic, whereas Saudi Arabian culture is more collectivist (Al-Zahrani & Kaplowitz, 1993). The literature on the speech act disagreements in American culture is limited. There is a lack of research and analysis on how people in American culture handle disagreements in speech acts in comparison to other speech acts such as apologies, requests, and responding to compliments. However, the following section represents the literature that views the studies that have examined the disagreement performances in American culture.
Numerous studies examine various factors' influence on disagreements in American culture in different contexts; for instance, the influence of relative power on the disagreement utterances in the American English language (Khammari, 2021), gender differences in the oral American academic context (Achkasov & Barsova, 2021), verbal disagreement in the American Academic context (Achkasov & Barsova, 2021; Miller, 2000). To my knowledge, examining American disagreement strategies in online interactions has still not been studied. Most of the previous literature has examined American disagreement strategies in an academic context in classrooms, informal conversation, and by completing a discourse completion test (DCT). Consequently, the current study examines American disagreement strategies on Twitter compared to Saudi ones.

In studying American disagreement strategies, many studies discovered they employed positive politeness strategies. For example, in studying the politeness strategies in American cultures, Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 114) give examples of the ‘token agreement’ strategy, which comes under the super strategy of ‘avoid disagreement’ as a politeness strategy, from Sacks’s (1973) American data for how speakers may pretend to agree by hiding their disagreement, such as: (where A is a speaker’s utterance and B refers to an addressee’s response):

A: "That’s where you live, Florida?"
B: "That’s where I was born" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 114).

Furthermore, according to Hariri (2017), Lakoff’s (2005) analysis of politeness in American society suggests that it has transformed from a culture that prioritized respect to one that highlights the importance of maintaining social harmony. Hariri supposes that this shift indicates a move from a culture of negative politeness to positive politeness. More studies have discovered
that American speakers tend to employ positive politeness in expressing their disagreements; for instance, in examining the disagreement strategies in American culture, Khammari (2021) also investigates disagreement strategies in American English. He examined the role of the factor of relative power on disagreement utterance. His research revealed that native speakers of American English employed positive politeness techniques significantly not just with superior interlocutors (father, teacher) but also with interlocutors of equal status (friends). Khammari observes that Native American English speakers often use hedges to lessen the impact of their disagreement. This was especially true in asymmetrical relationships (student/teacher), where they would use positive politeness to maintain good relations with those of higher status and symmetrical relationships with their peers and friends. For instance, when they needed to disagree, they used hedges to soften their disagreement performance, such as "I'm sorry to tell you we are taking the wrong turn" (p. 30). For them, by hedging opinions, they could avoid making the hearer feel uncomfortable.

In studying American disagreements in informal conversations, Locher (2004) examines the realizations of disagreements in natural arguments among family and friends at a dinner in Philadelphia. She concludes that participants favored softened disagreements over unmitigated ones. Examples of disagreement strategies found in her study were hedging, providing reasons, transferring responsibility, providing questions instead of directly disagreeing, using 'but' to mitigate the disagreement, repeating the previous utterance, and disagreements without mitigation (Locher, 2004, p. 149).

In examining oral disagreement in the Academic context of American culture, Achkasov and Barsova (2021) investigate gender differences in employing disagreement strategies in oral academic discourse. They explore that explicit unmitigated disagreement utterances or criticism is
not standard in the American academic context. They found that males and females used direct disagreements with mitigators. However, the direct and unmitigated strategies only employed by teachers to their students may happen due to the asymmetrical statutes. Contrary to previous studies, this study shows that males used more softened disagreements, e.g., lexical hedges, than females. Furthermore, in an American academic context, Miller's (2000) research shows that professors use more polite language when expressing disagreement with their students. She reveals that pedagogical contexts in classrooms and academic talks significantly influence linguistic markers when expressing disagreement (see section 2.2.4.3).

The studies mentioned above focused on disagreement expressions in American society; the following section represents the studies that were carried out to contrast the ways of expressing disagreement in American culture with those in other languages.

2.4.5. Politeness and Disagreements Strategies in American Culture Compared to Other Languages


Many researchers find that disagreement is preferred; for instance, Samovar and Porter (2001) state that expressing opinions freely and assertively in American culture is accepted and
regarded as a positive quality (as mentioned in Kobayashi and Viswat, 2010, pp. 1,2). Some research has found that disagreement can be a preferred strategy, demonstrating solidarity and strengthening social relationships instead of posing a threat. Kotthoff (1993) examines the disagreement strategies in German and Anglo-American disputes. She finds that both participants preferred disagreements to defend their opinions and perceive it as a signal of solidarity, not necessarily as a risk or threat to relationships, while the reluctance markers were dispreferred. Kotthoff (1993) discovered that Anglo-Americans and Germans preferred to disagree directly rather than being hesitant in expressing their disagreement. This was also noted by Tannen and Kakavá (1992), who demonstrated that Greeks viewed disagreement as preferred and did not see it as a threat to social unity between conversational partners. In addition, Locher (2004) points out that cultural norms affect disagreements, relying on Kakava (1993) and Tannen (1988), Greeks value disagreement more than Americans (Locher, 2004, p. 98).

In studying the influence of unequal social status on disagreement performance, Yan's (2016) study examines how American and Chinese speakers disagree with unequal social status. This study explores that native English speakers were less influenced by relative power and social distance than Chinese EFL learners when performing disagreement. Yan finds that when Chinese EFL learners employ their disagreements, they usually employ an explicit approach with someone of equal status. In contrast, they tend to use negative politeness with someone of higher status, and when the addressees have lower status, they utilize a positive politeness strategy to maintain their positive faces. In contrast, native English speakers, who are less concerned with the social status and power of the addressees, usually employ positive politeness followed by negative politeness strategies. Also, Yan discovers that Chinese speakers tend to transfer expressions from their first
language into English, creating what is known as "Chinese-style English" (Yan, 2016, p. 243). Therefore, Yan recommends that EFL learners should be taught more native-like expressions.

One study finds similarities in the disagreement expressions between native American English speakers and non-native speakers of English; for example, Xu, Chang, and Long (2021) examine daily conversations between Chinese and American college students. According to them, when Chinese and American students disagree, they employ implicit disagreement, and there are more similarities than differences in their use of an implicit disagreement. Chinese and Americans used strategies before disagreements to express it implicitly, such as a compliment, surprise, and thanks. They found that complimenting disagreement is the most frequently used strategy of implicit disagreement. They claim that these implicit strategies are used to employ politeness before expressing disagreement. They assume that American culture is interested in politeness, as seen in frequent expressions they usually employ in everyday use, such as 'thank you,' 'please,' and 'sorry.' They suggest Americans believe everyone is "equal and respectful" (p. 208).

On the other hand, other studies find that other cultures used more politeness strategies in expressing disagreement than American speakers (e.g., Mandarin Chinese and Persian). For example, Guodong and Jing (2005) examine the disagreement strategies between American English and Mandarin Chinese speakers with different social statuses. They find that the Chinese perform more politeness strategies and honorifics when disagreeing with the superior than American speakers. In the equal status, it has been found that if the social distance increases, American and Chinese employ fewer politeness strategies. They found that female Chinese applied more politeness strategies than males, and males regarded themselves as superior to females. They argue that western culture, like the Chinese, shows "a concern for the harmonious existence of intimacy and in-group harmony" (p. space9). At the same time, Bavarsad, Eslami-Rasekh, and
Simin (2015) explore the connection between power and disagreement strategies between Persian EFL learners and American English speakers. The results reveal that American English speakers and Persian EFL learners vary in their use of disagreement; Iranians were more polite and careful in protecting the addressees' faces by using mitigating strategies rather than face-threatening ones. However, they find that Americans rarely consider the face of the hearer, even in communicating with someone with higher status. They find a strategy entirely related to Persian culture and religion: mitigation of God willing, "e.g., *Maybe next time, God willing*" (p. 101). They conclude that the Islamic culture of Iran affects how people disagree by producing conservative behavior and preserving the face of addressees with various statuses and cultural norms.

According to the above studies, various cultures express disagreement differently; American speakers may be more direct in their expressions of disagreement. At the same time, other cultures (e.g., Chinese, and Persian) use more politeness strategies, such as hedging and indirect disagreement utterances. Therefore, cultural norms play a significant role in how individuals express disagreement.

In studying how Americans perceive non-native speakers' disagreement performances, Kobayashi and Viswat (2010) demonstrate that Americans perceive Japanese students' utterances of disagreements as ineffective, and they must be more direct and straightforward. One of the disagreement strategies that the Japanese used was silence when they kept silent and disagreed with an American's opinion regarding the issue of part-time high school students, which was perceived as negatively marked by Americans. The Americans opted to provide their disagreement clearly and provide merits and reasons to support their views, such as "*I disagree because*....". Another strategy was ambiguity, in which Japanese speakers used hedges to blur their opinions, such as "*Probably*" and "*Maybe, I think so,*" which were negatively marked by Americans as
"very confusing" and "very indecisive" (pp. 4-5). They display that Americans opted not to use hedges when they lack knowledge on a specific issue, e.g., "I think" or "maybe"; they would say, "I will think about it." Thus, Kobayashi and Viswat conclude that Americans misinterpreted the disagreement statements of Japanese speakers because they were unaware of the cultural distinctions of how they value clarity and ambiguity.

Overall, many researchers find that American speakers tend to employ positive politeness when expressing their disagreements (Khammari, 2021; Lakoff, 2005; Samovar & Porter, 2001). It can be concluded that studying the disagreement strategies between two languages in different contexts may result in different strategies, such as studying disagreement strategies in American and Chinese languages; one study finds that the Chinese used more politeness strategy in the context of examining unequal social statuses by completing a discourse completion test (DCT) (written language) (Guodong & Jing, 2005). On the other hand, another study finds that American and Chinese college students employ similar politeness strategies in daily conversations (verbal communication) (Xu, Chang, & Long, 2021). It has been found that Americans tend to use the same politeness strategies with different statuses or social distances (Khammari, 2021; Yan, 2016). It is worth mentioning that what is considered polite in one culture in expressing disagreements can be considered as impolite in another culture; for instance, Japanese value being indirect and vague in expressing disagreements and see it as polite, while Americans perceive it as ineffective and impolite (Kobayashi & Viswat, 2010).

After reviewing previous research on how disagreements are expressed in American culture compared to other languages, the following part focuses on various studies that explored how disagreement strategies differ in different languages and cultures.
2.4.6. Previous Research on Examining Disagreements in Other Languages

Different research has been interested in examining disagreement strategies in different languages and cultures in verbal communication, such as, in Iranian culture (Abaszadeh & Samar, 2014; Masoumeh, Abbass, Azizollah, & Davood, 2013; Pourmohamadi, Abaszadeh, & Samar, 2014), in Hong Kong classrooms (Lopez-Ozieblo, 2018).

In studying disagreement strategies in classrooms, Lopez-Ozieblo (2018) assumes that teachers are needed to disagree with their students in the classroom context, contrary to the notion that disagreements are 'dis-preferred' and face-threatening acts as seen in traditional politeness theories. She investigates teachers’ disagreements in academic classrooms in Hong Kong. Her study finds that disagreement is a 'dis-preferred' option among teachers; they usually attempt to minimize disagreement by head nodding and minimizing undesirable actions. Also, teachers tend to mitigate the threat on their students’ faces when expressing their disagreements. Their disagreements were linguistically highly mitigated; for example, they encouraged their students by nodding to make them keep participating.

In two formal and informal contexts, Masoumeh, Abbass, Azizollah, and Davood (2013) examine the factor of gender on disagreement performance in the expressions used by male and female Iranian speakers. They discover that the female respondents are more likely to be less direct and less confrontational when expressing disagreement than the male respondents. Strong denial was used more often by the male than the female group. Regarding the formality of the context, both groups of respondents have similarities when it comes to expressing disagreement; they are more likely to be less confrontational when the context is formal, and both groups used strategies such as making suggestions and providing reasons.
Moreover, Muntigla and Turnbull (1998) investigate everyday argument exchanges in verbal communication in the English language by examining three-turn exchanges where Speaker A makes a claim in Turn 1 (T1), which Speaker B disputes in Turn 2, and then Speaker A either directly supports the T1 claim in Turn 3 or explicitly disagrees with the disagreement utterance in T2. Their study shows that if the Speaker B in the second turn threatens speaker A's face; then there is a higher probability that A replies in Turn 3 by supporting the claim, in turn, one argument. Their study explores that the disagreement strategies used by participants in Turns 2 and 3 during argument exchanges were the act combination of contradiction and counterclaim, irrelevancy claim, and challenge.

Muntigla and Turnbull (1998) proposed a model of disagreement exchanges. While their research focused on face-to-face interactions, many scholars have used their model of conversational exchange to analyze online interactions involving expressing disagreements on platforms such as MailOnline (Langlotz & Locher, 2012), online forums (Shum & Lee, 2013), Facebook (Harb, 2016; 2021), and Twitter (Almtairi, 2021).

The studies mentioned above have been conducted to investigate the disagreement strategies in face-to-face communication, e.g., conversational exchanges between families, peers, or university students. However, the following section summarizes previous research on disagreement expressions in computer-mediated communication (CMC).

2.4.7. Previous Research on Studying Disagreements in CMC

Recently, there has been a significant focus on investigating the expression of disagreements in computer-mediated communication (CMC) in various studies; for instance, studies have explored the use of disagreements in the Arabic language on Facebook (Harb, 2016; 2021), Saudis' disagreements on Twitter (Almutari, 2021), online forums in Hong Kong (Shum &
Lee, 2013), an online collaborative project using English as a lingua franca (Maíz-Arévalo, 2014), and disagreements in Greek online forums (Angouri & Tseliga, 2010).

In examining disagreement strategies in computer-mediated communication (CMC), Almutairi (2021) analyzes disagreement strategies among Saudis on sociocultural and political issues on Twitter (see section 2.6). In comparison, Harb (2016) examines Arabic disagreements on Facebook. Different disagreement strategies were found in these two studies. Al Mutairi (2021) discovered that most disagreement strategies were aggravated and impolite, while Harb (2016) found that most strategies were politic and appropriate. Harb (2016) finds that there is divergence among Arabic speakers regarding their politeness strategies on Facebook. These strategies range from polite, such as avoiding arguments and counterclaims, to socially acceptable or 'politic' strategies, like challenging, contradicting, supplicating, mildly scolding, exclamations, and making irrelevant claims. Finally, there are impolite strategies such as verbal attacks and verbal irony.

Furthermore, in the aspect of CMC, Shum and Lee (2013) also investigate the employment of politeness strategies in uttering disagreement in two online Hong Kong discussion forums. Their study reveals that most disagreement strategies among forum interlocutors were direct and unmitigated, e.g., scolding and providing negative opinions/comments, but they are usually regarded as appropriate/politic communicative behavior. This result is aligned with what Harb (2016) discovered, that some disagreement strategies were aggravated but perceived as politic and appropriate, e.g., supplications and mild scolding. However, in Shum and Lee’s (2013) study, some disagreement utterances were perceived as impolite, such as short vulgar words and cursing.

Moreover, in studying disagreement in online communication and the effect of linguistic proficiency and explicit instruction of pragmatic knowledge in disagreement expressions in the
second language, Maíz-Arévalo (2014) investigates how international master's degree students, who use English as a lingua franca, employ disagreements in an online cooperative assignment. This study shows that advanced linguistic proficiency crucially affects improving pragmatic knowledge. Also, explicit instruction affects students to various extents: students with higher proficiency improve faster than those with lower proficiency in the competence of using an appropriate production of disagreement.

In the same vein, another study has been conducted by Angouri and Tseliga (2010) to examine impoliteness and disagreement in two online forums. The sample of data was taken from two communities of practice (CofP): Greek students and professional academics. Their study focuses on instances of "impolite talk" and examines the communicative strategies participants use to engage in impoliteness deliberately. They pay special attention to spelling, punctuation, and using the discourse particle [re] in confrontational disagreements that breach norms of unmarked behavior in the two CofPs. Their study finds that impoliteness is deeply ingrained in small-scale (discourse) and large-scale (social) contexts, with different judgments of the participants for what constitutes marked behavior depends on factors such as communication purpose, forum norms, participant relationships, and group identities.

After reviewing previous literature on speech acts of disagreement in different languages, the following section reviews the politeness strategies in other speech acts on Twitter after reviewing the first study, to my best knowledge, that has been done to examine the politeness strategies as represented by emojis in CMC. The next part provides explanations of different disagreement strategies accompanied by examples.
2.4.8. Definition of Disagreement Strategies

Many disagreement strategies have been found in previous studies. The descriptions of these disagreement strategies are given below.

2.4.8.1. Act Combination

The strategy of act combination occurs when a speaker utilizes two or more strategies when expressing his/her disagreement (Almutairi, 2021, p. 22). According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the speaker uses more than one politeness strategy when the imposition of ranking is high to mitigate their utterance. The strategy of act combinations has been found in many studies (e.g., Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998; Almutairi, 2021; Bavarsad, Eslami-Rasekh, & Simin, 2015; Harb, 2021). One example of act combinations is the direct disagreement followed by justification, e.g., 'I disagree because...'. Another example is contradiction followed by counterclaim, e.g., "I do not think so. I think that is not important. What is important is ...." (Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998, p. 233).

2.4.8.2. Verbal Attacks

This strategy can be described as using insulting or hurtful words to express disagreement, to attack the other person's face, and to mitigate the disagreement or concern for the harm caused by the attack. This strategy has been found in investigating Arabic disagreements on Facebook (Harb, 2016; 2021) and Saudis’ disagreements on Twitter (Almutairi, 2021). Examples of verbal attacks are the second-person accusatory pronoun "you are totally wrong", and vulgar words, e.g., 'it is bullshit'.

2.4.8.3. Raising Rhetorical Questions

Shum and Lee (2015) explain this strategy as the speaker expresses their disagreement through a question that conveys an opposing viewpoint, using negative tags or interrogatives to clarify their stance. Many previous studies have found this disagreement strategy (e.g., Culpeper,
1996; Locher, 2004; Miller, 2000; Shum & Lee, 2013). Sometimes the interlocutor uses this strategy to aggravate the disagreement, such as 'excuse me!' in other stances, it could be used to redress the threat on the negative face of the address, 'It is not the case, is it?'

2.4.8.4. Giving Suggestions

Giving suggestions in expressing disagreement can occur when a speaker offers an alternative choice of action instead of forcing their opinion on the listener (Almutairi, 2021, p. 39). This strategy is also found in Arab’s use of disagreements on Facebook (Harb, 2016; 2021) and Saudis’ disagreements on Twitter (Almutairi, 2021). Also, as found in Khammari’s (2021) study, the strategy of giving suggestions, which was used by American English speakers when expressing their disagreements. Examples of this strategy are ‘I would suggest that…’, ‘it would be better …’.

2.4.8.5. Counterclaim

This strategy is described as the speaker presenting a different statement that does not oppose or dispute the previous utterance (Harb, 2016; Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998). The strategy of counterclaim has been found in previous studies (e.g., Almutairi, 2021; Harb, 2020; Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998; Bavarsad, Eslami-Rasekh, & Simin, 2015). This strategy has been found as the least face-threatening strategy in Bavarsad, Eslami-Rasekh, & Simin’s (2015) study. Examples of this strategy are stating an oppositional stance without mentioning a direct disagreement, e.g., ‘this matter is considered as …’ in which the speaker does not provide direct disagreement and directly explains the opposite opinion without threatening the addressee’s face.

2.4.8.6. Using Inclusive Pronoun ‘We’

The speaker used the inclusive pronoun 'we' to claim common ground with the addressee to maintain the interlocutors' positive face. Brown and Levinson mentioned it under the super strategy of "Impersonalize S and H" (p. 190). Miller (2000) and Locher (2004) have documented
the presence of this strategy in the results of their studies. A clear instance of this strategy can be seen in the statement, "Well, we do not even need to do that... Let us just assume..." (Miller, 2000, p. 1108). In this study, the inclusive first-person plural pronoun 'we' would be analyzed as a form of positive politeness since the speaker implements this impersonal linguistic form to claim a common ground and boost the positive face for both interlocutors, as employed in the study of Miller (2000).

2.4.8.7. Making a Personal Stance

Previous literature describes this strategy as the interlocutor refusing to have a common ground with the addressee by expressing one's position with a statement that negates the first utterance, such as 'I do not believe that' or 'I do not think so' (Shum & Lee, 2013).

2.4.8.8. Verbal Irony

Irony can be described as a statement made by a speaker that appears polite on the surface but is interpreted as impolite or a face attack when analyzed more deeply (Leech, 2014, p. 234). Leech presents conversational irony or sarcasm as pragmatic principles that manipulate politeness. The examples of verbal irony can be interpreted differently; one was seen as neither disagreeable nor overly polite, while another was seen as aggravated, and that depends on the context and the prior relation among interlocutors. This strategy was found in many previous studies (e.g., Almutairi, 2021; Culpeper, 1996; Harb, 2020; Locher, 2004; Shum & Lee, 2013).

2.4.8.9. Exclamation

Almutairi (2021) states that exclamations commonly convey emotions such as disbelief, surprise, astonishment, and wonder in response to a previous statement or idea. This strategy has been found in the literature studying Arabs' and Saudis' disagreement strategies on online
platforms (e.g., Almutairi, 2021; Harb, 2016; 2021). The best example of this strategy can be found in this statement that expresses surprise or wonder, 'it is weird!'. Another example, as found in Harb (2016) is "This is the strangest I have ever heard" (p. 64).

2.4.8.10. Giving Opposite Opinions

Shum and Lee (2015) describe this strategy as the interlocutor providing the opposite opinion to express his/her disagreement without any intention of attacking the addressee's face. The example of this strategy does not include phrases such as 'I do not think so' as in the strategy of making a personal stance (see section 2.4.1.7.7). This strategy can be found in an example such as 'I believe that ....' followed by the opposite opinion.

2.4.8.11. Challenge

According to Muntigl and Turnbull (1998), when using the strategy of a challenge to express disagreement, the speaker challenges the addressee’s previous statement and requests evidence to support it, indicating that the addressee cannot provide such proof. For example, ‘I dare you...’, ‘who are you to say that.’ It is considered aggravated disagreement in which the speaker does not attempt to mitigate it. This strategy has been found in the study of Muntigl and Turnbull (1998), in Arabs’ use of disagreement on Facebook (Harb, 2016; 2021) and also in Saudis’ disagreement performances on Twitter (Almutairi, 2021), and also in Iranians’ performance of disagreement (Bavarsad, Eslami-Rasekh & Simin, 2015).

2.4.8.12. Partial Agreement/ Token Agreement

Brown and Levinson (1987) rank the ‘token agreement’ strategy under the sixth positive politeness strategy, ‘avoid disagreement.’ They describe the strategy of ‘token agreement’ as the desire to agree in which the speakers twist their utterance to pretend to agree, for example, saying yes instead of a blatant no and then expressing the opinion after the coordinating conjunction ‘but’.
2.4.8.13. Hedging Opinions

By using hedges, the speaker can opt to be ambiguous about their own viewpoints to avoid being perceived as disagreeing with others (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 116). Brown and Levinson demonstrate that while they regarded hedges as negative politeness markers, certain hedges can also be classified as positive politeness strategies. Brown and Levinson give examples of this strategy in English, such as "I really sort of think/hope/wonder ....".

Although Miller (2000) classified the downtoners ‘sort of,’ ‘maybe’ and ‘I do not know’ as a negative politeness strategy, in this study, these downtoners are analyzed as a hedging opinion strategy which comes under the category of positive politeness following Brown and Levinson’s classification of the strategy of avoid disagreement. Furthermore, the phrase ‘I think’ is classified according to its use in the context and illocutionary act of the saying; some utterances are classified as making a personal stance, while others as hedging opinions.

2.4.8.14. Interrogatives/ Raising Question

The interrogatives are utilized to mitigate the threat on the negative face of both interlocutors. This strategy differs from 'raising the rhetorical question' by giving a question to ask for clarification, while the former does not provide an inquiry. The speaker responds with the question instead of expressing disagreement to save both interlocutors' faces. Raising questions in expressing disagreement has been characterized by Miller (2000) as a negative politeness strategy. An example of this strategy is "Well, do you really want to say that it is that whole thing?" as found in Miller (2000, p. 1104) in an attempt of a professor to mitigate the threat of negative face of the student by raising a question instead of explicitly uttering disagreement.
2.4.8.15. Conditional

Using the conditional statement 'if...' in a disagreement is considered negative politeness in which the speaker attempts to minimize the pressure on the addressee's negative face. Thus, the conditional statement 'if' expresses the feeling of uncertainty utilized to mitigate the imposition on both interlocutors' negative faces instead of uttering explicit disagreement. Khammari’s (2021) study finds that this strategy was the least frequently used to express disagreement among American English speakers. For example, 'if this happens....'.

2.4.8.16. Scolding

Scolding can be described as the speaker expressing disapproval of the first utterance, behavior, or attitude (Almutairi, 2021; Harb, 2016; 2021; Locher, 2004; Shum & Lee, 2015). An example of scolding is, 'you should not do that...'.

2.4.8.17. Judgmental Vocabulary

The strategy of making judgmental vocabulary is considered an aggravated disagreement. An example of this strategy is 'that is ridiculous!' (Miller, 2000).

2.4.8.18. Using Personal Accusatory ‘you’

In this strategy, the speaker directly uses the second person pronoun to accuse the addressee and directly disagrees with him/her without mitigating the disagreement utterance, e.g., "You have no idea." Miller's (2000) study considers this strategy an aggravated disagreement.

2.4.8.19. Using Intensifiers

This strategy is considered aggravated disagreement in which the speakers intensify their disagreements with no mitigation attempt (Miller, 2000). For example, ‘I totally disagree.’
2.4.8.20. Short Contrary Statement

This strategy can be considered neither a disagreement nor strengthened or softened in which the interlocutors express their disagreement in short statements such as ‘I disagree’.

2.4.8.21. Argument Avoidance

This strategy happens when the speaker purposely chooses not to respond to the first utterance and prefers to be silent instead of expressing disagreements by saying a statement such as "I will not respond to you" (Harb, 2016, p. 191).

2.4.8.22. Giving a Personal Experience

Shum and Lee (2015) explain this strategy as the speaker uses their past experience to support their disagreement. For example, ‘I have been used to ...’.

2.4.8.23. Giving an Apology

In this strategy, the speakers attempt to soften the disagreement and mitigate the addressee's negative face by providing an apology when expressing their disagreements, such as ‘I am afraid I have to disagree’.

2.5. Politeness Strategies and Speech Acts in Saudi Online Contexts

A growing body of research discusses the politeness strategies used in online interactions. In examining the replies to a post of a Saudi man who trained her wife to drive after the Saudi government allowed women to drive in Saudi Arabia, Zamakahari (2018) discovers different (im)politeness strategies such as name-calling, attacks on physical appearance, and direct verbal attacks and imperatives. Also, Alenzi (2019), in his Ph.D. dissertation, examines how young Saudi Arabian adults represent their sociocultural identities in online interactions. Alenzi examines the politeness strategies employed by Saudi Arabian adults when communicating on various online
social platforms. According to his findings, Saudi adults are more polite during FTF interactions than faceless online communications.

Additionally, Alenzi discovered that participants who utilized anonymous nicknames were likelier to engage in impolite behavior during their online exchanges. Moreover, in the Saudi online context, Mahzari (2017) conducted a sociopragmatic study to examine the linguistic and nonlinguistic types of congratulations strategies in the responses used by Saudi Facebook users. His study reveals that the participants frequently offered good wishes when uttering congratulations. He finds that Saudi Facebook users also employed nonlinguistic strategies to express congratulations, e.g., emojis, besides expressing good wishes in linguistic forms.

In the same respect, Hariri (2017) conducted a sociolinguistic study to explore politeness strategies used among Saudi students and their professors in email exchanges. Hariri points out that a particular expression might carry different interpretations. The results show that Saudi students are indirect and expressive in their emails. In contrast, their professors tend to be direct due to the realization of professors' power over their students, as Brown and Levinson (1987) referred to.

In sum, the previous research on employing politeness strategies in online contexts concentrates mainly on gender, identity, social variables, and power relations. In addition, much previous research discusses speech acts of requests, congratulations, compliments, and academic contexts. Accordingly, my study fills this gap and endeavors to contribute to sociopragmatics and CMC fields by exploring politeness strategies used in expressing disagreements online. Furthermore, my study seeks to examine the factors that influence the expression of disagreements among the participants.
2.6. Previous Research on the Factors that Influence Pragmatic Competence

Many factors can affect learners' pragmatic knowledge, as indicated in different studies (Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986). Angouri and Tseliga (2010) show some factors that influenced impoliteness strategies, including the primary objective of the communication, the platform's established norms, the participants' relationships, and the group identities that they assume in different situations.

In investigating the influence of proficiency level and length of stay in native English-speaking countries on pragmatic development, Blum-Kulka, and Olshtain (1986) conclude that length of stay is a much more critical measure of pragmatic competence than the level of linguistic proficiency. Their study shows that having a high grammatical competency among non-native speakers does not necessarily entail a high level of pragmatic knowledge. On the contrary, Bardovi-Harlig and Dornyei (1998) show that residency in an environment that offers the opportunity to communicate in the target language outside the classroom will develop pragmatic awareness. They explore that in this environment, the learners are not afraid only of making mistakes in the language, but they need to establish smooth relationships with Ns in the host country.

In examining the role of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in acquiring pragmatic competence, Ajabshir (2019) examines the speech act of request in CMC compared with traditional face-to-face instruction. The results show that CMC-focused teaching is better than face-to-face instruction. Also, his study ends with some pedagogical implications for EFL teachers using CMC affordances to teach pragmatic knowledge.

In addition, regarding the influence of L1 culture and social norms in the disagreement strategies, Pourmohamadi, Abaszadeh, and Samar (2014) show that the culture of the first
language and social norms affect the expression of disagreement in the target language. Therefore, they recommend additional research to compare the way of expressing disagreements across languages and investigate the influence of L1 on L2. Therefore, my study compares the performance of disagreements between Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers.

2.7. Summary

Many previous studies that associated with computer-mediated communication (CMC) concentrating on politeness strategies have been conducted via emails, Facebook, and blogs. The research on politeness strategies on Twitter is insufficient, especially in the Saudi context. Also, little research has examined the politeness strategies performed to produce disagreements and compared them with the native American English speakers’ employment of disagreements.

The previous research concentrates nearly on investigating the improvement of EFL learners' pragmatic competence and rarely examines teachers' pragmatic awareness and their production of disagreements. One study addressed teachers' disagreements with their students in the classrooms (Lopez-Ozieblo, 2018). As Bardovi-Harlig (1999) points out, although grammatical competence is insufficient, it is still a necessary condition for pragmatic development. Thus, the current study seeks to explore the factors that may affect teachers' expression of disagreements, such as linguistic proficiency, years of EFL teaching experience, online nature of Twitter, length of residency/study in the native English-speaking countries, last degree earned, the type of topic (contextual factors), personal involvement, reputation, L1 influence, contact with NSs, gender, age, identity, beliefs, cultural background, or other factors.

Accordingly, my study endeavors to provide more data on politeness strategies in the popular social media platform Twitter, as this area still lacks documentation (Maros & Rosli, 2017). As a result, my study seeks to make a valuable contribution to the field of sociopragmatics,
CMC, and second language studies (SLS). It addresses a gap in previous studies by analyzing how politeness strategies are utilized when expressing disagreement by Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers on Twitter.

To conclude, this chapter reviewed the literature on politeness theories (the first and second waves). Noticeably, the notion of politeness changed from the first order of politeness theorists to post-modern theorists as it focused on the speaker. Then, in the second wave, it became a discursive concept focused on the speaker and addressee. Although the theorists of the first order of politeness focused on the facework, the post-modern theorists take into account the contexts and prior relation among interlocutors into account (Locher & Watts, 2005). The politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), the disagreement taxonomies offered by Miller (2000), and refers to the relational work developed by Locher and Levinson (2005) were provided in detail since they work as foundations of the data analysis of the current study. Then, the speech act of disagreement has been discussed by reviewing the previous literature on politeness and disagreement in different languages, including Arabic and American English. The significant findings of the previous studies are reviewed. Therefore, the current study aims to extend the literature by investigating the speech act of disagreement on online social media platforms (e.g., Twitter). The following chapter provides the methodology and data collection of the current study.
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY, DATA COLLECTION, AND ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

This qualitative study employs the following instruments: observation of a thread of tweets with the hashtag #ExpressYourOpinion, circulated to both Saudi EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers (experimental group) and American ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers (control group). Then, an open-ended questionnaire and follow-up interviews were given to Saudi EFL teachers. In addition, an investigation of the Twitter corpus was carried out: the corpus of tweets was collected for this study consisting of participants’ tweets, including arguments, disagreements, or opinions from 2018 to 2022. These instruments were created to answer the following three research questions of this study:

**RQ 1.** What are the politeness strategies used in performing disagreements on Twitter by Saudi EFL teachers?

1.1 How do Saudi EFL teachers apply face threatening acts (FTA) in performing disagreement?

1.2 What is the perlocutionary effect of tweets on Saudi EFL teachers?

**RQ 2.** What factors influence Saudi EFL teachers’ use of politeness strategies in expressing disagreements?

**RQ 3.** What are the different politeness strategies used in expressing disagreements by Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers?
The choice of the Twitter platform is appropriate for collecting the data for this study since its users naturally and freely express their opinions and arguments and discuss different trending and controversial topics more than other online social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, or WhatsApp (Vásquez, 2021). According to AlKarni (2018), Saudis consider Twitter, an "online parliament" (p. 70) to communicate their views openly, especially in expressing disagreements. Thus, I observed the politeness strategies used in expressing disagreements on Twitter because it is an authentic online platform that is open and permanent.

My study conducts an analysis of a tweet corpus, observation of a thread of tweets, questionnaire, and follow-up interviews to provide valid and reliable results for this study. Besides investigating the disagreement strategies expressed by Saudi EFL teachers, I also compared their strategies with American ESL teachers’ disagreement strategies by observing their interactions in a thread of tweets and retrieving the corpus of their tweets. The instruments used to collect the data for this study are summarized in Figure 5.

**Figure 5**

**Instruments for Collecting Data**

**The instruments of data collection:**

1. A corpus of tweets → was circulated to → both Saudi EFL teachers & American ESL teachers

2. A thread of tweets → was circulated to → both Saudi EFL teachers & American ESL teachers

3. Questionnaires → were distributed to → only Saudi EFL teachers

4. Interview → was conducted with → only Saudi EFL teachers
3.1. The Participants of The Study

The total number of participants in the current study is 20: 10 Saudi EFL teachers and 10 American ESL teachers, with five male and five female Saudi EFL participants. However, although gender is not the main factor to be investigated in this study, I endeavored to recruit a balanced number of male and female American ESL teachers, but only two male and eight female participants agreed to participate in my study. All the participants were asked to participate in the thread of tweets on Twitter. Also, I collected the corpus of the participants' tweets by conducting Twitter API in Python. Furthermore, Saudi EFL teachers were interviewed and filled out the questionnaire when their participation on Twitter was completed. To answer the third question of the current study, I chose to have a control group of American ESL teachers to compare their disagreement strategies with Saudi EFL teachers.

I noticed that American ESL teachers are cautious and hesitant to participate in this study by expressing their disagreements on public online platforms. On the contrary, Saudi EFL teachers were more eager to participate and express their opinions publicly. One of the female American ESL teachers asserts that any issues related to religion or governmental decisions are considered taboo in American culture. In contrast, as found in Almutairi’s (2021) study, Saudis expressed their opinions and disagreements on religious and political issues on Twitter.

According to the questionnaire, Saudi EFL teachers’ age ranged from 26 to 44 years (Figure 6). The Saudi EFL teacher participants have different English proficiency levels; some work in public education and teach elementary, intermediate, and high school; others work in higher education as lecturers and professors in different Saudi universities. One female Saudi teacher had less than three years of experience, which I classified as a beginner teacher, while all the rest had more than five years of experience and were classified as more experienced (Figure 7).
My study investigates if the roles of Saudi EFL teachers’ linguistic proficiency and teaching experience affect their familiarity with politeness strategies in expressing their disagreements in English. The participants have different linguistic proficiency and teaching experience; three have bachelor’s degrees, four have master’s degrees, and three have Ph.D. degrees (Figure 8).
Figure 8

Highest Degree Earned

![Pie chart showing the highest degree earned by Saudi EFL teachers.](image)

Around 70% of the Saudi EFL teachers studied in Saudi Arabia, followed by 20% who studied in native English-speaking countries. Another participant received a degree from a non-English-speaking country representing 10%, as shown in (Figure 9).

Figure 9

The Places of Studying English Language

![Pie chart showing the places of studying English by Saudi EFL teachers.](image)

As found in the questionnaire, the participants determined their proficiency level in English (Figure 10). However, some participants perceived that their English proficiency level was advanced (receiving a score of 5.5 in IELTS). However, the IELTS scoring system regards the
candidates with a score of 5.5 as modest users (B2) and classifies their English proficiency level as upper-intermediate.

**Figure 10**

*Linguistic Proficiency*

To determine the English proficiency level of the Saudi EFL teachers, I asked them to submit their standardized tests with the earned scores. As shown in Table 5, two participants have a score of 7; one has 6.5 in IELTS, which ranks as advanced, one has a score of 6, and one has a score of 5.5 in IELTS, categorized as upper-intermediate. Two participants took the TOEFL IBT exam; one received a score of 94 while the other received 92, which equals 7 and 6.5 in IELTS according to the score comparison tool on the ETS website; thus, their English proficiency level is considered advanced. Two participants took a Standardized Test of English Proficiency (STEP) in Saudi Arabia with scores of 84 and 92, equal to 6 and 6.5 in IELTS (upper-intermediate and advanced), respectively. One participant considered his proficiency level of English as advanced, with no exam score provided. Therefore, it appears from (Table 5) that around 6 participants have advanced proficiency levels in the English language, representing 60%, while around three have upper-intermediate English proficiency levels, representing around 40%.
Table 5

Scores of Standardized English Proficiency Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standardized proficiency test</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Level of Proficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL IBT</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL IBT</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>Upper-intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEP</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>Upper-intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Upper-intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEP</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding American ESL teachers, two males and eight females participated in my study. They have different academic qualifications, four with Ph.D. degrees (3 females and one male), two females are Ph.D. students, one holds a master’s degree, and three have bachelor's degrees (two females, one male). They have different experiences: some work in education and curriculum design, and one participant works in education for deaf people. The instruments and procedures are discussed in the following parts.

3.2. The Instruments

3.2.1. Building a Corpus of Tweets

A Twitter Developer account was applied in Twitter API (Application Programming Interface). Afterward, academic research access was developed, which helps to retrieve up to 10 million Tweets per month and access full-archive Tweet counts. Many features on the Twitter API account support creating codes in any programming language application, such as Python, to retrieve conversational data. Also, Twitter API packages ("tweepy" and "pandas") were imported into Python programming. Then, Twitter API was run in Python for each participant by identifying
the query of @username and requesting to retrieve the recent and last 2500 main tweets with no retweets in the time range from 2018 to 2022. The corpus of the full text of a tweet, the tweet date created, and the author Id were retrieved, as shown in Figure 11. Furthermore, queries of some words have been identified, such as disagree or disagreement, and hashtags such as #ExpressYourOpinion #EFL #TEFL #TESL #ESL #SaudiTesolers #AmericanTesolers #TESOL #Englishteaching. After running Twitter API in Python for all participants was completed, a total of 2403 tweets were retrieved.

**Figure 11**

*Sample of the Corpus of Tweets*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>author_id</th>
<th>created_at</th>
<th>edit_history_tweet_ids</th>
<th>id</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>@Keyonmiller12 @Coachm_m Congratulations!!</td>
<td>269378661</td>
<td>2022-09-30T01:20:34Z</td>
<td>['1575656819 070226432']</td>
<td>157565681 9070226432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>@mbwatts6 I walked past someone today and said hello. His entire face lit up!</td>
<td>269378661</td>
<td>2022-09-29T23:46:47Z</td>
<td>['1575633215 477338113']</td>
<td>157563321 5477338113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>@Larryferlazzo @educationweek Thank you for this opportunity to share and learn from the other contributors. Knowledge is power!</td>
<td>269378661</td>
<td>2022-09-29T23:07:49Z</td>
<td>['1575623412 977762304']</td>
<td>157562341 2977762304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>@LizzyPerezLLC @OLLUnivSATX Congratulations!!</td>
<td>269378661</td>
<td>2022-09-29T22:29:42Z</td>
<td>['1575613819 291770882']</td>
<td>157561381 9291770882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Make sure to smile and say hello to people you encounter. This helps people to know they are seen, heard, and valued. Be an angel to those around you so they see clear examples that God hears their cares and concerns.</td>
<td>269378661</td>
<td>2022-09-29T19:31:25Z</td>
<td>['1575568952 365023232']</td>
<td>157556895 2365023232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>For those who may have forgotten or gotten weary on their journey….There’s a difference between “feeling left out” and “being set apart” for good works. It’s all about perspective. #keepthefaith #thebestisyettocome</td>
<td>269378661</td>
<td>2022-09-27T11:25:44Z</td>
<td>['1574721951 666507777']</td>
<td>157472195 1666507777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>@HarrisLeads Thank you! 😊</td>
<td>269378661</td>
<td>2022-09-25T22:40:59Z</td>
<td>['1574167106 966368256']</td>
<td>157416710 6966368256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>@mr_aamitche @WayneTwpSchools @RobIrvine1 @wle_elem1955 She said thank you!</td>
<td>269378661</td>
<td>2022-09-24T20:19:44Z</td>
<td>['1573769173 385285633']</td>
<td>157376917 3385285633</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After retrieving the corpus of participants’ tweets, I manually collect the tweets containing any kind of arguments, disagreements, conflicts, or refusals. I observed how they usually interacted frequently on Twitter. Some of the participants did not argue or rarely expressed their opinions. Some frequently argued about educational or political issues, followed by social or daily matters. I observed that some Saudi EFL participants argued only in Arabic while using English to perform other speech acts such as thanking, congratulating, praising, or complimenting. The analysis of the tweet corpus will be discussed in the next chapter.

This procedure helps in analyzing the politeness strategies that participants naturally employ when expressing their opinions and disagreements. I investigated what topics they interacted with, and which provoked different strategies in performing their disagreements. After noticing the type of the participants' interactions on Twitter, I created a thread of tweets in order to evoke the participants' disagreements by posting various topics that tackle different social, educational, gender, identity, and cultural issues, for example, "Exams are not the ideal criteria for testing students' knowledge, Salary is the most crucial aspect of a job, Men and women can do all jobs equally well, Machines have become superior to humans in many functions".

Then, the investigation of how the participants used disagreement strategies and the most controversial issues that provoked aggravated disagreements was carried out. Miller (2000, p. 1098) proposes that disagreements become serious when they challenge the personal or professional identity, value system, beliefs, or worth of those involved in the conversation. In addition, Locher (2004, p. 100) argues that examining how individuals express disagreement through various strategies such as hedging, repetition, questioning objections, emotional reasoning, and shifting responsibility can provide insight into their unique styles of disagreement.
3.2.2. Observation of the Thread of Tweets

I created a thread on Twitter to have a more controlled experiment, relying on my observation that Saudi/American EFL/ESL teachers would express their disagreements more naturally and freely since there are few consequences (unlike in a school environment). All participants were informed of the nature of my study. I conducted this method to further examine Saudi/American EFL/ESL teachers by establishing various controversial topics (such as, *Universities should admit students partly on the basis of race*) that assist in provoking their disagreements. I confirm that teachers represent themselves when they perform disagreements and do not represent any institution. For this reason, I chose Twitter to enable Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers to express their disagreements informally without restrictions and outside their official jobs.

I observed their interactions for two months by adding two controversial topics each week to guarantee their continuous participation by expressing their disagreements on various issues. In total, 16 controversial topics (see appendix A) were posted in the thread of tweets concerning social Saudi and American topics, teaching-related issues, social and cultural issues, and universal matters (see appendix A). The current study examines the role of cultural background, gender, identity, personality, educational and occupational experience, and personality affect their expressions of disagreement.

The participants could reply to my initiated tweet or each other's tweets in the thread by adding the hashtag #ExpressYourOpinion.

In the first week of the study, I posted two controversial topics regarding teaching-related issues to investigate if the participants' knowledge and teaching experience or their beliefs and attitudes toward teaching methods affect their way of expressing disagreements. These topics
posted with hashtags #ExpressYourOpinion #Tesol #EFL #ELT #ESL #TESOLers #Englishlanguage #TESL #TEFL #AmericanTESOL #SaudiTESOL are:

1- Teaching grammar is more important than teaching conversation skills.

2- Extracurricular activities are a waste of time for teachers and students.

In the second week, I posted two controversial topics regarding the assessment methods to examine if the participants’ nature of jobs, beliefs, and experiences affect their disagreements:

1- Exams are not the ideal criteria for testing students' knowledge.

2- A high IELTS/TOEFL exam score does not guarantee English language fluency.

In the third week, I posted two universal controversial matters to investigate if the different cultural backgrounds affect Saudi and American EFL/ESL teachers in performing their disagreements:

1- Salary is the most crucial aspect of a job.

2- Men and women can do all jobs equally well.

In the fourth week, I posted two argumentative topics that tackle educational matters to examine if the teachers' experience, beliefs, qualification, or culture affect their employment of disagreement.

1- The education system is not updated to accommodate current job demands.

2- The human world is progressing very quickly, but education is not keeping pace with this progress.

In the fifth week, I added two debatable issues, one concerned with trending and recent controversial issues, and the second a common cultural issue in American culture, to investigate the role of cultural background, attitudes, and beliefs expressing disagreements:

1- New social-media celebrities deserve their fame.
2- Cancel culture results in bullying or censorship that is usually worse than the original offense.

I clarified the concept of 'cancel culture' by replying to the main tweet in the thread with this explanation: "'Cancel culture' is popular in American society to remove the fame or esteem from a public figure or company based on offensive behavior."

In the sixth week, I posted two controversial topics about technology development and gender differences to examine the role of identity, gender, belief, or personality in their use of disagreements:

1- Machines have become superior to humans in many functions.
2- Females are better students than males.

In the seventh week, I posted two personal and argumentative topics to examine the role of race, beliefs, culture, education, mentality, or personality in expressing disagreements:

1- Universities should admit students partly on the basis of race.
2- Men and women should get married before they turn thirty.

In the eighth and last week, I posted two psychological and mental illness issues that frequently debate with approval and disapproval opinions around the world to examine the role of culture, tradition, mentality, personality, or beliefs in employing disagreements:

1- Visiting a psychiatrist is more harmful than positive.
2- Depression is a mental illusion rather than an actual disease.

After the discussions of the participants in the thread of tweets were completed, a questionnaire was distributed to Saudi EFL teachers (the experimental group) to investigate the factors influencing Saudi EFL teachers' use of politeness strategies in expressing disagreements.
3.2.3 Questionnaire

An open-ended questionnaire is a powerful tool for gathering qualitative data in sociolinguistics and human studies. It provides detailed, personalized answers from respondents that can offer valuable insight into their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Cialdini (2007) supports the importance of conducting questionnaires in research, demonstrating that they are an effective and reliable way to measure attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Questionnaires are crucial in linguistics research, especially in obtaining information about language use in various contexts (Biber, 1991; Schmitt, 2004). Numerous researchers highlight the significance of open-ended questionnaires in examining language use, participants' attitudes (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Gee, 2004), and language use in educational contexts (McDonough & McDonough, 1997). In addition, the open-ended survey can provide valuable insights into how people think and feel about language use and can help to uncover underlying motivations and attitudes that may not be revealed through other methods (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Gee, 2004). This study conducted an open-ended survey to examine the disagreement strategies employed by Saudi EFL teachers on Twitter. It also investigated how their teaching background, academic credentials, English language proficiency, age, gender, place of study, and the textbooks' pragmatic knowledge affect their disagreement performance.

The questionnaire examines the role following factors that affect the participants' employment of disagreements: the types of the participants' interactions on Twitter, how they usually interact with the impolite tweet or replies to their tweets, their teaching experience, academic qualifications, English proficiency levels, age, gender, place of study, and the pragmatic knowledge from textbooks. The questionnaire contains two sections: Section A: Demographic Background, and Section B: Open-ended Questions.
I designed Section A and adapted some of Section B of the questionnaire (see Appendix A) from Mishaud (2007), as adapted by Maros and Rosly (2017, pp. 147-148), with modifying and adding some questions to further address my study questions. This questionnaire is formatted and completed on Google Forms. I considered an online format where the participants could type in their answers, and they provided their answers in the English language. By performing this procedure, the following question is examined: RQ 2. What factors influence Saudi EFL teachers’ use of politeness strategies in expressing disagreements?

When I received the answers to the questionnaire from all the participants, I scheduled a Zoom meeting with each participant at their convenient times. I conducted these interviews to examine the factors that may affect their expression of disagreements in English.

3.2.4. Interviews

In qualitative research, an interview provides thorough knowledge of a particular culture or linguistic phenomenon. Gillham (2010) demonstrates that interviews are an essential data source in qualitative research. They allow researchers to deeply explore participants' perspectives and experiences, thereby gaining a comprehensive understanding of their opinions and views on a specific subject. Moreover, interviews can offer invaluable knowledge about how people interact with each other in various contexts (Patton, 2002). According to Talmy and Richards (2011, p. 1), interviews have been widely used in applied linguistics as a successful approach to investigating a wide range of phenomena. Also, interviews are essential to gain insights into how people use social media platforms, e.g., Twitter, to interact with others and express themselves through language.

A thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative interview data of the current study. Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis as "a method for identifying, analyzing and
reporting patterns (themes) within data" (p. 79). It is an interpretive approach that aims to find patterns of meaning in data derived from the language used by participants in the study. Thus, once all the interviews were obtained and completed, the qualitative interview data was organized, and a coding system was developed. Coding data involves assigning labels to each section of data in order to organize it. This procedure is essential in identifying themes in the data. This process involves breaking down the text into smaller units, such as words, phrases, or sentences, and assigning a code to each unit. Coding qualitative data can determine patterns and relationships between different text pieces and find themes and meanings that take time to be apparent (Saldaña, 2016). The interview data were coded using a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software called NVivo, which helps identify patterns and relationships in the data that would otherwise be difficult to detect.

The 10 Saudi EFL teachers (5 males and 5 females) were interviewed after sharing their expressions of disagreement on Twitter. I scheduled Zoom meetings with them individually at their convenient times. This procedure addresses the following questions: RQ1.2 What is the perlocutionary effect of tweets on Saudi EFL teachers? RQ 2. What factors influence Saudi EFL teachers’ use of politeness strategies in expressing disagreements?

During the interview, Saudi EFL teachers were asked questions (see Appendix C) to examine the effect of the first language and culture, the role of the direct interaction with the native speakers of the target language in expressing their disagreements, the perlocutionary effect of the tweets on them, the pragmatic knowledge, teaching experiences, personality, and the nature of online platform in employing disagreements in the target language.
The meetings ranged from 15 minutes to around one hour, depending on how long each participant responded. The interviews were recorded for the academic purpose of this study. The analysis of these meetings will be provided in the next chapter.

3.3. Data Collection and Procedure

After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I started searching for participants for my study. Choosing sufficient and eligible participants for the current study follows different procedures. Firstly, I chose the participants of this study manually after viewing their accounts and observing their types of interactions on Twitter. I selected the participants according to their Twitter bio/status (biography) if they mentioned that they work in the field of English teaching, e.g., TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) or TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language). Then, I sent a direct message to them on Twitter that contained a recruitment letter that explained their role in the study. Finding Saudi EFL teachers was more accessible since hundreds of them followed my Twitter account, allowing me to reach and contact them more effortlessly than Americans. They all have their Twitter accounts open, with more than 200 followers, and write all the essential information clearly in their Twitter status/bio (‘biography’). In their Twitter account bios, they mentioned their highest degrees earned and sometimes their research interests. For example, a Twitter user mentioned in his/her bio: "Ph.D. student @university, lecturer @university, and interested in pragmatics and CMC". After receiving a preliminary acceptance, I send them a consent form to their emails to be signed. After the participants signed the consent forms, they started to respond to the thread of tweets.

However, I struggled to find enough participants depending only on manual research. Therefore, I ran some Python codes using my Twitter API developer account to find more participants. In Python, I used Twitter-specific search words and hashtags such as #EFL, #ESL,
#TEFL, and #TESOL, specified the geographical place, e.g., SA or US, and chose the language of English. Some teachers refused to participate because they found it hard to be committed to participating in the same thread more than once; they preferred to have a survey or just a one-time response.

After finding sufficient participants, they were asked to sign the consent form and send it back via email to give their official permission to participate in this study. Twitter was mentioned for the participants to post and share their expressions of disagreement. I retrieved the participants' corpus of tweets to investigate the type of their interactions and how they regularly argued on Twitter. After pulling up around 2403 tweets and analyzing the participants' corpus of tweets by searching for any kind of arguments and disagreements, I initiated a thread of tweets to investigate the participants' disagreement strategies.

Observing the thread of tweets investigates the participants’ awareness of using politeness strategies in performing their disagreements on an informal and faceless platform like Twitter. It is worth mentioning that the participants have a right to use their official Twitter accounts or anonymous account to participate in this study. However, only one American female participant with around 21,000 followers preferred to use an anonymous account to participate. After choosing the appropriate and sufficient participants and getting their permission to participate was completed, they were required to respond to a thread of tweets (eight tweets, two controversial topics in each) over two months (the observation period). I controlled non-participants from participants in the Twitter thread since I already knew their accounts; only participants responded to all the tweets in the thread of tweets, and I rarely had replies from non-participants.

Then, I distributed the online questionnaire to Saudi EFL teachers. This procedure took around two weeks to receive all ten participants’ answers. When all the answers were received, I
scheduled Zoom meetings with Saudi EFL teachers at their convenience. The meetings took around two weeks to be completed. The meetings ranged from 15 minutes to around an hour depending on how long the answers that participant provided. Some tended to give short and direct answers, while others gave more elaboration and examples.

3.4. Analytical Procedures

Several different taxonomies are offered in the literature for examining disagreement strategies. Although much research has effectively employed these taxonomies, consulting only one taxonomy to analyze the disagreement strategies used on online platforms like Twitter is challenging. Miller (2000) believes that the taxonomies of disagreements provided by Brown and Levinson (1987) are inadequate in elucidating the expression of disagreements in her research. Miller argues that Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies are, to some extent, challenging for analysts to determine the specific tactics employed by speakers. As a result, I conducted interviews with the Saudi EFL teachers who had completed their participation in the tweet thread. This was done to gain a clearer understanding of their intended meaning when expressing disagreement (illocutionary force) and to prevent any misinterpretation of the data.

However, since my study examines the politeness strategies used in expressing disagreements, I adapted Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness strategies (see sections 1.2 & 2.2 in Chapters I & II). Brown and Levinson consider the speech act of disagreement as positive politeness in which an addressee should avoid disagreement to claim common ground with the speaker. Since Brown and Levinson suggest that disagreements should be avoided and mitigated and consider it positive politeness, I also consulted the taxonomies proposed by Miller (2000) (see section 2.4.1.1. in Chapter II) to examine disagreement strategies used by participants in online communication on Twitter. Moreover, I further refer to Locher and Watts's (2005) model
of Relational Work (see section 2.3 in chapter II) in examining the disagreement utterances. However, I refer to the classification of the communicative behavior after categorizing and analyzing the disagreement strategy depending on Brown and Levinson's model of politeness strategies and Miller's disagreement taxonomies.

The rationale for choosing Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory framework for analyzing the data of my study is that it is the most comprehensive model available for examining politeness strategies. However, although their work is foundational, many recent studies criticized their model and revisited the politeness strategies (e.g., Spencer-Oatey, 2000; Watts, 2003). According to Watts (2003), Brown and Levinson's theory focuses too much on face-saving and neglects other crucial aspects of politeness. Watts suggests that politeness can also involve strategies to build solidarity and establish relationships between interlocutors. Brown and Levinson's theory, on the other hand, tends to concentrate on politeness strategies that aim to avoid threatening the addressee's face.

Nevertheless, Brown and Levinson's work has significantly influenced the field of pragmatics, and their politeness theory has been extensively researched and debated over the past few decades. Their framework remains the most comprehensive approach for analyzing politeness strategies when expressing various speech acts, and it continues to be used in recent works in addressing politeness strategies in Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) (e.g., Harriri, 2017; Maros & Rosli, 2015). Additionally, I consulted Miller's (2000) disagreement taxonomies, which referred to different politeness strategies used to express disagreements rather than solely relying on Brown and Levinson's claim that positive politeness should be used to express disagreements to preserve the addressee's face. Finally, I referred to the relational work of Locher and Watts (2005) to consider the context in analyzing the disagreement expressions. After
reviewing the summary of disagreement taxonomies in the previous literature, the proposed rubric for analyzing the data of this study is provided in Table 6.
Table 6

A Proposed Rubric for Analyzing Disagreement Strategies on Twitter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FTA</th>
<th>Politeness strategies:</th>
<th>How the speaker expresses disagreement</th>
<th>Disagreement taxonomy</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Communicative behaviors in terms of (im)politeness/(in)appropriateness</th>
<th>Emojis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do the FTA</td>
<td>Bald on-record 1. Without redressive action, badly (Bald on record)</td>
<td>There is no attempt from speaker to minimize or soften his/her disagreement</td>
<td>Aggravated disagreements</td>
<td>(Rhetorical questions, intensifiers, personal accusatory you Judgmental vocabulary [verbal attack/verbal irony] such as (You are totally wrong)) no of course not I disagree, …, should ….</td>
<td>Impolite (non-politic/inappropriate, rude) (Negatively marked)</td>
<td>🙄ophobic, 🙄, 😞, 😞, 😞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagreement nor softened or strengthened</td>
<td></td>
<td>I disagree + explanation (we) (although) (so) Or disagree without providing explanation or (e.g., no)</td>
<td>Polite/appropriate (unmarked behavior)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | | | | |
|                          |                        |                                        |                       |                                                                         |                                          |                                |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do the FTA</th>
<th>On-record (With redressive action) [Positive politeness]</th>
<th>Speaker attempts to avoid and hide their disagreement</th>
<th>Softened disagreement</th>
<th>Polite (politic/appropriate) Positively marked behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- (Token agreement/ partial agreement)</td>
<td></td>
<td>non-politic impolite inappropriate (Negatively marked) (Almutairi, 2021)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-pseudo-agreement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-white lies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-inclusive 1st pronoun (we)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-positive comment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-hedging opinion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>such as (I really sort of think ...) to claim a common ground with the addressee)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-counter claim (giving elaboration for the opposite opinion)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Humor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Humor**

Polite (politic/appropriate) Positively marked behavior
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do the FTA</th>
<th>On-record (with redressive action) (Negative politeness)</th>
<th>When speaker tries to redress the negative face of the addressee by providing apologies and using impersonalizing mechanisms (such as passives) that distance S and H from the act”</th>
<th>Softened disagreement</th>
<th>Questions Apologies Conditional agreement <em>(if…)</em> <em>(depends)</em></th>
<th>Polite (politic/appropriate) Positively marked behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do not do the FTA</td>
<td>-Contradictory statement -verbal shadowing</td>
<td>Disagreement nor softened or strengthened</td>
<td>-Contradictory statement counter claim (giving elaboration for the opposite opinion)</td>
<td>Polite/appropriate (unmarked behavior)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do FTA</td>
<td>Off-record</td>
<td>S avoids offending H at all with FTA … S also fails to achieve his desired communication”(Brown &amp; Levinson, p. 72)</td>
<td>Avoid disagreement</td>
<td>Hints Metaphors Understatements tautologies</td>
<td>Unmarked</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5. Summary

This chapter outlined the methodology used to answer this study's research questions. Two instruments; were employed, collecting the corpus of tweets and observing the thread of tweets of both Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers to address the first main question and the third question:

RQ 1. What are the politeness strategies used in performing disagreements on Twitter by Saudi EFL teachers?

RQ 3. What are the different politeness strategies used in expressing disagreements by Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers?

Moreover, the other two instruments (the questionnaire and interviews) were administered to Saudi EFL teachers to answer all the parts of the first question and second questions:

RQ 1. What are the politeness strategies used in performing disagreements on Twitter by Saudi EFL teachers?

RQ 1.1 How do Saudi EFL teachers apply (FTA) in performing disagreement?

RQ 1.2 What is the perlocutionary effect of tweets on Saudi EFL teachers?

RQ 2. What factors influence Saudi EFL teachers' use of politeness strategies in expressing disagreements?

The summary of the methodology is given in Table 7 below. The analysis of the data gathered to address the research questions will be presented in Chapter IV. The findings of my data collection and recommendations for further study will be provided in Chapter V.
Table 7

Summary of Methodology and Procedure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Time Spent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corpus of tweets</td>
<td>10 Saudi EFL teachers (5 males/ 5 females as the experimental group) and 10 American ESL teachers (the control group).</td>
<td>I created a developer account of academic research project and retrieved the participants’ tweets by conducted Twitter API in Python. After pulling up the participants’ tweets, I manually select the tweets that contain any type of arguments.</td>
<td>Two months (around two weeks to receive an acceptance from Twitter API). (Around three weeks to install Python and its packages, import Twitter API packages in Python, and create codes to retrieve required tweets by searching queries of participants’ usernames and the numbers of required tweets). (Around 3 to 4 weeks to pull up the participants’ corpus of tweets (The total of around 2403 tweets were retrieved).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thread of tweets</td>
<td>10 Saudi EFL teachers (5 males/ 5 females as the experimental group) and 10 American ESL teachers (the control group).</td>
<td>I created a thread of tweets with using hashtag #ExpressYourOpinion, then I posted two controversial topics every week for two months. The total of 8 tweets which contain 16 various controversial issues.</td>
<td>Two months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Saudi EFL teachers</td>
<td>I developed a questionnaire and adapted some parts of the section B from</td>
<td>One week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Saudi EFL teachers</td>
<td>I scheduled a Zoom meeting with the participants at their convenient times. The interviews were recorded to be referenced later.</td>
<td>Two weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS FROM DATA ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the disagreement strategies used by each participant in both the thread of tweets and the corpus of tweets are analyzed separately, and then the politeness strategies will be classified according to the types of disagreement performances used by participants. Firstly, the analysis of the natural use of Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers retrieved from their corpus of tweets will be interpreted with examples. Next, the observation of participants' replies to the thread of tweets over two months will be analyzed and interpreted with examples. The analysis will be based on the rubric of analyzing disagreement strategies on Twitter that was outlined in Chapter III. This rubric is inspired by Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies, Miller's (2000) disagreement taxonomies, and Locher and Watts' (2005) communicative behavior.

Firstly, the corpus of tweets from Saudi and American participants is analyzed to provide examples of their disagreement strategies and to compare their utterances (see sections 4.5.1.2 & 4.5.1.3). The exact process will be done for their disagreement implementations in the thread of tweets (see sections 4.5.2.1 & 4.5.2.2). Then, the open-ended questionnaires (see section 4.5.3) and interviews (see section 4.5.4) with Saudi EFL teachers will be analyzed. The findings from these four procedures and how they relate to previous studies will be discussed in Chapter V (Results and Discussion).
The data (particularly the interview data) were initially transcribed to be analyzed. All the interviews were conducted in English. The questionnaire was written in English, and the received answers were written in English as well. Some tweets in the Saudi participants' corpus were written in Arabic. Consequently, I translated those tweets, which were written in Arabic, into English. For each procedure, the retrieved corpus of tweets and the observation of the thread of tweets, the types, and the number of disagreement strategies will be identified for Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers independently, considering those disagreement strategies that have been observed in previous studies as well as any new strategies found in this study. After this, the frequencies of these utterances and their interpretations with examples will be discussed. Finally, the two groups' use of disagreement strategies will be compared and discussed in Chapter V.

Analyzing the politeness strategies employed by the participants is challenging since Brown and Levinson (1987) believe that "the fact that strategies may be shuffled from off record 'down' (in terms of face redress) into positive or negative politeness, while not necessarily creating problems for the interactants, may be problematical for the analyst" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 20). In this matter, Miller (2000) assumes that it is hard to analyze the type of strategy to be on-record or off-record. She claimed that a discussion's context and mutual understanding determine whether a strategy is to be direct or indirect when the interlocutors employ a specific linguistic form. For this reason, it is problematic to analyze the disagreement expressions since they might appear to be off-record for an analyst while it is on record for the interlocutors. Moreover, Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that there is an overlap in their classification of FTAs (Face-Threatening Acts) "because some FTAs intrinsically threaten both negative and positive faces. (e.g., complaints, interruptions, threats, strong expressions of emotion, requests for personal information)" (p. 67). In addition, some researchers criticize Brown and Levinson's model (e.g.,
Harris 1984) by claiming that the politeness strategies "can be mixed in discourse, for example, positive politeness markers within negative politeness strategies like indirect requests or off-record positive politeness." (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 17). Accordingly, the analysis of the participants' disagreement strategies will be provided according to the type of interactions and how the researcher perceives those utterances based on the proposed rubric based on different studies and from different scholars' perspectives, as mentioned above. The disagreement strategies were analyzed qualitatively, supported by descriptive statistics. In the next section, the analysis of the corpus of tweets is provided.

4.1. The Analysis of the Corpus of Tweets

Overall, two common disagreement strategies employed by both Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers were found in the corpus of tweets: act combination and making a personal stance (Locher, 2004; Shum & Lee, 2013). In the corpus of tweets, one common disagreement strategy is employed by the two groups: verbal attacks (Almutairi, 2021; Harb, 2020). However, the disagreement strategies found in the Saudi EFL teachers’ corpus of tweets are raising rhetorical questions (Locher, 2004; Miller, 2000; Shum & Lee, 2013), complaints, giving suggestions (Harb, 2020), challenge (Bavarsad, Eslami-Rasekh & Simin, 2015; Harb, 2020; Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998), raising questions (Miller, 2000), and exclamation (Almutairi, 2021; Harb, 2020). On the other hand, the following types of tweets revealed in the corpus of tweets of American ESL teachers: judgmental vocabulary (Miller, 2000), expressing anger, exaggeration, and verbal irony (Almutairi, 2021; Harb, 2020; Locher, 2004; Shum & Lee, 2013).

As seen above, most strategies have been explored in previous studies of disagreements. However, the analysis of the corpus of tweets revealed three new types of disagreement strategies used by Saudi EFL teachers (complaints) and American ESL teachers (expressing anger and
exaggeration). All the definitions of the disagreement strategies are explained and clarified in Chapter II in (section 2.1.7). The examples of the disagreement strategies performed by Saudi EFL teachers are given in the following section.

### 4.1.1. Saudi EFL Teachers’ Disagreement Strategies in the Corpus of Tweets.

In the corpus of tweets, the Saudi EFL teachers used nine different ways to express disagreement. The disagreement strategies Saudi EFL teachers employed in the corpus of tweets are summarized in Figure 12.
In the corpus of tweets of Saudi EFL teachers, there are 12 disagreement strategies: act combinations, verbal attacks, compliments, raising rhetorical questions, exclamations, challenges, raising questions, giving suggestions, hedging opinions, token agreements, and counterclaims. 'Act combination' means two or more disagreement performances are used in one utterance. Al Mutairi
(2021) refers to act combination strategy as "the use of two or more of the disagreement strategies" (p. 24). In the corpus of Saudi participants' tweets, the act combination included 11 disagreement strategies, as shown in Table 8.

**Table 8**

*The Strategies of Act Combinations in the Corpus of Saudi EFL Tweets*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) asking a question, verbal irony, and supplication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2) objection, judgmental vocabulary, and exclamation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) challenge, using the personal accusatory 'you' and supplication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) verbal attack, supplication, and scolding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) supplication, verbal attack, and judgmental vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) giving questions, personal accusatory 'you' and challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) expressing disappointment and judgmental vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) rhetorical questions, personal accusatory 'you,' verbal attack, scolding, and supplication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) supplication, using the personal accusatory 'you', protest, and judgmental vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) protest and providing inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) protest, verbal attack, and supplication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The act combination strategy was used in 12 utterances, while the verbal attack was used in two. The remaining strategies (raising theoretical questions, exclamation, complaint, giving suggestions, challenge, raising questions, exclamation, hedging opinion, and token agreement) were each employed once by different participants, which suggests that the Saudi participants often combined two or more strategies when expressing their disagreements. The frequency of
disagreement strategies in the corpus of tweets produced by Saudi EFL participants is depicted in Figure 13.

**Figure 13**

*Frequency of Disagreement Strategies in Saudi EFL Teachers’ Corpus of Tweets*

![Frequency of disagreement strategies in Saudi EFL teachers' corpus of tweets](chart)

Saudi EFL teachers employed aggravated disagreements (the on-record strategy) (see section 2.2.1.1 in chapter II) in 14 utterances: act combinations (see examples 1-7), verbal attacks (see example 8), and challenges. They employed disagreement neither softened nor strengthened (the off-record strategy) in four utterances, e.g., act combinations (see example 13). In addition, mitigated disagreements (a negative politeness strategy) occurred in three performances, e.g., raising a rhetorical question, giving suggestions, and raising a question. The least-found strategy is mitigated disagreements (positive politeness), which occurred only in two instances, e.g., partial agreement and hedging opinion (see example 12). The disagreement taxonomies found in the corpus of tweets of Saudi EFL teachers are provided in figure 14. The frequencies and percentages
of politeness strategies employed by Saudi EFL teachers in the corpus of tweets are given in figure 15.

**Figure 14**

*Politeness Strategies Employed by Saudi EFL Teachers in Expressing their Disagreement in the Corpus of Tweets.*
4.1.1.1 Examples of Disagreement Strategies (the Corpus of Tweets of Saudi EFL Teachers)

Examples of the disagreement strategies will be provided under each disagreement category with the interpretation and classification of the politeness strategy. The communicative behavior (i.e., polite/impolite, politic/non-politic, etc.) will be perceived by the researcher according to the type of discursive challenge. The examples of disagreement strategies will be
firstly provided, followed by the mitigated disagreement (positive/negative politeness), and finally, the disagreement neither softened nor strengthened will be given. Pseudonyms letters will be used to refer to the participants of the study for the purpose of maintaining the privacy of the participants (e.g., SA participant) and AM participant P).

4.1.1.1.1. Aggravated Disagreements (Bald On-Record Without Redressive Action)

In this study, by following the previous studies (Almutairi, 2021; Harb, 2020; Shum & Lee, 2013), any aggravated disagreement could be seen as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic and negatively marked communicative behavior (Locher & Watts, 2005). Furthermore, by producing aggravated disagreement (Miller, 2000), the FTA is implemented by conducting bald on-record without a redressive action strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

4.1.1.1.1 Act Combinations

This strategy is the most frequent strategy in the corpus of tweets of both Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers. They mostly employ two or more strategies when expressing their disagreements. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the speaker tends to use more than one strategy of politeness when the imposition of ranking is high to mitigate their utterance. However, employing the act combinations to soften the disagreement performances occurred only once in the participants’ corpus of tweets: by a female American ESL teacher. But it is not always the case: the participants mostly employed act combinations to aggravate their disagreements as evident in their corpus of tweets (see examples 1-7). Also, it can be unmitigated or strengthened once by a female Saudi EFL teacher. Examples of act combinations that performed by Saudi EFL teachers are given below.
4.1.1.1.1.1 Challenge, Using Personal Accusatory ‘you’ and Supplication

Example 1:

SA participant J, a Saudi female EFL teacher, provided argument to a tweet that was deleted by a creator:

- The original tweet was provided in Arabic:

وبعدين مالك علاقة مو من شأناك تطلع ولدها ولا تخبي حملها ، مين انتي أصلاً ولا تصور غرفتها+ انتي لو مكانها نفس الشيء حتسوين ، مو معناة هي مشهورة خلاص كل شيء لازم توريك، استغفر الله.

- The translation:

And then you have no right to tell her what she has to do; it is not your business to decide if she has to show her son on social media or not hide her pregnancy news; who are you if she wants to share photos of her room and put yourself in her situation, you will do the same thing. This does not mean that she is famous.

Everything needs to be shown to you. I seek my Lord’s forgiveness.

In this example, SA participant J produced aggravated disagreement by using a personal accusatory pronoun ‘you’ to claim that the addressee has no right to flout the privacy of one social media influencer. Then, she provided a challenge by saying that "who are you" and ended her disagreement utterance with supplication "I seek my Lord’s forgiveness". Therefore, participant (J) employed FTA by using a bald on-record without redressive action strategy. This aggravated disagreement might be considered as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic and negatively communicative behavior.
4.1.1.1.1.2 Verbal Attacks, Supplication, and Scolding

Example 2:
SA participant J replied in Arabic to a tweet that has been deleted by a creator to again provide aggravated disagreement to defend the private life of social media influencers.

- The original tweet provided in Arabic:

اعوذ بالله منك ومن أشكالك الحقودة والحسوده خلي البنت في حالها أخذت من فلوسك والا ايش ، بدال ما تدعين ربى في الرزق قاعدته تسببت فيها مو ذنبيا ان ربى جعل لها رزق ومشهورة ع الأقل عايشه حياتها ماضرت احد ، لكن انتي خلي خلق ربى يسلمون من لسانك و هي عندها رب يحاسبها مو مستنديك تقييمينها

- The translation:

*I seek God to protect us from your envy and spitefulness. Leave the girl alone. Does she take your money or what, instead of asking God for a good life, you insult her; it is not her fault if God made her rich and famous; at least she lives her life and does not harm anyone. But you must keep the humans out of your bad words, she has God, who is responsible for her actions, and you do not have right to evaluate her.*

SA participant J initiated her disagreement by providing supplication, which includes offensive language against the addressee, e.g., *"I seek God to protect us from your envy and spitefulness"*, then produced verbal attack to express her aggravated disagreement, e.g., *"your envy and spitefulness", "you insult her", "you do not have right to evaluate her"*. Participant J also reprimanded the addressee by uttering, *"you must keep the humans out of your bad words"*. Thus, the participant employed a bald on-record without a redressive action strategy. The type of
disagreement is aggravated, which can be perceived as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic, and negatively marked communicative behavior.

4.1.1.1.3 Rhetorical Questions, Personal Accusatory you, Verbal Attack, Scolding and Supplication

Example 3:

SA participant S, a Saudi female EFL teacher in Saudi elementary school, interacted with a post that included a slightly smiling face 😊 and an image of anonymous message that she had received to take her followers opinions toward it:

- The original tweet was provided in Arabic:

My daughter is a one-year-old age, and I felt that I hated her from the first moment I gave birth to her. I like to beat and torture her, which makes me feel satisfied when I see her cry. It is not jealousy, I swear, but my heart has no mercy for her even though she is my first child. Do not judge/insult me; this is out of my hand.

SA participant S replied: (The original tweet was written in Arabic):

تكرهينها؟ لو احد أكبر وأقوى منك وتكرهينه تقدرين تضربينه وتعذبينه!! طبعا لا ..هذا مو كره هذا مرض قاعده تستترون بالضحكة روحي تعالجي حد والبنت ماتفهم اذا كبرت بتسببين لها عقده .. اللهم لافيسي قلوبنا

The translation of the image’s content:

My daughter is a one-year-old age, and I felt that I hated her from the first moment I gave birth to her. I like to beat and torture her, which makes me feel satisfied when I see her cry. It is not jealousy, I swear, but my heart has no mercy for her even though she is my first child. Do not judge/insult me; this is out of my hand.
Do you hate her? If someone is bigger and stronger than you and you hate him, you can beat and torture him!! Of course, no... This is not hatred... This is a disease. You show off your strength on this weak person. You should get mental therapy as the girl is still unaware of your behaviors, and if she grows up, you make her life complicated... I ask God not to let us become heartless.

SA participant S started her disagreement by raising a rhetorical question "do you hate her?" followed by using personal accusatory ‘you’ e.g., "You show off your strength on this weak person”, verbal attack ”this is a disease”, scolding "You should get mental therapy”. In Arabic-speaking societies, Harb (2016) describes the strategy of mild scolding as a non-rude political strategy in disagreements while in this example the use of scolding reflects aggravated disagreement and can be seen as non-politic behavior. However, Harb argues that more significant breaches would require greater scolding, which may be accompanied by aggravators or taboo language to emphasize the disagreement utterance. An example of mild scolding in Arabic-speaking societies is when an older speaker (e.g., parents) explicitly uses the word عيب/ʕajb/ ‘shame’ to a younger speaker (e.g., children) (Harb, 2016, p. 187). In addition, SA participant S ended her utterance with supplication which include judgmental and criticism of the act of the addressee, e.g., "I ask God not to let us become heartless".

The kind of disagreement here is aggravated, and the face threatening act (FTA) was implemented by a strategy of bald on-record without redressive. It can be seen as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic and negatively marked behavior.
4.1.1.1.1.4 Supplication, Verbal Attack, and Judgmental Vocabulary

Example 4:

SA participant S replied in Arabic to a tweet that has been deleted by a creator:

الله يأخذه حسبي الله صوتهما مو قاعد بروجه من اذني شيء يوجع والله وصلنا للزمن هذا ولست في ناس تتعامل
بهجميه ومافي أحد يوقفها

@....
ذنبها ف رقيكم مافي أحد يقدر يساعدها بعد الله غيركم

- The translation of participant S’s reply:

*May Allah takes away his soul; God is sufficient for me; I cannot take his voice off my ear. I swear it is upsetting that we have reached this point in time and, and still, there are people acting wildly, and nobody stopping them.*

*You are guilty and will carry this sin with you for the rest of your life; no one other than you can assist her after God.*

The SA participant expressed her aggravated disagreement, making supplications that included bad wishes, e.g., "May Allah takes away his soul", and attacking the other person with judgmental words, e.g., "it is upsetting", and "there are people acting wildly". Then, she oriented her anger on a famous Saudi journalist by mentioning his Twitter account in the same tweet and produced verbal attack and judgmental vocabulary if they did not react to that abusive situation as

\[1\text{ Participant (S) mentioned account of a popular journalist to seek his assistance in the issue that she has been argued and accuse them as guilty if they do not provide help.}\]
she believed "you are guilty and will carry this sin with you for the rest of your life". She did not attempt to utilize any redressive action strategies and directly expressed her disagreement. Her identity as a mother and her personality made her strongly express disapproval regarding social affairs, including the mistreatment of children by their parents.

4.1.1.1.1.5 Expressing Disappointment and Judgmental Vocabulary

The act combinations of 'expressing disappointment and providing judgmental vocabulary' implemented by two Saudi EFL teachers, one female, SA participant S and one male, SA participant B, a Saudi EFL teacher at a Saudi elementary public school. In both disagreement utterances, the participants criticized and blamed governmental institutions, as shown in the following examples.

Example 5:

The main tweet was provided in Arabic by an official Twitter account of governmental institution of female driving school at Jeddah, a city in the Hejaz region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA):

عزيزاتي المتدربات
تم تحديث المنصة، وتتم اتاحة المواعيد والسداد
نتمنى لكم التوفيق
#مدرسة_جدة_المتطورة_لتعليم_قيادة #jeddahds

- The translation of the preceding tweet:

Dear trainees, the platform has been updated, and appointments and payment methods have been made available. We wish you luck ♥

#Jeddah_Advanced_Driving_School #jeddahds

- SA participant S replied:
The translation of SA participant S’s reply:

*Unfortunately, this is the first time I have witnessed a governmental organization lacking honesty and accuracy. Whenever I contacted you, I always got the same answer, ‘open the website every other day and check for available appointments!!’

Sadly, you do not offer appointments for the driving level test. I waited more than a year, and most people faced the same issue. I hope there will be a simple method for making appointments.*

SA participant S expressed her disappointment at the beginning of her disagreement utterance, e.g., "unfortunately" and "sadly". Also, she provided different judgmental vocabularies to show her strong disagreement with their policy, e.g., "this is the first time I have witnessed a governmental organization lacking honesty and accuracy", followed by explaining how they reacted to her inquiries. The FTA implemented with a bald on-record without a redressive action strategy. The participant's aggravated disagreement might be seen as impolite, non-politic/inappropriate, and negatively marked communicative behavior.

**Example 6:**

SA participant B, a Saudi EFL male teacher, initiated a tweet to express his disappointment on what happened in his city and mentioned the problem to two governmental institutions to judge them for not paying attention to unfixed billboards found in all streets of two towns in the region where he lives. He included a picture of that billboard and inserted it in the same post, as it appeared below.
The original tweet provided in Arabic:

مع الاسف هذه اللوحة والاعلان في كل شوارع أبها والخميس ولم يلتفت لها أحد لتعديلها.

The translation of SA participant B’s tweet:

Unfortunately, this billboard contains an advertisement on all streets of Abha and Khamis Mushait, and no one cares to fix it

SA participant B implemented the FTA using a bald on-record without a redressive action strategy. He used an unmitigated disagreement strategy which might be perceived as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic, and negatively marked behavior. He started his disagreement with what he had seen in his city by expressing disappointment "unfortunately" and ended his utterance by producing a judgmental vocabulary, "no one cares". He directly criticized the governmental issues without redressing his disagreement. It can be concluded that his concern for the image of his hometown led him to produce unmitigated disagreement.

4.1.1.1.1.6 Objection, Judgmental Vocabulary, and Exclamation

Example 7:

- The original tweet that SA participant D, a female EFL instructor at a Saudi university, replied to:

تعمل مع مديرها عشر سنوات لم تختلف معه، واختلفت مع زوجها في أول سنة زواج. لماذا برأيك؟

- The translation of the original tweet:
She has been working with her manager for ten years, and she did not argue with him, but she disputed with her husband in the first year of marriage. From your perspective, why did this occur?

- SA participant D provided her replies in two tweets in Arabic:

١ - المقارنة هذي منتشرة للأسف إنه النساء تتحمل من مديرها الي ما تتحمله من زوجها مقارنة مغلولة ومافي مجال للمقارنة بين العلاقتين، المدير لو كان فيه كل العبر ما راح أتحمله أكثر من ٨ ساعات وتحمل اللين أลาقي فرصة عمل أفضل ولو استثمرت وقتي مع مدير سيء خسارتي معوضه.

٢ - لكن الزوج سند ومودة ورحمة واستثماري معاه في حياة وأولاد والمعاملة السيئه من القريب مو زي الغريب.. القريب بينكم عشم وميثاق غليظ لكن الغريب يظل غريب.. مقارنة عجيبة!!!

- The translation of SA participant D’ s two tweets:

１- Unfortunately, it is a common belief that women are more tolerant of their bosses than their spouses. This is a wrong comparison, and there is no way to compare these two different relationships. If the manager had all bad behaviors, I would tolerate it for a maximum of 8 hours and be patient until I find a chance for a better job, and if I invested my time with a bad manager, my loss would be compensated.

２- However, marriage is a relationship where you may find peace, love, support, and investment in children’s life. Also, the bad manners of a relative are not the same of a stranger. You have a firm pledge with a relative, while a stranger remains a stranger. Odd comparison!!!
SA participant D strongly disagreed with the preceded utterance by judging his opinion about how women act differently with their boss at work and with their husband at home, e.g., "This is a wrong comparison". She further totally objected to that view by uttering, "there is no way to compare these two different relationships". Then, participant D explained how these two relations are totally different in the two tweets. She ended her disagreement by providing an exclamation, e.g., "Odd comparison!!!" to assert her oppositional stance. Thus, in this example, the participant D implemented the FTA with bald on-record without redressive action that might be considered impolite, inappropriate/non-politic, and negatively marked behavior. It might be argued that the gender and the identity of participant D as a woman and wife affect her disagreement performance to appear unmitigated.

- SA participant D’s replies received one reply from one of her followers that supported her view:

  Soooo True ☺ well said ...

4.1.1.1.2 Verbal Attack

In this strategy, speakers attack the addresses’ faces without attempting to mitigate or soften the disagreement. Almutairi identifies that speakers use hostile and offensive language to express disagreement in this strategy. Thus, the disagreement is aggravated and could be perceived as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic, and negatively marked behavior. The examples of verbal attacks found in the Saudi EFL teachers’ corpus of tweets are provided below.

Example 8:

- The original tweet of (a preceding utterance) that prompted SA participant D’s disagreement was posted in Arabic and included a video:

كيف تؤثر على الآخرين ب #الوهم
The translation of the original tweet:

How do you affect others by #illusion

Build me a palace of illusion

Where I live for just moments

and return to my table

with nothing but merely words

SA participant D replied in Arabic:

أحلام الناس ما هي الا أدوات لتُجّار #الوهم و #الطاقة و #الحدس

نصب واحتيال ودجل ومكاسب هائلة وانتشار مخيف...

The translation:

"And the poor man dreams of being rich, the weak man dreams of being strong,

and he who fears the future, his dream to know it...."

People's dreams are nothing but tools in the hands of traders of #illusion

#energetics #intuition. Fraud, cheating, massive gains, and frightening spread...

SA participant D produced verbal attacks publicly to express her disagreement with people who believe in energetics and accused them as "traders of #illusion" which she thinks they are playing in people's minds by providing programs courses on energetics and taking money from people for paying merely an illusion in return. Additionally, accusing them of "cheating", which
is a "frightening spread", and they merely exploit people's dreams to be "tools in their hands".

Participant D implemented the FTA with bald on-record without redressive action strategy. Consequently, the disagreement is classified as aggravated and could be perceived as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic, and negatively marked behavior. SA participant D's beliefs and attitudes play a prominent role in expressing her unmitigated disagreement on public platforms like Twitter in addressing the issues of energetics and manipulating people's minds.

Example 9:

SA participant A, a Saudi female EFL instructor who teach English for specific purposes in a preparatory year at Saudi university, initiated this tweet to provide her disagreement in English toward how people interacted in the Twitter spaces, audio chat rooms where people can interact with each other:

_Talkative people on Twitter spaces 😝 I hope I don’t quit Twitter too soon._

Participant A, a female Saudi EFL teacher, posted a tweet to express her disapproval of what she observed on Twitter spaces by explicitly attacking their faces by calling them "talkative people" with a face vomiting emoji "🤮" to indicate her disgust toward them, and she wished that she wouldn’t "quit Twitter too soon" because of their actions. Later in the interview, SA participant A mentioned that she usually joins those Twitter spaces, especially the arranged debate, to interact with different people on different issues as she said in the following extract:

"This is what I have noticed in Twitter spaces, to be honest, this is what I mostly engaged."

However, she expressed that Arab people in those Twitter spaces tend to force their opinions on others, do not accept or respect others' points of view, and take those subjectively. Obviously, Participant A employed the FTA with a bald on-record without redressive action. The
type of disagreement is aggravated, which can be perceived impolite, inappropriate/non-politic and negatively marked behavior.

4.1.1.1.2 Mitigated Disagreement (Negative Politeness)

Mitigated disagreement is a form in which the speakers employ mitigators to soften their disagreements. Examples of mitigators as Brown and Levinson propose in the positive politeness strategy in a super strategy ‘avoid disagreements’ such as, token disagreement, and hedging opinion. Moreover, other researchers present mitigators as negative politeness strategies such as conditional statement, providing question and giving suggestions (Almutairi, 2021; Harb, 2020; Miller, 2000). The mitigated disagreement is likely perceived as polite, appropriate/politic and positively communicative behavior.

4.1.1.1.2.1. Raising Rhetorical Questions

Shum and Lee (2015) describe this strategy as expressing disagreement in a form of a question such as a "negative tag question" or one utilizing a negative interrogative or another type of question. The question presents opposing viewpoints. For example: "You call that pretty...?" (Shum & Lee, 2015, p. 60). This utterance produced by a female Saudi EFL teacher, participant D, as shown in the following example:

Example 10:

- The original tweet (posted with a photo)

*From the movie #TENET*
"We live in a twilight world ... 
And there are no friends at dusk."

Ambiguous. Open to interpretation.

SA participant D provided her opinion in English:

But in this case, can we call them "friends"? Maybe the "dusk" only showed their true colors...

SA participant D raised a rhetorical question to indicate her opposite opinion and provide a suggestion that explains her view that dusk may show the actual color of the friends. In this utterance, the participant employed a negative politeness strategy by raising a rhetorical question instead of uttering explicit disagreement. She attempted to lessen the threat on her and the addressee’s negative faces since she started her disagreement by providing alternative opinions and suggestions to give the addressee an option of interpretation. Accordingly, the mitigated disagreement was employed in this disagreement act which can be perceived as polite, appropriate, and positively marked behavior.

4.1.1.2.2. Raising Questions

The interrogatives are used to mitigate the threat on the negative face of both interlocutors. The speaker responds with the question instead of expressing disagreement to save both interlocutors' faces.
Example 11:

SA participant K, a Saudi male professor of Applied linguistics in Saudi university, posted a tweet in which he provided questions and examples that indicated his criticism and disagreement on a common linguistic feature implemented in the menu at many Saudi Arabian restaurants. This linguistic feature uses Arabic letters to mimic the sound of the English word of the food instead of translating their meaning into Arabic, such as the word, "menu," as shown below in a picture he included in the tweet. On the other hand, in other instances, the Arabic word is more frequently used than English one, for example, the Arabic meaning of the English word ‘delivery’. He used Arabic hashtags التخطيط_اللغوي_

اللغويات_

 والذي means #linguistics and #linguistic_planning.

The original tweet was provided in Arabic:

ما الذي يجعل كلمات مثل (منيو) أكثر شيوعاً في الاستخدام من (قائمة الطعام/المشروبات)?

في المقابل، لماذا شاع استخدام عبارة(خدمة التوصيل) أكثر من (ديليفري)؟ والأمثلة كثيرة...

اللغوي_

اللغويات_

- The translation:

What makes words like /ˈmenjuː/ (منيو) more commonly used than (Arabic words /Qaːmaːt al taaˈm, almsfrobat)?
On the other hand, why is the 'Arabic' term /Khāḍmat al-tawṣee{l/ more frequently used than "Delivery"?!

And the examples are a lot...

#linguistic_planning

#linguistics

In this utterance, SA participant K employed a negative politeness strategy by raising a question to soften a negative threat on his and the addresses’ faces by making it a general issue to be discussed. He included a photo in his tweet to support his opinion. Thus, this disagreement strategy could be seen as appropriate and unmarked behavior since the disagreement was not strengthened.

The strategy of raising a question differs from a rhetorical question in that the former does not require an answer and is usually expressed as a 'tag question'; it is generally represented in a verbal irony or suggestion to hide the direct disagreement. On the other hand, the latter is providing a question or inquiry that needs an answer; it usually occurs as a negative politeness to mitigate the threat in the negative face of both the speaker and addressee.

4.1.1.1.3. Mitigated Disagreement (Positive Politeness)

Positive politeness strategies were found in the corpus of tweets in argument turns between AM participant K and his colleague to respond to official tweets by CNN. The politeness strategies were in the forms of hedging opinion and token agreement to mitigate the disagreement and promote the addressee's positive face, as shown in Example 12 below.
4.1.1.3.1. Providing Hedging Opinion and Token Agreement in Back-and-Forth Interactions (Different Argument Turns)

Example 12:

SA participant K replied in English language to a tweet posted on the official account of CNN containing that:

A woman who's never been to Ireland wakes up with an Irish accent. CNN's Jeanne Moos reports. https://cnn.it/3fkFAOO.

This tweet contained a video on the CNN channel about A woman who posted videos counting days on Tik Tok when she had an Irish accent after the tonsil removal surgery; she is Australian that said in the video that 'I woke up with an Irish accent'; she cries because as said, 'she lost her identity'. The channel shows how she sounded before the surgery and after it. The CNN report declared that it is a rare but real ‘foreign accent syndrome disorder’ and it happened after head surgery. A man stated that it is not a real foreign accent but rather a damaged form of a person’s native language and accent. The CNN report gave examples of the foreign accent syndrome that happened after a stroke, and a woman lost her native accent after visiting a dentist!

- Participant K’s (hedging opinion) reply:

   Although very rare, FAS (Foreign Accent Syndrome) is mainly associated with brain damage, such as stroke. But walking out with a new accent after a tonsil removal surgery, that’s a first 😞.

   SA participant K disagreed with the Foreign Accent Syndrome disorder happened to a woman due to the tonsil removal surgery. SA participant K employed the strategy of hedging opinion by providing evidence that support the preceding utterance after a linguistic mark of
subordinating conjunctions "Although very rare". Then he produced an exclamation that implies his disagreement included ‘thinking emoji’ e.g., "that’s a first. 😏". Thus, the paralinguistic marker here reflected the exclamation. According to Almutairi (2021, p.40), exclaimations are utilized "to express one's disbelief, surprise, astonishment, and wonder at the prior claim or proposition. They are usually emotionally loaded reactions." (p. 40) For example, "اقول لكم لا!" translated to "you want us to say nothing?!?!?!” (Almutairi, 2021, p. 23). Therefore, the positive politeness strategy was implemented in this utterance. This softened disagreement might be perceived polite, appropriate/politic and positively marked behavior.

Participant K’s tweet received a reply that makes him to explain his argument in the second turn. The reply offered in English language by a Saudi female lecturer of linguistics:

> Everything is related, somehow, to the brain cells and the nerves system. I believe, if it’s rare, then it would be relatively easy to say it’s because of the tonsil, because this is the only evidence that they have observed to come up with that conclusion!

Participant K (in the 2nd turn) replied by providing token disagreement to pretend to agree to support the positive face of the addressee, and then mitigated his disagreement by giving suggestion.

- SA participant K replied:

> You’re right!

> But I still find it very unusual to be caused by tonsil surgery. It could be a speech disorder and articulatory differences that made her sound as if she speaks in an Irish accent.
SA participant K attempted to claim common ground with the addressee to encourage her positive face by uttering an agreement, "You're right!" followed by expressing his opposite opinion, "But I still find it very unusual........". Thus, the disagreement utterance is mitigated by a positive politeness strategy, which could be considered polite, appropriate/politic, and positively marked behavior. So, SA participant K might have reduced his disagreement since the addressee was a colleague who worked in the same field.

4.1.1.1.4. Disagreement Not Softened or Strengthened

This strategy is neither mitigated nor aggravated in which the speaker expresses their disagreement in a neutral opinion to express his oppositional stance without attempting to soften or strengthen it. This strategy is usually seen as polite, appropriate/politic, and unmarked behavior, for example, counterclaim, direct disagreement, and explanation. However, it could be perceived as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic, and negatively marked behavior such as short contradictory disagreement, e.g., "I disagree".

4.1.1.4.1 Act Combinations

Only one disagreement utterance was performed by combining more than one strategy to make the disagreement not softened or aggravated, as shown in Example 13 below.

4.1.1.4.1.1. Asking Question, Verbal Irony, and Supplication

Example 13:

Firstly, the preceding utterance will be provided followed by the participant’s reply and any kind of interactions. The turns of arguments the participants typically engage in will be considered to examine how many turns the participants usually argue.
The preceding utterance is provided by a Saudi Twitter user who received a question via direct message on his Twitter account and posted a tweet to ask his followers’ opinion about it.

- The preceding utterance (the original tweet is given in Arabic):

وصليني هذا السؤال على الخاص وبصراحة وجدت صعوبة في اجابته: "دكتورة انا طبيب وناوي اتزوج قريباً. هل السؤال هل تنصحتيني بالزواج من طبيبة؟ بالذات انا ناوي الاكثر من الأطفال. هل هو ظلم لها؟ هل تعرين طبيبات عندهم +7 اطفال؟ وما هي تخصصاتهن؟" وش رأيك؟!

- The translation of the preceding utterance:

I received this question via direct message (DM), and honestly, I found it difficult to answer: "Doctor, I am a physician and intend to get married soon if Allah wills. The question is, do you advise me to marry a female physician? Especially since I plan to have many children if Allah wills, or is it unfair for her? Do you know female physicians who have +7 children? And what are their specializations?"

What do you think?"

- SA participant D’s reply:

أول شي الله يسخرله الي تناسبه... بس المشكلة هنا مو هل يتزوج طبيبة أو لا. السؤال هل ممكن يلاقى زوجة ترغب في إنجاب +7 أطفال... لو النقطة هذي تهمه حداً أتوقع يحتاج طبيبتين أقل شيء لله يرزقه الذرية الصالحة ويعينه

- The translation of SA participant D’s reply:

First, may Allah give him a woman that suits him. But the problem here is not whether he does marry a female physician or not... The question is, can he ever find
a wife who wants to have 7+ children 😊... If this point is crucial to him, I expect he needs two female physicians at least 😊 May Allah give him good children and help him.

In this example, the preceding utterance included a message in which male physician asked if he could marry a female physician or not since he wants to have more than 7 children and as he claims that might be unfair for her. SA participant D began and concluded her disagreement expression with a supplication e.g., "may Allah give him a woman that suits him" and "May Allah give him good children and help him". Supplication is a religious term in which the speaker requests assistance or anything they desire from God. Participant D might use the strategy of supplication to express her surprise which was evident in the following utterance of raising a question e.g., "can he ever find a wife who wants to have 7+ children 😊" regardless of if she is a physician or not. She made an ironic statement by saying "If this point is crucial to him, I expect he needs two female physicians at least 😊". SA participant D used the emoji of ‘a grinning face with sweat’ twice in her utterance when she provided a question as well as sarcasm. The participant employed off record strategy to express her disagreement. The disagreement performance in this example was nor mitigated or strengthened which can be seen appropriate and unmarked behavior.

SA participant D’s reply received six replies, but she interacted with only one.

The reply that SA participant D interacted with is:

- The original tweet was provided in Arabic in replying to participant D’s tweet:

  ترا مرره حلو بجيب اطفال كثير أكثر من ٧ بعد ما يكبروا هم سند لبعض وبصير البيت فيه حياه 😊😊

- The translation:

  It is sooo pleasant to have many children, even more than seven. If they grow, they will support each other, and their house will be lively and happy 😊😊. 

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Participant D replied:

أكيد... المال والبنون زينة الحياة الدنيا. أتكلم على حجم المسؤولية...ربي يقرر عينا في أولادنا ولا يضيع لنا

The translation:

Sure... wealth and children are the adornment of life. May Allah gladden our eyes with our children and that our efforts in raising them are not in vain 🙏.

SA participant D gave her arguments in two turns: to the original tweet and then in reply to her tweet that expressed an opposing opinion, which made the participant provide an agreement and supplication, as shown above "Sure....... May Allah gladden our eyes with our children”.

4.1.2. American ESL Teachers’ Disagreement Strategies in The Corpus of Tweets

The analysis of the corpus tweets of American ESL teachers revealed nine strategies for expressing disagreement: 1) act combination, 2) making a personal stance, 3) verbal irony, 4) scolding, 5) verbal attack, 6) judgmental vocabulary, 7) expression of anger, 8) using intensifier, and 9) exaggeration. Six strategies are implemented in the act combination: 1) cursing and verbal irony, 2) verbal attack and raising a rhetorical question, 3) verbal irony, personal accusatory ‘you’ and raising rhetorical questions, 4) scolding and using personal accusatory ‘you’ 5) using intensifier and verbal attack, and 6) partial agreement and asking a question. The summary of American ESL teachers’ disagreement performances is given in Figure 16.
The frequencies of the occurrences of these disagreement implementations are shown in Figure 17 below. Like the Saudi EFL teachers, American ESL teachers also employ more than one strategy when employing their disagreements. Act combination was the most common strategy, occurring in seven utterances, followed by verbal irony, which was used four times. Scolding, judgmental vocabulary, verbal attacks, and making a personal stance were each used twice while expressing anger, using intensifiers and exaggeration each occurred once. The strategies of act combination that produced by American ESLs are provided in Table 9.
Table 9

The Act Combination Strategies that Provided by American ESL Teachers in the Corpus of Tweets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act combination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cursing and verbal irony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Verbal attack and raising rhetorical question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Verbal irony, personal accusatory ‘you’ and raising rhetorical questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Scolding and using personal accusatory ‘you’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Using intensifier and verbal attack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Partial agreement and asking question</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 17

Frequencies of disagreement strategies in American ESL teachers’ corpus of tweets

American ESL teachers employed aggravated disagreements (on-record strategy) in 14 utterances: act combinations (see examples 14-17), verbal attack (see example 18), judgmental vocabulary expression of anger, exaggeration, using intensifiers, and scolding. They employed
disagreement nor softened or strengthened in seven utterances, e.g., act combinations (e.g., verbal irony, personal accusatory ‘you’ and raising rhetorical questions, see example 25) verbal irony. The least found strategy is mitigated disagreements (positive politeness strategy) which occurred in three instances, e.g., act combinations (see example 22), partial/token agreement, and hedging opinion (see example 26). No negative politeness strategy was found in the American ESL teachers’ disagreement expressions in their corpus of tweets. The disagreement taxonomies found in the corpus of tweets of American teachers are provided in Figure 18. The frequencies and percentages of politeness strategies employed by American ESL teachers in the corpus of tweets are given in Figure 19. Examples of disagreement strategies employed by American ESL teachers in the corpus of tweets are provided below.
Figure 18
Taxonomy of Disagreement Performances of American ESL Teachers in the Corpus of Tweets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of disagreement</th>
<th>Type of linguistic marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Softened disagreement (Occurred 3 times</td>
<td>partial agreement (e.g., <em>I am ok with them... but...</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreement not softened or strengthened</td>
<td>Hedging opinion (e.g., <em>well...</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated disagreement (Occurred 14 times</td>
<td>Making a personal stance (e.g., <em>I am not a fan of...</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Verbal Irony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cursing (e.g., <em>All the goddamn ... people</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Judgmental vocabulary (e.g., <em>The tweet was bad.</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Verbal attack (e.g., <em>Wtf??</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>personal accusatory ‘you’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scolding (e.g., <em>Please stop acting like...</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expression of anger (e.g., ...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using intensifier (e.g., Absolutely not true)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exaggeration (e.g., <em>This every word.</em>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 19
Politeness Strategies Employed by American ESL Teachers in Expressing their Disagreement in the Corpus of Tweets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive politeness</th>
<th>On record</th>
<th>Off record</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 (13%)</td>
<td>15 (62%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 (25%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.2.1 Examples of Disagreement Strategies Employed by American ESL Teachers in The Corpus of Tweets

The following section includes examples of the disagreement strategies provided by American ESL teachers, begins with aggravated disagreements, then mitigated disagreement (positive politeness), and lastly, disagreements not mitigated or aggravated.

4.1.2.1.1. Aggravated Disagreements (Bald on-Record Without Redressive Action)

The examples of aggravated disagreements that occurred by American ESL teachers in the corpus of tweets are act combinations, e.g., verbal attack and raising rhetorical questions, scolding and using personal accusatory ‘you,’ using intensifier and verbal attack, verbal irony, personal accusatory ‘you’ and raising rhetorical questions, verbal attack, judgmental vocabulary, expression of anger and exaggeration.

4.1.2.1.1. Act Combinations

Below are examples of act combinations performed by American ESL teachers in their corpus of tweets. American ESL teachers, in the corpus of tweets, often combine two or more strategies to express their disagreements, similar to Saudis.

4.1.2.1.1.1. Verbal Attack and Raising Rhetorical Question

Example 14:

Participant C, a female American ESL instructor with PhD in Linguistics, interacted with the following tweet:
The original tweet was included as a photo:

*Academia, the only industry that doesn’t value education.*

AM participant C replied:

*Wtf?? It's not enough to pay adjuncts less than a living wage, now they want one to work for nothing?*

AM participant C produced a verbal attack at the beginning of her disagreement "Wtf??" followed by a rhetorical question "*It's not enough to pay adjuncts less than a living wage, now they want one to work for nothing?*". Participant C employed bald on-record without redressive action in this aggravated disagreement utterance, which could be considered impolite, inappropriate/ non-politic, and negatively marked behavior. The analysis of the tweet’s corpus revealed that academia issues are triggers to produce most of AM participant C's arguments on Twitter.

4.1.2.1.1.1. Scolding and Using Personal Accusatory ‘you’

Example 15:

The following tweet triggered the disagreement from AM participant I, a female American ESL professor of linguistics at an American university:

*Ladder-climbing politicians are NOT the solution to our problems, Pennsylvania.*

*To them, it’s about power and control. To me, it’s about finding solutions and putting PA first.*
- AM participant I replied:

    Please stop acting like you know PA. You lived here as a student a long time ago.

In this example, AM participant I reprimanded a politician by providing him a command as in the example "stop acting like you know PA". She directly oriented her disagreement utterance to the addressee without any attempt to save his face by using personal accusatory pronoun "You lived here as a student". The disagreement act was direct and unmitigated. The FTA was implemented by choosing to be bald on-record in expressing aggravated disagreement.

4.1.2.1.1.3. Using Intensifier and Verbal Attack

Example 16:

AM participant I replied to a tweet that included a criticism of a politician who talked in video:

Original tweet:

    Watch Professor Khiara Bridges HANDLE Josh Hawley. Laughing at his attempts to seem reasonable and to denigrate her. Dismissing his insincere attempts to deny trans people’s existence Calling his line of questioning about "what is a woman" transphobic. Masterful. [this tweet includes a video of a politician’s speech]

AM participant I replied:

    He always manages to be worse.

As shown in the example above, participant (I) intensifies her disagreement by using the intensifier "always" and verbal attack "manages to be worse". She usually produced an aggravated disagreement and used bald on-record strategy without redressive action when she argues in political issues.
4.1.2.1.1.4. Verbal Irony, Personal Accusatory ‘you’ and Raising Rhetorical Questions

Example 17:

AM participant I, a female American ESL teacher, replied to a tweet that was posted by a politician:

*Restricting the freedom of law-abiding Americans will never, ever make us safer.*

- Participant I’s reply:

*You have got to be kidding. You’re tweeting this today?*

In this instance, participant I initiated her disagreement expression by using a personal accusatory pronoun, e.g., "you have got to be kidding", and then raised a rhetorical question that indicated an irony "You’re tweeting this today?". From her corpus of tweets, it has been found that participant I regularly produced arguments in her replies to different politicians’ tweets. She implemented aggravated disagreement in which she directly accused the addressee of lack of seriousness. This type of disagreement might be seen appropriate but unmarked behavior. It can be concluded that political issues play a significant role in producing her aggravated disagreement. Participant I also performed the exact combined strategies in another tweet but perceived as off-record strategy which are not mitigated or strengthened, as shown in the example (25) below.

4.1.2.1.1.2. Verbal Attack

Example 18:

The following tweet triggered AM participant I’s aggravated disagreement:

*On Monday I posted Guava and someone said what an ugly baby. Firstly, she’s a baby who raised you? Secondly, here's another post for good measure!* 😁
AM participant I’s interacted with this tweet:

*Obnoxious and incorrect.*

AM participant I expressed her disapproval of people who used the term 'ugly' to describe a little girl by labeling their behavior as "*obnoxious and incorrect." She directly attacked those people without any attempt to buffer her disagreement. Thus, the FTA was employed with bald on-record without a redressive action strategy. AM participant I’s personality made her produce aggravated disagreement and not tolerate this action.

**Example 19:**

AM participant G initiates a thread of two tweets:

**Tweet 1:**

*All the goddamn eugenics people went to Ivies. I met some absolutely terrible people in undergrad (and some cool ones), but I don't think they've done anything like that. Yet.*

**Tweet 2:**

...although two of them killed people later, so.

In this example, cursing is regarded as a verbal attack. In this thread of tweets, AM participant G produced cursing to express his aggravated disagreement. This kind of disagreement is absent in the corpus of Saudi participants’ tweets. Thus, the kind of politeness strategy is on-
record without redressive action which can be seen as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic, negatively marked communicative behavior.

The three following examples, 20, 21 and 22 express judgmental vocabulary, expression of anger and exaggeration, respectively, and are aggravated disagreement utterances. The strategy of on-record without redressive action was employed which might be seen as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic and negatively marked behavior.

4.1.2.1.3. Judgmental Vocabulary

Example 20:

AM participant I replied to the following tweet:

PEOPLE OF THE WORLD! My tweet about women was a response to this fascinating and well written piece in the NYT on July 3rd. There was no intention of anything exclusionary or transphobic in what I said, it wasn’t about that.

Participant I’s replied:

The tweet was bad, and the number of lifelong fans who were devastated should be an indication of that. So maybe an actual apology.

In this example, in the preceding utterance, there is a feature of online communication that appeared in capitalizing every letter in the words to grab others’ attention and make the statement necessary. Participant, I produced judgmental vocabulary to express her disagreement "The tweet was bad" without any attempt to soften her disagreement. Thus, this disagreement is aggravated, which can be perceived as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic, and negatively marked behavior. Therefore, the strategy used here is on record without redressive action.
4.1.2.1.1.4 Expression of Anger

Example 21:

AM participant I expressed her anger in her reply to the following tweet:

*Tucker Carlson just blamed the 4th of July mass shooting on "mostly women" who "never stop lecturing [men] about their so-called male privilege." He also blamed "social media, porn, video games, and government-endorsed weed".  

AM participant I replied:

*Of course he’d find a way to blame women. 😠

AM participant I responded with an aggravated disagreement, using both verbal and nonverbal cues such as "😠" to express her anger. She did not attempt to lessen the disagreement by adding phrases like "of course" to emphasize it. The FTA was implemented with on-record without redressive action strategy which can be seen as inappropriate/non-politic and negatively marked behavior.

4.1.2.1.1.5. Exaggeration

Example 22:

The following tweet triggered strong disagreement from participant P, a female American TESOL teacher and a Ph.D. candidate in Linguistics:

*It’s wild to me that teachers are asked to "engage" students in classes they don’t see the relevance in, they often aren’t prepared academically for, and the teachers have crap curriculum, no time, and minimal resources to make things better. 

Participant P replied:

*This 😞 - every word.
In this example, the paralinguistic feature used by AM participant P to express completely disagreement by exaggerating it using the following emojis to disagree with every word as the participants disapplied in her reply "This 😞 - every word". The on-record without redressive action implemented in this example to express aggravated disagreement which can be seen as impolite, non-politic and negatively marked behavior.

4.1.2.1.2. Mitigated Disagreements (Positive Politeness Strategy)

The mitigated disagreements that produced by American participants were only by implementing positive politeness strategies. The examples were act combinations (see example 22), token agreement and hedging opinion (see example 26).

4.1.2.1.2.1. Act Combinations

An example of act combinations that have been done by American participants in the corpus of tweets to produce politeness strategies is partial agreement and asking question. This example is explained below.

4.1.2.1.2.1.1. Partial Agreement and Asking Question

Example 23:

AM participant Y, a female American ESL teacher, replied to the following tweet:

*I honestly don’t like the banning of devices on campuses. Not after what we just saw in May... (and every other month in this country).*

AM participant Y replied:

*I am ok with them being able to call someone in emergencies. But sitting on a FaceTime call the entire class? Filming the entire class for YouTube? Playing video games, etc. i just wish there was a better solution. Our school locks wifi but they use VPN’s-so they get around that!*
In this example, AM participant Y attempted to show an agreement with the addressee, but simultaneously, she asked questions to express her disagreement. The participant tries to maintain the addressee's positive face by preceding her utterance by partially agreeing instead of explicitly disagreeing. Therefore, the FTA was employed by conducting a positive politeness strategy. The participant performed mitigated disagreement, which can be seen as polite, appropriate/politic, and positively marked communicative behavior.

There are also examples of positive politeness strategies employed in expressing disagreement in the back-and-forth interactions (many arguments turns) in example (26) below.

4.1.2.1.3. Disagreement Not Softened or Strengthened

4.1.2.1.3.1. Verbal Irony

Verbal irony was found to be the second most common strategy used by American ESL teachers in their corpus of tweets. The examples of verbal irony used by these teachers were interpreted differently; one was seen as neither disagreeable nor overly polite (see example 25), while another was seen as aggravated (see example 17). Examples of verbal irony employed by American participants in the corpus of tweets are provided below.

Example 24:

AM participant C, a female American ESL instructor, posted a tweet to wrap her disagreement in the act of irony:

*the academic urge to use first plural pronouns in an abstract when it's just you and the Swedish fish on your desk.*

As mentioned earlier, participant C regularly provides arguments about the issues of academia. In her tweet here, she uttered sarcasm to express her disagreement on using the first person plural pronouns in the abstract while there is no one other than you and the Swedish fish
on the desk. Here, the participant employed an off-record strategy in which she criticized the academic. However, in this utterance, the type of disagreement was not mitigated or aggravated. It can be seen as polite/appropriate and unmarked communicative behavior.

**Example 25:**

The following tweet triggered participant C’s disagreement:

> How many of the women rallying against overturning Roe are over-educated, under-loved millennials who sadly return from protests to a lonely microwave dinner with their cats, and no bumble matches?

AM participant C replied:

> Excuse me, but I ate Panera today.

AM participant C indicated her aggravated disagreement by producing verbal irony to contradict the preceding opinion. She implemented off record strategy in which she implies her disagreement in an ironic statement. Thus, the type of disagreement here could be seen as neither mitigated nor aggravated, which can be seen as appropriate and unmarked behavior since she expressed her disapproval in the act of irony.

**4.1.2.1.3.2. Act Combinations**

**4.1.2.1.3.2.1. Verbal irony, Personal accusatory ‘you’ and Raising Rhetorical Questions**

**Example 26:**

AM participant I provided a disagreement to the following politician’s tweet:

> It never ceases to amaze me the lengths gun control zealots will go! They turned my speech about protecting Second Amendment rights and my right to protect my grandchildren from violent criminals into a claim I would harm my own grandchildren. Absolutely ridiculous!
AM participant I again conducted verbal irony, personal accusatory ‘you’ and raising rhetorical questions in her reply to the above-mentioned utterance:

"Have you listened to the clip? Perhaps you misspoke or used an unclear pronoun.
Why not say that, clarify, and move on?"

However, in this utterance, AM participant I provided an ironic statement to indicate criticism. She employed an off-record strategy, which might be perceived as appropriate and unmarked communicative behavior. The participant did not produce mitigated or aggravated disagreement, while her disagreement was implied in the illocutionary force of her utterance.

4.1.2.1.3.3. Making a Personal Stance

In the following examples, AM participant G provided a personal stance of "I hate it", followed by positive politeness strategies: hedging opinion and token agreement which make the personal stance in this argument seem to be neither disagreement nor aggravated or softened.

Example 27:

AM participant G, a male American ESL teacher, interacted with the following two utterances in the thread of tweets:

The first tweet in the thread:

(1) We used ‘teacher’ for everyone in my former school and it was so comfortable for everyone.

A twitter user replied to support the opinion of the first utterance:

(2) That’s how we do it! I have always loved being called teacher by my students and many perceive and label this a "mistake" but in reality many multilingual students are actually sharing wisdom and respect when they call their teachers, teacher. ❤️
AM participant G replied:

*I hate it (I earned this title) but it was the norm in Korea so I dealt with it. If it works for someone it’s fine.*

In this utterance, "making a personal stance was achieved by giving an explicit phrase to show an opposite view" (Shum & Lee, 2013, p.60). AM participant G made a personal stance by directly denying the views of the preceding utterances by saying "I hate it" and then provide that he dealt with it since it is the norm in Korea where he was worked and showed a respect of other opinions if that works with them. Therefore, the FTA was implemented in this utterance using on record strategy. The disagreement here can be classified as non-mitigated or strengthened which might be seen as polite, politic/appropriate, and unmarked behavior. Hence AM participant G expressing his opposite opinion directly followed by showing understanding of other possible opinions. It is evident in his interactions in the same thread that he attempted to utter straightforward utterance but still seemed to be polite as shown below.

AM participant G received a reply from a person who replied in (2):

*Would you reconsider, being it a gender-neutral, more equal term that also acknowledges respect? I think here we are contrasting it to the traditional miss and mister. What would you prefer? This discussion is a worthy one to have.*

Participant G replied: (the second turn) *(example of hedging opinion):*

*Well considering doctor is gender neutral, that’s the one I like. I don’t want to be Mr. So, we cool.*

Locher (2004) regarded the use of "well" as hedges, and one of the hesitation markers. So, AM participant G hedged his disagreement in his 2nd turn of argument and provided an alternative
linguistic marker such as "doctor" instead of gender marker "Mr", or "teacher" to be more gender neutral.

AM participant G also received two responses from a person who initiated the thread of tweets (1):

In Quaker schools is used to avoid the titles related to marriage that for once felt really refreshing. It also helps with gender neutrality. It’s done with equality in mind. I understand the choice of the use of "doctor" (identity markers should always be a personal choice.

A person who tweeted in (1) also added another tweet to complete her argument:

But at the same time, not everyone has access to academia and depending on the context it might come across as elitist. Not to mention that in Spanish is gendered so it might put nonbinary folx in a tough spot.

AM participant G replied with expressing (token agreement):

Yes, though for the racialized that whole elitist conversation is very different.

In AM participant G’s third turn of interaction, he initiated his utterance by saying "yes" instead of blatant no and then provided his oppositional stance after "though".

In the second and third turn of arguments, AM participant G employed positive politeness strategies, the former was hedging opinion, and the latter was token agreement. Thus, the disagreement utterances were mitigated, which could be seen as polite, appropriate/politic, and positively marked communicative behavior.
4.3. Conclusion

Overall, there are similarities in employing the politeness strategies between Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers. The differences are that American participants use no negative politeness strategy in the corpus of tweets, which is consistent with Lakoff's (2005) findings; Americans tend to rely more on positive politeness than negative politeness tactics. Moreover, Saudi EFL teachers mostly provided supplications when they uttered their disagreements, whereas American participants produced more verbal irony and cursing (e.g., *All the goddamn ... people...*). It is worth mentioning that Saudi EFL teachers tended to express their disagreements and argue in Arabic while posting tweets in English to express other speech acts, e.g., sharing condolence, thanking, advice, religious ceremonies, congratulations, and agreements, for example, "Many congrats dear ....... You always deserve the best  ❤️ " and "Thank you so much my dear ....  ❤️ Happy to hear from since long time 🎉 🎉 🎉 ". Also, they posted achievements with their followers in the English language. However, the results will be discussed in the following chapter (Chapter. V). The next section of this chapter will discuss the analysis of the disagreement strategies used by Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers in the thread of tweets.

4.2. The Analysis of the Thread of Tweets

This section will provide the analysis of disagreement strategies performed by Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers during their participation in the thread of tweets. Overall, regarding the thread of tweets: nine common strategies employed by the two groups in the thread of tweets are: *act combinations*, *making personal stance*, *partial agreement* (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Miller, 2000), *conditional* (Khammari, 2021), *using an intensifier* (Miller, 2000), *short contrary statement* (Behnam & Niroomand, 2011; Emmerson, 2004), *hedging opinion* (Miller, 2000), *scolding* (Almutairi, 2021; Shum & Lee, 2013), and *giving an opinion* (Shum & Lee,
However, the following types of disagreement strategies were employed by Saudi EFL teachers in the thread of tweets: counterclaim (Almutairi, 2021; Bavarsad, Eslami-Rasekh, & Simin, 2015; Harb, 2020; Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998); using the inclusive first pronoun ‘we’ (Locher, 2004; Miller, 2000), giving an apology, using personal accusatory ‘you’ (Miller, 2000) and giving suggestions (Khammari, 2021). On the contrary, the following two strategies are used only by American ESL teachers in the thread of tweets: argument avoidance (Harb, 2020) and giving a personal experience (Shum & Lee, 2013). Analyzing the thread of tweets revealed one new strategy employed by Saudi EFL teachers (giving apologies).

4.2.1. The Analysis of Saudi EFL Teachers’ Disagreement Strategies in The Thread of Tweets

In the thread of tweets, Saudi EFL teachers employed 14 disagreement strategies throughout their participation over two months. These strategies are: the act combination, partial agreement, hedging opinions, scolding, using intensifiers, counterclaim, giving an opinion, conditional, using a personal accusatory pronoun (you), giving short contrary statements, giving suggestions, giving an apology, using an inclusive first pronoun (we), and making a personal stance—these strategies are outlined in Figure 20.
The strategy of the act combination implemented by Saudi EFL teachers were 15 disagreement expressions: 1) direct disagreement and explanation; 2) making personal stance and respect other opinions; 3) partial agreement and respect other possible opinions; 4) direct disagreement and objection; 5) verbal attack, judgmental vocabulary, and rhetorical question; 6) making personal stance and giving reason; 7) using intensifier and scolding; 8) using intensifier and objection; 9) making a personal stance and using intensifiers; 10) using intensifiers and giving a reason; 11) giving opinion and using inclusive 1st pronoun ‘we’; 12) giving opinion and provide personal experience, 13) direct disagreement and scolding, 14) conditional and scolding, and 15) direct disagreement, judgmental vocabulary, and intensifiers. These disagreement utterances that are employed by Saudi EFL teachers in the act combination strategy are summarized in Table 10.
Table 10

*Saudi EFL Teachers’ Employments of Act Combination Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Act combination (AC)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Direct disagreement and explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Making personal stance and respect other opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Making personal stance and giving reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Partial agreement and respect other possible opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Direct disagreement and objection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Verbal attack, judgmental vocabulary, and rhetorical question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Using intensifier and scolding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Using intensifier and objection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Making a personal stance and using intensifiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Using intensifiers and giving a reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Giving opinion and using inclusive 1st person pronoun ‘we’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Giving opinion and provide personal experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Direct disagreement and scolding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Conditional and scolding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Direct disagreement, judgmental vocabulary, and intensifier</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Figure 21 below, there are 14 disagreement strategies employed by Saudis in their replies to the thread of tweets for two months. The most used disagreement strategy is acting combination which occurred in 34 utterances, in which the speakers use two or more different strategies in their disagreement utterance. The second most observed strategy is partial agreement, represented in 17 utterances. Then, giving short contrary statements is the third most frequently occurring strategy observed in 10 utterances. Using an intensifier occurred in 8 disagreement
expressions. In six disagreement utterances, five Saudis implemented the strategy of a counterclaim. Each of the following strategies: giving opinions and making personal stances were implemented five times in the thread of tweets. Also, both strategies of giving an apology and giving suggestions are found in four utterances. Hedging opinions were found in three utterances to blur disagreement acts. Scolding was found in two disagreement performances throughout the thread of tweets. Only one instance was found for each of the following strategies: using the inclusive first pronoun ‘we’ and the use personal accusatory pronoun ‘you’.

Figure 21

*Frequencies of Disagreement Strategies Employed by Saudi EFL Teachers in the Thread of Tweets*

In the participation of Saudi EFL teachers in the thread of tweets, the most frequent disagreement strategy was disagreement not softened or strengthened, representing 41% of the
total. Those disagreements were neither softened nor strengthened by explicit linguistic markers; "I disagree" followed by explanation, reason, opinion, or personal experience. The second most frequent disagreement strategy was mitigated by employing politeness strategies found in 26 utterances; for example, partial agreement (found in 17 instances), hedging opinion, and using the inclusive first pronoun 'we.' The third most used disagreement strategy that occurred was aggravated, found in 22 utterances; for example, using intensifier, scolding, objection, and the personal accusatory pronoun 'you.' The least found strategy is mitigated disagreements (negative politeness strategy), which occurred in 10 instances, e.g., conditional, giving an apology, and giving suggestions. The disagreement taxonomies found in the thread of tweets of Saudi EFL teachers are provided in Figure 22. The frequencies and percentages of politeness strategies employed by Saudi EFL teachers in the thread of tweets are given in Figure 23.
### Taxonomy of Disagreement Performances of Saudi EFL Teachers in the Thread of Tweets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of disagreement</th>
<th>Type of linguistic marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Softened disagreement</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive disagreement (Occurred in 26 utterances which represents 27%)</td>
<td>Partial agreement (e.g., “I partially agree...” using inclusive 1st pronoun ‘we’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative disagreement (Occurred in 10 utterances which represents 10%)</td>
<td>Hedging opinion (e.g., although...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disagreement not softened or strengthened (Occurred in 40 utterances which represents 41%)</strong></td>
<td>Giving suggestion (e.g., I would suggest...), Giving apology (e.g., I Beg to differ...), Conditional (e.g., Actually we r.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aggravated disagreement (Occurred in 22 utterances which represents 22%)</strong></td>
<td>Giving short contrary statement (e.g., I disagree), Giving opinion (e.g., &quot;my opinion is that...&quot;), Counterclaim, Direct disagreement and explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Making a personal stance (e.g., I personally cannot locate any plausible reason..., personal accusatory ‘you’, Scolding (e.g., ...’), Using intensifier (e.g., I totally disagree”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.1.1. Examples of Disagreement Strategies Employed by Saudi EFL Teachers in the Thread of Tweets

In the following section, examples of the most common strategy of 'disagreement not softened or strengthened' will be presented, followed by mitigated disagreements (positive and negative), and finally, aggravated disagreements. In the examples, the main tweets (the preceding utterance) will be provided, followed by the participant's reply, as shown below.

4.2.1.1.1. Disagreement Not Softened or Strengthened

In the thread of tweets, the most frequent strategy used by Saudi EFL teachers is disagreement not softened or strengthened. For example, act combinations, e.g., direct disagreement and explanation, giving opinion and giving short contrary statements.

4.2.1.1.1.1. Act Combinations

The most frequent strategy of act combinations employed by Saudi EFL teachers in the thread of tweets is direct disagreement and explanation followed by short contradictory statements.
4.2.1.1.1.1. Direct Disagreement and Explanation

This strategy refers to uttering direct statements of disagreement "I disagree" and then providing straightforward explanation or justification which is not mitigated or strengthened to express the opposite stance. Six Saudi participants employed the act combination of direct disagreement and providing explanations to express their disagreements in the thread of tweets in 15 utterances.

Example 28:

The original tweet:

"Machines have become superior to humans in many functions."

Participant A’s reply:

"I disagree, still humans are in control"

Participant A, a female Saudi EFL instructor who teaches English for specific purposes in a preparatory year at a Saudi university, in this example uttered explicit statement of disagreement "I disagree" and then provided a short explanation to express her opinion "still humans are in control".

The participant did the FTA by applying the politeness strategy of bald on-record without redressive action, but also here; there was no aggravated attempt: the participant did not aggravate or soften her disagreement; she gave a short opposite opinion after uttering direct disagreement. Thus, the participant produced disagreement neither softened nor strengthened. As found in the previous studies (Almutairi, 2021; Herb, 2019), this strategy can be perceived as politic/appropriate (unmarked behavior).

The factor of human identity may affect participant opinion to disagree with the issue of human abilities to be compared to machines. However, her disagreement is not softened or
strengthened. The participant employed this strategy only once to express her disagreement through her participation in the thread of tweets.

**Example 29:**

The original tweet:

"The education system is not updated to accommodate current job demands."

Participant M’s reply:

"I disagree with this. Education nowadays is trying to focus on skills that are needed for current job demands”

Participant M, a Saudi female professor of applied linguistics at Saudi university, in this example expresses her disagreement by uttering it explicitly "I disagree" followed by straightforward explanation of her opposite opinion "Education nowadays is trying to focus on skills that are needed for current job demands".

The participant states a contradictory statement, "I disagree with this", but also provides a straightforward and clear illustration to promote her opinion. As shown in the example, the participant does the FTA by employing the politeness strategy of bald on-record without redressive action, and there is no attempt to strengthen or aggravate her disagreement. As a result, the disagreement strategy in this example was neither mitigated nor strengthened which can be classified as politic/appropriate (unmarked behavior). Her identity as a teacher and her teaching experience may affect her opinion and makes her disagree with the statement that implies the deficiency of the education system as being not qualified for the current job demand. However, the participant does not produce aggravated or softened disagreement but utters explicit disagreement and straightforward opposite opinions.
Participant M employed this strategy in six utterances in her replies to different issues in the thread of tweets. The issues other than the education system that drive this participant to perform this strategy are that the exams are not a good way to test the students' knowledge; for example, "I disagree with that. There are many exams that can really test students' knowledge. Without exams, we can't know what the students acquire"; those female students do better than males, e.g., "I disagree. Both of them have abilities that can make them better students"; the concept of visiting a psychiatrist, e.g., "I disagree .... Some people have to go to a psychiatrist to help them overcome their problems"; and depression perception, e.g., "I also disagree .... Depression is an actual disease which sometimes leads to suicide". In all these instances, participant M employs the strategy of direct disagreement and explanation, which is the most occurred strategy in her participation in the thread of tweets.

2.1.1.1.2. Making Personal Stance and Giving Reason

In this act combination strategy, participant J provided a personal stance followed by a reason in which she seemed to be neutral without any attempt to mitigate or aggravated her disagreement as shown in the following example (30).

**Example 30:**

The original tweet:

"Extracurricular activities are a waste of time for teachers and students."

Participant J’s reply:

"I do not tend to this statement; cause students receive the enhancement of their language mostly through extracurricular activities where the teacher gives them more space and autonomy."
The main tweet:

"Visiting a psychiatrist is more harmful than positive."

Participant J’s reply:

"I don’t see it this way cause the importance of caring about the psychological and mental aspects is no less vital than physical issues, and neglect will make the matter worse, so the existence of psychiatrists is essential."

In these examples, participant J makes personal stances followed by providing reasons to express a neutral opinion by stating, "I do not tend to this statement, cause ..." and "I don’t see it this way cause...". She applies disagreements neither mitigated nor strengthened, which might be received as polite, politic, appropriate, and unmarked communicative behavior. Thus, the participant did not employ the FTA by providing a contradictory statement in which she gave reasons to support her idea without softening or aggravating it. For this participant, it can be claimed that her personality affects her style of expressing her opposite opinion neutrally. Instead of arguing, she offered a rational explanation.

4.2.1.1.2. Giving Opinion

The strategy of giving an opinion usually appears as a disagreement not mitigated or aggravated in which the speakers express their opposite opinions without strengthening or softening them. In this strategy, the speaker disagrees by expressing an opinion different from what was said without making negative judgments or comments (Shum & Lee, 2015).

Example 31:

Participant D replied to the following three utterances by giving her opinions.

The original tweet:
"The human world is progressing very quickly, but education is not keeping pace with this progress."

Participant D’s reply:

"For me stability and consistency are more important than keeping up"

The original tweet:

"Men and women should get married before they turn thirty."

Participant D’s reply:

"My opinion is that people should marry when they feel ready, whenever that is Of course time is a concern especially for women but it shouldn't be the only drive!"

The original tweet:

"Depression is a mental illusion rather than an actual disease."

Participant D’s reply:

"I know it's real and I have seen people saved by simply admitting it and treating it like it should be treated."

In these three instances, participant D initiates her utterances with personal phrases, "for me", "My opinion is", and "I know", to express opposite opinions. The uses of disagreements were neither softened nor strengthened, which can be perceived as polite/appropriate and unmarked behaviors. The participant did not perform the FTA and avoided uttering an explicit disagreement by giving her personal thought. It can be argued that the participant’s attitude and personality that preferred stability may affect her stance on the issue of keeping up with the rapid changes that happened in the world. Also, the participant’s gender as a female makes her concerned about the appropriate age of the marriage, although she asserts that should not be the only drive. AlBuhairan et al. (2015) demonstrate that Saudi Arabian society is very conservative in addressing sensitive
topics such as mental health issues, i.e., depression, which are considered to be taboo. Therefore, the factor of age and education may make her open to discussing her disagreement with the taboo topic in Saudi society, that is, tackling depression as an actual disease and at the same time not softening or strengthening it.

4.2.1.1.3. Giving Short Contrary Statement

The strategy of providing short contrary disagreement were found in 10 utterances throughout the thread of tweets. For example, SA participant H, a male Saudi EFL teacher in a Saudi public school, utilized a short direct disagreement "I disagree" in 6 utterances. For example:

Example 32:

The original tweet:

Depression is a mental illusion rather than an actual disease.

Participant H’s reply:

Disagree

SA participant H implemented an on-record without redressive action, but at the same time, without an attempt to strengthen it. This short utterance might be seen as inappropriate and negatively marked behavior. However, it can be claimed that the participant's lack of proficiency in English may have contributed to his inability to express his disagreement more appropriately in English, as he clarified in the interview.

4.2.1.1.2. Mitigated Disagreement (Positive Politeness)

In this strategy, the speaker attempted to soften their disagreements to save or support the positive face of addressee. The positive politeness strategies are the second most frequent strategy employed by Saudi EFL teachers in the thread of tweets. This strategy can be perceived as polite, appropriate/politic, and positively marked communicative behavior. The following section will
provide examples of positive politeness strategies performed by Saudi EFL teachers in the thread of tweets as mitigated disagreement.

4.2.1.2.1. Using Inclusive 1st Pronoun (we)/ Impersonalization

In this study, the inclusive 1st person plural pronoun 'we' would be analyzed as a form of positive politeness since the speaker implements this impersonal linguistic form to claim a common ground and boost the positive face for both interlocutors as employed in the study of Miller (2000).

Example 33:

The original tweet:

“Cancel culture results in bullying or censorship that is usually worse than the original offense”

Participant D’s reply:

"We can only disagree with the act not attack the actor! But we always need to stand for what we believe is right!"

Cancel culture is not common in Saudi culture like in American society. In this instance, participant D impersonalized her disagreement by using the linguistic marker (inclusive first pronoun "we") to claim common ground with the given issue. She disagreed with the concept of the cancel culture that aimed at the actors instead of their actions. The FTA was employed in this utterance, conducting the positive politeness strategy in which the participant attempts to claim a mutual understanding by using the inclusive 1st person plural pronoun "we". The participant disagreement is softened and mitigated, which might be considered polite, politic/appropriate, and positively marked behavior. The participant's personality and attitudes may affect her stance on the issue of cancel culture to produce mitigated disagreement.
4.2.1.2.2. Hedging Opinions

The hedging opinion strategy is considered a positive politeness strategy, as Brown and Levinson (1987) classified under the super strategy of 'avoid disagreement.' Even though the employment of hedges, questions, and impersonal forms mitigate the threat to the addressee's negative face, Brown and Levinson assume that "some hedges can have this positive-politeness function as well" such as: "sort of, kind of, like, in a way" (p. 116). The examples of hedging opinions performed by Saudi EFL teachers in the thread of tweets are provided below.

Example 34:

The original tweet:

*Men and women should get married before they turn thirty.*

Participant L, a male Saudi EFL instructor, replied:

*I am not sure if this statement is absolutely true, for individuals as well as their societies differ in every single aspect. I would say this option might be fruitful to many as long as their circumstances can reinforce such a critical decision.*

Participant L attempted to hide his disagreement by hedging his opinion by saying, "I am not sure if this statement is absolutely true"; "I would say……, but it is also……" followed by an explanation instead of uttering direct disagreement. The participant maintained the positive face of the addressee in most of his replies in the thread of tweets. Participant L did the FTA using a positive politeness strategy in these two instances. This disagreement strategy is mitigated and considered polite (politic/appropriate) positively marked behavior. In many instances, he tried to hedge his opinion and mitigate his acts of disagreement. Thus, the cultural factor may influence his opinion to not directly disagree with the concept of the importance of marriage before the age of thirty since it is popular in the Saudi context. Still, he mitigated his disagreement to show his
tolerance of the opposite view as he spent around six years in the United States and is open to accepting different opinions on this issue. In another issue of the development of education to keep pace with the world's progress, his identity as a teacher may have driven him to hedge his disagreement with this concept.

4.2.1.2.3. Partial Agreement

Partial agreement is the most frequently used strategy after act combination in Saudi’s replies in the thread of responses. This disagreement strategy occurred when the participant initiates their partial agreement instead of uttering a blatant no and then express their oppositional stance. Saudi participants employed partial agreement strategies in 17 replies.

Example 35:

The original tweet:

"Men and women can do all jobs equally well."

Participant D’s reply:

"In short, I partially agree... it will take me an article to fully express my opinion regarding this :)"

In this example, participant D expressed her partial agreement by stating it clearly and then mentioned that she would need an article to express her opinion on this matter. She posted a smiley face in her response to make the interaction more cooperative. She used a smiley face in her posts throughout the thread to soften her opinions because she is aware of the importance of facial expression and voice tone in FTF communication which is absent in online interactions. Her identity may affect her opinion toward this issue as she replied to another tweet in the same thread of tweet, "Females are better students than males" as "As a female, I say yes ;)". This example demonstrates how her gender identification as a female influences her opinion to agree that female
students are superior to males. The participant employed the positive politeness strategy by showing partial agreement, so she did the FTA to support the addressee's positive face. She used a mitigated disagreement strategy which can be categorized as polite (polite/appropriate) and positively marked behavior. This participant employed this strategy once through her participation in the thread. The issue of gender differences and the factor of her personality and female identity may affect her opinion to show partial agreement. The participant’s utilization of a new feature of claiming a mutual understanding among interlocutors is a smiley face to substitute the facial expression that is absent in the online communication.

4.2.1.1.3. Mitigated Disagreement (Negative Politeness)

Saudi EFL teachers used negative politeness strategies to mitigate the negative threat on the addressees’ faces, for example: giving an apology, giving suggestions, and using conditional statements. Examples of negative politeness strategies employed by Saudi participants to mitigate their disagreement performances in the thread of tweets are given below.

4.2.1.1.3.1. Giving Apology

Example 36:

The original tweet:

"Cancel culture results in bullying or censorship that is usually worse than the original offense."

Participant J's reply:

"I'm afraid I have to disagree with that very much. We need some strictness, so a cancel culture is a solution to deter some offensive behavior and limit its spread. So public figures must be aware of their actions".
In this example, participant J preceded her strong disagreement by providing disagreement to mitigate the threat on her negative face. Brown and Levinson (1987) conclude that some speakers may use mitigators to redress the action that endangers their or others' negative faces. As shown in this example, the participant said, "I'm afraid I have to disagree with that very much", followed by an explanation in which she attempted to claim a common ground by using the inclusive 1st person pronoun 'we.' The disagreement is softened and mitigated, which might be perceived as polite, politic/appropriate, and positively marked behavior. Thus, the FTA is implemented using a negative politeness strategy. The factor of the participant's personality, as noticed in her participation in the thread of tweets, may affect her style of disagreeing to be mostly mitigated unless, in some issues, she provided a neutral opinion. To support this claim, this participant used an apology in another utterance, "I beg to differ because people who experience depression are unaware of their case. They usually need someone to help and get them out of their imprisoned thoughts and feelings inside them, so they have actual suffering" in replying to the posted topic "depression is a mental illusion rather than an actual disease". In this example, she provided an apology and a reason to redress her disagreement with the mental health issue. Again, negative politeness and softened disagreement were used.

4.2.1.3.2. Giving Suggestion

Example 37:

The original tweet:

"Teaching grammar is more important than teaching conversational skills."

Participant A’s reply:

For teaching English as a second or foreign language, I’d suggest teaching more of conversational skills.
Participant A provided a suggestion to mitigate her disagreement. The participant attempted to soften her disagreement by providing a suggestion "I’d suggest" rather than a blatant ‘no’ in order to vague her opposite attitude. She implemented the FTA using the positive politeness strategy. The softened disagreement strategy in this utterance might be regarded as polite, politic/appropriate, and positively communicative behavior. By observing the participant’s utterances in both the thread of tweets and the corpus of tweets, the participant’s personality affects her use of disagreements. In the interview, participant A confirmed this fact by explaining that she prefers to provide a suggestion instead of directly disagreeing with the addressee in both Arabic and English languages and in face-to-face and online communication like on Twitter.

4.2.1.3.3. Conditional

Example 38:

The original tweet:

"Exams are not the ideal criteria for testing students' knowledge."

Participant D’s reply:

"Actually, if we're testing their knowledge, traditional exams focus on info retention, so yes, I think they're suitable."

Participant D attempted to hedge her disagreement with the first utterance that claims against the professionalism of the traditional exams. In order to soften her disagreement, participant D began her argument with the adverb "actually," followed by a conditional statement, including the inclusive 1st person pronoun. Then she hedged her disagreement by using the verb of uncertainty, "I think they are suitable" to mitigate her disagreement. Therefore, the participant implemented the FTA by conducting an on-record with redressive action to lessen the threat on
her negative face. This disagreement performance is softened and mitigated and might be seen as polite, politic/appropriate, positively marked communicative behavior.

The sensitivity of the notion that the traditional exams are not qualified to be a standard test to examine the students' knowledge which are still conducted in Saudi Arabia, may cause her to refrain from supporting it on the public platform like Twitter. Moreover, the participant's attitudes and beliefs may support the idea of the effectiveness of the traditional exams in testing the students' knowledge. Different linguistic features are used by participant D throughout her participation in the thread of tweets, which are limited to online interactions. For example, as noticed in this utterance, the participant performs abbreviated forms of different words, such as "f" to stand for "if", "r" for "are", and "info" for "information". These shortened forms are commonly used and understood in online communication.

4.2.1.1.4. Aggravated Disagreements

The aggravated disagreement strategy occurred by Saudi EFL teachers in the thread of tweets, such as using intensifiers to intensify the disagreement utterance. Different strategies are combined in the act combinations, e.g., verbal attack, using judgmental vocabulary, and giving rhetorical questions. Examples of the aggravated disagreement produced by Saudi EFL teachers in the thread of tweets are provided below.

4.2.1.1.4.1. Using Intensifiers

Example 39:

SA participant M replied to the two following main tweets in the thread by using intensifier to express her aggravated disagreements.

The original tweet:

"Extracurricular activities are a waste of time for teachers and students."
Participant M’s reply:

"I totally disagree. Extracurricular activities help learning soft skills and self-confidence. #ExpressYourOpinion.”

The original tweet:

"Men and women can do all jobs equally well."

Participant M’s reply:

"I totally disagree with this statement because they are different in everything. #ExpressYourOpinion"

In these two examples, participant M utters aggravated disagreement by initiating her response with the intensifier "totally disagree". The participant did not soften her disagreement, and then she provided a straightforward reason to support her opinion on the issues of teaching methods and equality of gender abilities. It is worth mentioning that Twitter hid the content of her tweet, which was mentioned earlier in example 16, and considers it offensive. In these disagreement utterances, the participant utilized the FTA, conducting the bald on-record without a redressive action strategy. These disagreement expressions might be perceived as non-politic/inappropriate and negatively marked behavior. The participant's identity as a TEFL professor at a university drives her to strongly express her opinion about the importance of extracurricular activities in teaching methods, especially in teaching the English language. When it comes to the topics of activities and teaching strategies, the participants utter aggravated disagreement. Furthermore, the factor of gender triggers the participant's unmitigated disagreement toward the claim that males and females can do all jobs in the same way, disregarding the fact that they have different abilities. It is worth mentioning that participant M is influenced by gender and culture in expressing her opinion in different utterances in the thread of tweets. For
example, in this post that discusses the right time for marriage, the main utterance is, "Men and women should get married before they turn thirty", to which she replied, "I agree. Marriage is a kind of stability for the whole society". The participant's agreement utterance indicates the influence of the common culture in Saudi society, which promotes marriage before the age of thirty.

4.2.1.4.2. Act Combinations

4.2.1.4.2.1. Verbal Attack, Using Judgmental Vocabulary and Giving Rhetorical Question

Example 40:

The original tweet:
"New social-media celebrities deserve their fame"

Participant B’s reply:

"Non[e] of the so called influ[e]ncer or celebrity on social media deserve their fame ... I mean what have they done to improve soci[e]ties or ben[e]fit mankind??"

In this example, it is evident that there are mistakes in spelling, which is in line with Herring (2005) who suggests that online interactions tend to have less correct language with regard to spelling. Participant B, a male Saudi EFL teacher at a Saudi elementary public school, initiates his disagreement by giving absolute and exaggerated opinion followed by verbal attack and using judgmental vocabulary to express his disagreement toward the fame of celebrities "Non[e] of the so called....". The participant ends his disagreement by providing a rhetorical question to underestimate the acts of the social media influencers "what have they done to improve soci[e]ties or ben[e]fit mankind??". The participant did the FTA and used the bald on-record without redressive strategy. The participant employed aggravated disagreement strategy which there is no attempt to mitigate his disagreement. The fame of social media influencers can be regarded as a
universal and social issue. Therefore, given that the participant tends to be straightforward in expressing his opinions in most of his replies in the thread of tweets, the personality factor may have an impact on participant’s use of this type of disagreement. The context may play a significant role to trigger the participant’s strong disagreement as well, since he has no tolerance for accepting the fame of the celebrities and clearly expresses that they do not deserve their fame.

4.2.1.4.2.2. Using Intensifiers and Scolding

Example 41:

The original tweet:

"Universities should admit students partly on the basis of race."

Participant K’s reply:

"Totally disagree! Admission should see no color, race, or gender. Everyone, no matter their cultural or racial background, has the right to pursue their education."

Participant K initiates his reply by using the intensifier "totally" to produce an aggravated disagreement followed by a scolding utterance to boost his opposite viewpoint toward the issue of the divergences among races in university admission. The bald on-record without a redressive action strategy is employed in this disagreement utterance to show that the participant used the FTA. Thus, the participant utilized unmitigated disagreement, which might be seen as impolite, non-politic/inappropriate, and negatively marked behavior. The factor of studying abroad and the length of stay in the native English-speaking country i.e., the United States, which enabled him to interact with colleagues from different cultures, may influence the participant’s position to strongly disagree with the unequal chances of education based on race.
The discussion of Saudi EFL participants’ disagreement strategies in the thread of tweets will be given in Chapter V. The analysis of American ESL teachers’ use of disagreements will be provided below.

4.2.2. The Analysis of The Thread of Tweets of American ESL Teachers

In the American ESL teachers’ replies to the thread of tweets, there are 11 strategies employed over their participation over two months:

- act combination (43 utterances),
- short contrary statement (22 times),
- partial agreement (7 occurrences),
- argument avoidance (3 times),
- hedging opinions (3 times),
- conditional (2 times),
- using intensifiers (2 times),
- giving an opinion (1 time),
- scolding (1 time),
- giving a personal experience (1 time),
- making a personal stance (1 time).

These strategies are given in Figure 24.
### Figure 24

**American ESL Teachers’ Disagreements Strategies in the Thread of Tweets**

| Disagreement strategies used by American ESL teachers in the thread of tweets. |
|---|---|
| Act combinations |   |
| Short contrary statements |   |
| Scolding |   |
| Giving opinion |   |
| Using intensifiers |   |
| Conditional |   |
| Partial agreements |   |
| Hedging opinions |   |
| Giving a personal experience |   |
| Making a personal stance |   |
| Argument avoidance |   |

The act combination strategies included 15 strategies:

- direct disagreement and explanation (24 utterances),
- direct disagreement and scolding (3 utterances),
- direct disagreement and giving reason (2 utterances),
- direct disagreement and irony (2 utterances),
- direct disagreement and contradiction (2 utterances),
- direct disagreement and providing example (1 utterance),
- direct disagreement and objection (1 utterance),
- direct disagreement and expressing feeling (1 utterance),
- partial agreement, giving example and opinion (1 utterance),
- direct disagreement and using inclusive 1st person plural pronoun "we" (1 utterance),
o direct disagreement, refusal and giving reason (1 utterance),
o direct disagreement and giving opinion (1 utterance),
o direct disagreement and using intensifier (1 utterance),
o showing understanding and providing opinion (1 utterance),
o showing understanding and provide disagreement (1 utterance).

These strategies are outlined in Table 11.

Table 11

*American ESL teachers’ employments of act combination strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act combination (AC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Direct disagreement and explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Direct disagreement and objection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Direct disagreement and providing example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Direct disagreement and expressing feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Direct disagreement and giving reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Partial agreement, giving example and opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Direct disagreement and irony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Direct disagreement and using inclusive 1st person pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Direct disagreement, refusal and giving reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Direct disagreement and giving opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Direct disagreement and contradiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Direct disagreement and using intensifier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Direct disagreement and scolding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Show understanding and provide opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Show understanding and provide disagreement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in Figure 25, there are 11 disagreement strategies employed by American ESL teachers in their replies to the thread of tweets over two months:

- act combination (44 threads), (in which the teachers employed two or more different strategies in their disagreement performance),
- short contrary statement e.g., "I disagree" (22 utterances),
- partial agreement (7 utterances),
- hedging opinions (4 utterances),
- argument avoidance (3 utterances (one male American ESL teacher)),
- using a conditional (2 utterances)
- using an intensifier (2 utterances)
- making a personal stance (1 utterance),
- scolding (1 utterance),
- giving an opinion (1 utterance),
- providing a personal experience (1 utterance).
In the thread of tweets, the most frequent disagreement strategy employed by American ESL teachers was disagreement neither softened nor strengthened, representing 59% of the total. American ESL teachers utilized disagreements that were neither softened nor strengthened by providing explicit linguistic markers, such as "I disagree," followed by an explanation, providing examples, reasons, opinions, irony, using inclusive 1st person plural pronouns, and expressing feelings. The second most frequent disagreement strategy was mitigated by employing politeness strategies, found in 14 utterances, for example: partial agreement, hedging opinion, and act combinations, e.g., showing understanding and providing disagreement and partial agreement, giving an example and opinion. The third most common disagreement strategy was aggravated disagreement, found in 9 utterances, for example: using intensifiers, scolding, and act combinations, e.g., explicit disagreement and/or objection, refusal, and giving a reason. The least
found strategy was mitigated disagreements (a negative politeness strategy), which occurred in only two instances, e.g., the conditional. The disagreement taxonomies found in the thread of tweets of American ESL teachers are provided in Figure 26.

**Figure 26**

*Taxonomy of Disagreement Performances of American ESL Teachers in the Thread of Tweets*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of disagreement</th>
<th>Type of linguistic marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Softened disagreement</td>
<td>Positive disagreement (Occurred in 14 utterances which represents 17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partial agreement (e.g., &quot;Somewhat agree...&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Show understanding (e.g., &quot;I get what you are saying but...&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hedging opinion (e.g., &quot;not sure...&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conditional (e.g., &quot;Agree if&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreement not softened or strengthened. (Occurred in 59 utterances which represents 70%)</td>
<td>Giving short contrary statement (e.g., &quot;disagree&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Giving opinion (e.g., &quot;I think...&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct disagreement and explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct disagreement and irony (e.g., &quot;I disagree&quot; 😂)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Argument Avoidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated disagreement</td>
<td>Scolding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Occurred in 9 utterances which represents 11%)</td>
<td>Using intensifier (e.g., &quot;Strongly disagree&quot;)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The frequencies and percentages of politeness strategies employed by American ESL teachers in the thread of tweets are given in Figure 27.

**Figure 27**

*Politeness strategies employed by American ESL teachers in expressing their disagreement in the thread of tweets*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politeness Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative politeness</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive politeness</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On record</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not do the FTA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2.1. Examples from American ESL teachers’ disagreement utterances in the thread of tweets.

In the following section, examples of disagreement strategies employed by American ESL teachers will be provided. The disagreement not mitigated or strengthened is the most used strategy by American participants in the thread of tweets.

4.2.2.1.1. Disagreement Not Softened or Strengthened

The most used disagreement not softened or strengthened strategy by American ESL teachers is act combinations, e.g., explicit disagreement and explanation which can be perceived as polite, appropriate/politic, and unmarked behavior. Also, American participants often performed short contradictory statements e.g., "I disagree" that can be perceived as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic, and negatively marked behavior.
4.2.2.1.1. Act Combinations

American ESL teachers employed different act combinations strategies such as explicit disagreement and explanation, and direct disagreement and irony—examples of act combinations that American participants used in the thread of tweets are provided below.

4.2.2.1.1.1. Explicit Disagreement and Explanation

This strategy was found in 24 disagreement utterances of American ESL teachers during their participation in the thread of tweets, which is in the line with Kobayashi and Viswat’s (2010) study, which found that Americans tend to be direct and straightforward when expressing their disagreements.

Example 42:

AM participant R, a female American ESL teacher in high school who holds a PhD degree in Linguistics, produced the strategy of explicit disagreement and providing explanation in six utterances during her replies to the thread of tweets, [only two replies are shown here].

The original tweet:

*Extracurricular activities are a waste of time for teachers and students.*

Participant R’s reply:

*Disagree. Extracurricular activities support social connectedness. Social connectionness and a sense of belonging are important for acculturation.*

Participant R expressed her disagreement directly by uttering "I disagree" followed by straightforward explanation in two sentences to support her opposing opinion. Thus, participant R implemented the FTA by doing bald on-record strategy which is not mitigated or aggravated. It can be perceived as polite, appropriate/politic and unmarked communicative behavior.
4.2.2.1.1.2. Direct Disagreement and Irony

Example 43:

The original tweet:

*Men and women should get married before they turn thirty.*

Participant C’s reply:

*I disagree 😅I’m about to be thirty and happily single.*

In this utterance, AM participant C uttered direct disagreement by saying it clearly, *"I disagree"*, followed by making an ironic statement includes a laughing emoji, "😅"as a paralinguistic cue that reflects irony that supported by the following statement *"I'm about to be thirty and happily single"*, to support her oppositional stance, not to strengthen her disagreement. Therefore, she employed on-record strategy, which was not softened or aggravated. This type of disagreement can be seen as polite, appropriate, and unmarked behavior. However, the cultural background may have influenced her opinion since it is more common in American society to marry at any age, while in Saudi culture, it is more common to get married before the age of thirty.

4.2.2.1.1.2. Short Contrary Statement

Example 44:

The original tweets:

*Teaching grammar is more important than teaching conversational skills.*

*Extracurricular activities are a waste of time for teachers and students.*

Participant G’s reply:

*Disagree with both.*

In this instance, AM participant G responded with a short and direct disagreement statement of *"disagree"* without offering any justification for his opinion. This direct and brief
disagreement could be seen as impolite, inappropriate, and negatively viewed behavior. It could be argued that the participant may not have been interested in discussing the issue, thus leading to his explicit and short disagreement utterance.

4.2.2.1.3. Argument Avoidance

Example 45:

The original tweets:

- Visiting a psychiatrist is more harmful than positive.
- Depression is a mental illusion rather than an actual disease.

Participant G’s reply:

- Yeah that one makes me uncomfortable. I have depression.

In this example, AM participant G avoided expressing his opinions on these issues since he experienced depression and was uncomfortable expressing his views toward them. He did not employ the FTA.

4.2.2.1.2. Mitigated Disagreement (Positive Politeness)

The positive politeness strategies occurred in 14 disagreement utterances performed by American ESL teachers in the thread of tweets. Examples of positive politeness strategies used by American participants to promote the addressee's positive face in expressing their disagreements in the thread of tweets are provided below.

4.2.2.1.2.1. Hedging Opinion

Example 46:

The original tweet:

- Teaching grammar is more important than teaching conversational skills.

AM participant T, a male American ESL teacher who teaches IELTS and TOEFL, replied:
This is a tough one because I'm a big fan of grammar. Sadly in America, grammar is taught less and less, with the predictable result that English skills are declining. But for EFL students, I disagree.

Participant T pretended to agree by stating that it is tough to decide and provide a reason, followed by giving evidence to support the preceding opinion. Then, he produced his disagreement as a concluding sentence. He attempted to support the addressee's positive face and soften his disagreement by providing an example and a disagreement in the situation of EFL learners, which is the purpose of the preceding utterance. This mitigated disagreement can be seen as polite, politic, and positively marked behavior. The issue of teaching grammar, since he is a big fan of it, as he said, plays a significant role in making him deflect and delay his disagreement.

4.2.2.1.2.2. Partial Agreement

Example 47:

The original tweet:

Salary is the most crucial aspect of a job.

Participant C’s reply:

I soft agree w it - salary is extremely important, especially for ECRs and folks who are the primary care provider in the family.

Participant C produced a partial agreement to support the preceding utterance without expressing her other opposite opinion. She implemented a positive politeness strategy, mitigated and seen as polite, appropriate/politic, and positively marked behavior. The participant's personal identity, as she may be a primary provider in her family, may affect her opinion to produce partial agreement on this issue.
4.2.2.1.2. Mitigated disagreement (negative politeness)

The negative politeness strategies are rarely performed by American ESL teachers in the thread of tweets as conditional statements, as provided in example 48 below.

4.2.2.1.3.1. Conditional

Example 48:

The original tweet:

*Universities should admit students partly on the basis of race.*

AM Participant Y’s reply:

*If their goal is to diversify their population then yes, it may be necessary.*

AM Participant Y provided a conditional statement to mitigate the threat on her and the addressee’s negative faces. The sensitivity of the issue of considering race as a standard for university admission makes her mitigate her utterance; otherwise, she may be seen as a racist. Participant Y employed a negative politeness strategy in softening her opinion, which might be considered polite, appropriate, and positively marked behavior.

4.2.2.1.4. Aggravated disagreements

4.2.2.1.4.1. Using Intensifiers

Example 49:

The original tweet:

*Depression is a mental illusion rather than an actual disease.*

Participant C’s reply:

*I hard disagree - it’s a mental and physical reality and even if it weren’t, it’s still the real lived experience of many people.*
AM Participant C strongly disagreed with the previous statement, expressing her disagreement with an intensifier, "I hard disagree," and then providing a firm opinion to back it up, "it's a mental and physical reality." Her strong stance on the importance of mental therapy likely drove her to make such an aggravated response. Her attitude and personality also likely played a role in her choice of words, as she was unwilling to accept this kind of opinion.

4.2.2.1.4.2. Act Combinations

4.2.2.1.4.2.1. Direct Disagreement and Objection

Example 50:

The original tweet:

Females are better students than males.

AM Participant Z, a female American ESL teacher, replied:

Disagree, no one gender is guaranteed to be superior to the other.

In this example, AM Participant Z explicitly disagreed and provided an objection to the preceding opinion. The issue of gender differences affects her and produces aggravated disagreement. The direct and aggravated disagreement could be seen as impolite and negatively marked communicative behavior.

2.2.1.4.2.2. Direct Disagreement and Scolding

Example 51:

The original tweet:

Universities should admit students partly on the basis of race.

AM participant T’s reply:

I disagree...Race should play no role whatsoever in whether or not universities admit student applicants.
AM participant T uttered direct disagreement, "I disagree with the statement," followed by reprimanding that race should not play a role in any issue of this life. He did not tolerate the issue of racism, not only in the university admission. The seriousness of the issue and his attitude toward it influence her disagreement strategy. Aggravated and explicit disagreement without mitigated attempts might be perceived as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic, and negatively marked behavior.

4.2.3. Conclusion

Based on the comparison of the disagreement strategies used by Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers in a thread of tweets, it can be seen that American ESL participants were more direct and provided more straightforward explanations when expressing their disagreements than Saudis, which is in line with Kobayashi and Viswat's (2010) findings that Americans are more likely to be direct and straightforward than Japanese EFL learners. Additionally, American participants uttered short disagreements without providing any justifications 22 times, double the number of times Saudis did so, suggesting that Saudi EFLs tend to use more mitigated strategies such as: expressing partial agreement, apologizing, giving suggestions, and hedging opinions than Americans, which differs from Kreutel's (2007) findings that Americans used more mitigated disagreements than nonnative speakers of English. More discussion will be provided in the next chapter.

Overall, it has been observed that when the participants expressed their disagreements naturally, as found in their corpus of tweets, they produced more aggravated disagreements. On the other hand, in their participation in the thread of tweets, the participants mainly employed disagreement not softened or strengthened, followed by positive politeness in softening disagreement and then aggravated disagreements. Chapter V will provide a detailed discussion.
4.3. Questionnaire

The open-ended questionnaire used in this study includes section A (demographic background) and section B (open-ended questions). The interpretation of the data of demographic background (section A) was provided earlier [specific section number]). Thus, this chapter will provide an analysis and interpretation of open-ended questions (section B). The open-ended questionnaire involves 13 questions to investigate Saudi EFL teachers’ attitudes toward using disagreement strategies on Twitter.

However, analyzing the open-ended questionnaire can be challenging due to the large amount of text that must be read and interpreted. The first step was coding and categorizing the answers to analyze the open-ended questionnaire data (section B). Once all the responses had been received, they were automatically categorized and coded in Google Forms for each question. The next step was interpreting the data to draw meaningful conclusions from it by reading through the coded responses and identifying the data that emerged. Since there are varieties in most of the participants’ answers, the analysis and interpretation of the data will be provided on a question-by-question basis. The interpretation of the responses to the open-ended questions will be provided below. The discussion of the questionnaires will be provided in Chapter V. Participants’ answers will be displayed in the tables, followed by the interpretations, and finally, the summary will be visualized in figures, as shown below.

4.3.1. How Saudi EFL Teachers Joined Twitter

In order to know the main reason Saudi participants joined Twitter, the following question was provided to them. The answers of Saudi EFL teachers are displayed in Table 12.
Table 12

Saudi EFL Teachers’ Answers of What Attracted Them to Join on Twitter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. How did you come to join Twitter and what attracted you?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like writing pithy comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is a way of reading news and it contains helpful tweets. It also a way of contacting other people all over the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter is common in my country and I joined it since its beginning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A friend talked me into joining Twitter. I mostly used to be up-to-date on what's going on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socializing with my colleagues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From my friends. English Language and education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have come to find out about jobs news.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I joined Twitter out of curiosity at first... but I then became active when I started using it for mostly professional reasons. However, I also share personal things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 12, there are various responses provided by Saudi participants. This question includes two parts; how they joined Twitter and what attracted them to join. Some responded to how they knew about Twitter and their interest in using it, while others immediately revealed what attracted them to join. Two participants indicated that they heard about Twitter from a friend. At the same time, one participant revealed that it is popular in Saudi Arabia, making it easy to join it from the beginning. Also, one participant joined Twitter out of curiosity.

At the same time, participants provided different reasons that attracted them to join Twitter. Four participants preferred to use Twitter to read up-to-date news, and one also looked for jobs. Three participants were interested in educational accounts, one specified the English language field. Two participants used Twitter for communications, one participant with colleagues and the last participant with people worldwide. One participant clarified that he liked to write pithy comments, which is also evident in his corpus of tweets and his participation in the thread of
tweets. One participant implied that she first joined Twitter out of curiosity and started to use it for professional reasons, which is why she interacted with educational topics. Then she started to be interested in sharing tweets about her personal life. The summary of participants’ reasons for joining Twitter is shown in Figure 28.

Figure 28

Participants’ Reasons for Joining Twitter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>News</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2. The Most Styles of Language Used on Twitter

The question, ‘What are the most styles of language used on Twitter’ was provided to Saudi participants to investigate what is the most used language style they performed on Twitter. The answers are shown in Table 13.
Table 13

Saudi EFL Teachers’ Perception of the Most Used Language on Twitter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. What are the most styles of language used on Twitter: e.g., (polite/impolite) (direct/indirect) (formal/informal) or Other:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As I see, mostly informal, direct, and impolite styles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It includes all styles of language either polite or impolite, direct or indirect, and formal or informal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s a mixture of all the styles mentioned in the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe it's a little bit of everything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite, direct, informal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It depends on which hat you wear on Twitter, I am mostly formal, polite and direct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite and formal most time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try to be as formal as possible, depending on the situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 indicates that the most commonly used language style on Twitter, as perceived by Saudi participants, is polite language, which may be because four participants are interested in news. Three participants are interested in education according to their responses to the previous question. The direct language and formal styles were chosen by three respondents, while informal language was selected by two participants and impolite language by one participant. It is worth mentioning that some participants chose more than one strategy (6 participants).

However, most of the students claim that all the styles of language use polite/impolite, direct/indirect, formal/informal, implemented on Twitter depending on the situation. This result leads to the significant role of context in determining the language strategy used. This observation confirms Miller's (2000) finding that context strongly determines the expression of disagreement. The frequencies of the Saudi participants' choices of the most styles of language used on Twitter are provided in Figure 29.
4.3.3. Saudi EFL Teachers’ Interactions on Twitter

Table 14 below indicates that seven Saudi participants interacted with both Saudi and American ESL teachers on Twitter, while two only interacted with Saudi EFL teachers. One Saudi participant stated that she had no interaction with teachers on Twitter.

Table 14

With whom do Saudi participants interact on Twitter?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Do you usually interact with Saudi EFL teachers or American ESL teachers, or both on Twitter?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I usually interact with Saudi EFL teachers on Twitter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi teachers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfortunately, No.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you mean likes and retweets, yes, I do... but less in discussions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 30 below shows with whom Saudi EFL teachers are usually interacting: native English speakers, Saudi EFL teachers, or both.
4.3.4. The Presence of Pragmatic Knowledge in School Textbooks

As shown in Table 15 below, four participants’ responses suggest that there is a limited amount of pragmatic knowledge in the textbooks. However, three participants indicated that there is a substantial amount of pragmatic knowledge present in each unit, with one participant noting that this can be found in role-play exercises based on everyday Saudi life. In contrast, two participants stated that the textbooks did not cover the pragmatic aspect.

**Table 15**

**Saudi EFL Teachers’ Responses to the Existence of Pragmatic Knowledge in School Textbooks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Do Saudi EFL textbooks include pragmatic knowledge? If so, to what extent the pragmatic knowledge presented in Saudi EFL textbooks?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don’t think they consider pragmatical aspects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes to a large extent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, they do. It’s included in almost all units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think it can be seen on role-play exercises on these textbooks that are derived from the everyday Saudi life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, not too much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatic knowledge in Saudi EFL textbooks is very limited and hardly ever found.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, they don’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have no idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not as much as I want to... mostly in (functional language) sections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes in some levels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The number of the participants' responses are provided in Figure 31 below.

**Figure 31**

*The Presence of Pragmatic Knowledge in School Textbooks*

![Bar Chart]

The existence of pragmatic knowledge in school textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have no idea</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.5. Politeness Strategies and Speech Acts (Pragmatic Knowledge of The Target Language)

According to Table 16, five participants indicated that they had a good understanding of pragmatic knowledge; four of them were able to explain what they knew about politeness and speech act strategies. In contrast, three Saudi EFL teachers reported that they were unfamiliar with politeness strategies and speech acts in pragmatics, while one teacher had a limited understanding of them. On the other hand, one participant stated that she usually understood the importance of providing polite responses.
Table 16

_Saudi EFL Teachers’ Familiarity with Politeness Strategies and Speech Acts in Pragmatics_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Are you familiar with politeness strategies and speech acts in pragmatics? If so, briefly explain what did you know about these issues in pragmatics?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not too much honestly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using language in a way that maintains others’ feelings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes. I believe politeness strategies vary depending on the situation and the interlocutor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I teach English and it is usually part of the lessons. Due to lack of exposure to natural context of the English language, learners would sometimes unintentionally sound rude or impolite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I’m not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not a specialist in that, but I know the importance of polite responses strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes...I understand the cultural aspects and differences that needs to be considered by speakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No not yet.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding Saudi EFL teachers' views on politeness in pragmatics, one described politeness as "using language in a way that maintains others' feelings." At the same time, another participant highlighted that politeness strategies depend on the context and people involved. Also, another participant integrated pragmatic knowledge into her classes to help students avoid being seen as impolite or rude due to their lack of language exposure outside the classroom. One teacher noted that having a pragmatic understanding enabled her to recognize the cultural aspects and differences that needed to be considered by speakers. Saudi EFL teachers' familiarity with politeness strategies and speech acts in pragmatics is visualized in Figure 32, below.
4.3.6. The Teaching of Pragmatics in Classrooms

As Table 17 shows, seven Saudi EFL teachers taught pragmatic aspects of the second language while three did not.

Table 17

Saudi EFL Teachers' Use of Pragmatic Knowledge in Their Classrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Do you teach any pragmatic knowledge in your classrooms? If so, do you teach politeness and speech acts in your classroom?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes for both.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is very important to give some background knowledge about English the natural contexts and teach students what would sound polite and what wouldn't.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I don’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, politeness strategies are essential topics to teach students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I mention examples comparing between L1 and L2, to raise students’ awareness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes I do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 33 below represents the number of Saudi EFL teachers who incorporated pragmatic knowledge into their classrooms and those who did not.
Figure 33

_Arabic_ EFL Teachers’ Implementation of Pragmatic Knowledge in Their Classrooms

| Saudi EFL teachers’ implementation of pragmatic knowledge in their classrooms |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| no                              | yes             |
| 3                               | 7               |

4.3.7. Attitudes Toward Impolite Behaviors on Twitter

Table 18 below shows Saudi EFL teachers’ attitudes toward to what extent the impolite behaviors are found on Twitter.

**Table 18**

_EFL Teachers' Attitudes on The Behavior of The Majority of Twitter Users_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. Do you agree that most Twitter users use Twitter impolitely? Explain.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes. Directed offense is predominant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not most. Maybe some of them and this is due to their lack of politeness expressions and not respecting other's opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I don’t. Some users are polite whereas others are not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wouldn’t say ‘most’, but there are many of them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have always heard that most of twitter users are rude and impolite but I have very limited number of friends that I follow I am very selective with the topics I engage to. So, I can't recall any personal experience with those users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I don’t. Not all of them. There are users use Twitter to provide valuable topics and information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, most are misusing choosing the right words to express their opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of the accounts I follow are of academics with their true identity and names in their bio.. if anything they are probably more polite in Twitter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At some point.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As provided in Table 18, only two participants ultimately agreed that most Twitter users act impolitely; one said that "directed offense is predominant," and another added that most users misuse words when expressing their opinions. One participant clarified that most Twitter users act impolitely at some point. However, four participants disagreed that most Twitter users use Twitter impolitely and argued that while some users may be rude or impolite, many use Twitter to provide valuable topics and information in their interactions. Two respondents stated they could not recall any rude content; one is selective in the topics in which she engages, and the other only follows academic accounts with their true identities mentioned in their bios. Thus, the users of those academic accounts tend to be polite in their interactions on Twitter. One respondent completely disagreed but provided a short answer of "no" with no exceptions expressed. Saudi EFL teachers’ attitudes toward if the impolite behaviors most used on Twitter are summarized in Figure 34, below.

Figure 34

*Saudi EFL Teachers' Attitudes on The Behavior of "Most Twitter Users Use Twitter Impolitely"

4.3.8. How Saudi EFL teachers reduced the FTA

Table 19 below displays the answers of Saudi participants to what strategies they used to reduce the risk of offending their followers on Twitter.
Strategies Employed by Saudi Participants to Reduce the Risk of Offending Their Followers in Twitter Interactions

8. How did you reduce the risk of threatening or intimidating your followers’ faces in your exchanges? Explain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When occurring, I personally directly intervene and if the situation demands, I immediately block and hide the offending replies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I deleted these tweets and block those who threaten my followers after reporting their account.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through smiling, friendly looking and politely speaking.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would try not be as direct as face-to-face interactions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have never faced such problem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's never happened.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actually, I don’t have many followers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't get into a fight to impose my opinion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try to be as subjective as possible... disagreeing with the idea not the person.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By reporting inappropriate tweet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicates that three respondents have taken some steps to reduce the risk of threatening or intimidating the threat of other Twitter users’ replies to their followers’ faces, including directly intervening when such situations occur, deleting tweets, blocking offending accounts, and reporting inappropriate tweets. Four participants clarified how they softened their utterances to avoid misunderstandings when directly interacting with their followers: speaking in a friendly manner by posting a smiley face, being straightforward in face-to-face interactions, not forcing their opinions, and being as objective as possible by disagreeing with an idea, not the person. Three respondents said that had not previously experienced any issues with this. Figure 35 below outlines the strategies employed by Saudi EFL teachers to reduce any potential risks to their followers.
4.3.9. The Experience of Misunderstanding on Twitter

Table 20 shows to what extent Saudi EFL teachers experienced misunderstanding in their communication on Twitter.

Table 20

Saudi Participants’ Experience of Misunderstanding Among Followers on Twitter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. Have you experienced any misunderstanding on Twitter between your followers? Explain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, two female followers misunderstand each other and then I had to politely explain and end the misunderstanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I haven’t because I’m so cautious about the language I use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, it does happen on Twitter, and I believe it's because of the lack of real-life context and facial expressions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not really, I always make sure I use language they understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I haven’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall, as shown in Table 20 above, the majority of the Saudi participants did not encounter any misunderstanding between their followers on Twitter, accounting for 80% of the total. Only two participants experienced misunderstanding among their followers on Twitter. One participant described an incident in which he sought to resolve a quarrel between two female followers by responding courteously to solve that dispute. Another participant argued that the conflict happened on Twitter by virtue of the fact that the online platform lacks real-life context and facial expressions, which may exacerbate the problem and lead to such misunderstandings. The percentages of Saudi participants’ experience of misunderstanding among followers on Twitter are given in Figure 36 below.

**Figure 36**

*Saudi Participants’ Experience of Misunderstanding Among Followers on Twitter*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Saudi participants’ experience of misunderstanding among followers on Twitter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No, 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.10. **Reactions to Vulgar Words Used on Twitter**

Table 21 below demonstrates how Saudi EFL teachers reacted to impolite language on Twitter, such as swearing or vulgar words.
**Table 21**

*Saudi Participants’ Reactions to Swearing/ Vulgar Words Used on Twitter*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I never do so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really don't accept vulgar words in Twitter and I usually ignore them or even block them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t tolerate rude expressions or behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I just ignore or report the account.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I report the tweet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't accept or use such language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will not accept swearing and of course I will not use vulgar words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In particular, I have not seen such this in my account, but for me, I prefer not to respond by words but block the comment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't like it at all. As I once heard, “people can be anything they want in social media, why choose to be idiots!” Sorry:).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignore it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20 above shows that most participants did not tolerate swearing or using vulgar words on Twitter. The rest of the participants usually ignored them, blocked them, and some even went as far as to report the tweet. Overall, it is clear that Saudi participants do not accept or use such language and prefer to ignore it. The frequencies of Saudi participants’ reactions to swearing/vulgar words used on Twitter are displayed in Figure 37 below.
The discussion of the questionnaire data will be presented in Chapter V. The last part of this chapter will provide an analysis of the interview data, as demonstrated below.

4.4. The Analysis of Interview Data

In this section, the interview data will be analyzed to answer the questions of this study. After retrieving the corpus of the participants' tweets and observing their participation in the thread of tweets over two months, questionnaires were distributed to the Saudi EFL teachers. Once their responses were received, follow-up interviews were conducted.

Firstly, the recordings of the structured interview data were manually transcribed. All interviews were conducted in English, and the participants also provided their responses in English. Thus, all interviews were originally delivered in English. The average interview duration was 16 minutes, but some participants spent up to one hour explaining their answers. Some Saudi participants were willing to go further in explanation by providing personal experiences, which made more questions arise, such as teaching pragmatic knowledge to be more like semi-structured interviews. After coding and organizing the data into themes, the analysis of the data was provided systematically. Each main theme was divided into subcategories of themes. Overall, the answers
to the questions were selected and analyzed in the following interview extracts. The interviews were conducted to answer the following questions:

**RQ 1.2.** What is the perlocutionary effect of tweets on Saudi EFL teachers?

**RQ 2.** What factors influence Saudi EFL teachers’ use of politeness strategies in expressing disagreements?

**RQ 3.** What are the different politeness strategies used in expressing disagreements by Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers?

The main themes are organized under each of these three questions, which are categorized into subthemes. The interview data will be interpreted in the next section, while the discussion will be presented in Chapter V.

The themes and subthemes of RQ 1.2, "What is the perlocutionary effect of tweets on Saudi EFL teachers? "are provided in Figure 38 below.
Figure 38

Themes and Subthemes of RQ 1.2

Perlocutionary effect

The influence of the main utterance in the thread of tweets
- General perception
  - Willingness to participate
  - Enjoy providing opinions

The influence of provided issues
- Controversial/Taboo topics
- Specific culture/universal issues

Clarity
- Expressive and detailed answers
- Directness/indirectness

Clarity
- Interactions

Confusion
- English language proficiency
- Direct and short utterance

American ESLs teachers' disagreement performance

Saudi EFL teachers' disagreement performance

At the start of the interview, the interviewees were asked about their overall experience of taking part in the two-month-long thread of tweets and hashtag #ExpressYourOpinion, since they were enthusiastic and committed to expressing their views when different issues were posted.

4.4.1. The Influence of the Original Utterance in the Thread of Tweets

In the following subthemes, the influence of the main utterance i.e., the posted issues in the thread of tweets on Saudi EFL teachers.

4.4.1.1. General Perception

Example 1: Willingness to Participate

Extract 1:

Participant D: To be honest, when you first approach me regarding this, I was a bit hesitant about it. But when you started posting tweets, I thought it was not threatening as I thought to be. ...It was less scary than I thought.

Extract 2:

Participant F: I rarely participated on Twitter, but I checked it every day. I like the questions and linguistic issues, but they are critical questions. I liked participating in that hashtag.

Extract 3:

Participant S: Actually, this is my 1st time to share my tweets in English, so I was so excited.

As seen in extracts 2 and 3, participants F and S were willing to participate, and it was a new experience for them to be able to share their opinions in English on Twitter. Participant D, a female teacher, was initially hesitant to participate, but when the thread began, she found it less intimidating than she had expected, saying, "It was less scary than I thought."
Example 2: Enjoying Providing Opinion

Extract 1:
Participant L: *I really enjoyed it. It was like brainstorming for me, kind of thinking of some detailed issues that I sometimes have never thought of as language instructor, I really enjoyed it.*

Extract 2
Participant J: *For me it is new experience I liked it.*

Extract 3:
Participant A: *It was great and fun, I like the questions because most of the questions are crucial, and it is important for me to express my opinions.*

Extract 4:
Participant K: *It is good having an opportunity to express my opinion on different issues, very different issues I had add, ranging from educational topics to social to topics on different aspects, having the sufficient amount of time to give a lot of thought on my opinion and how to phrase it very well while keeping on the Twitter limitation for sending the tweets, so yes, it was different and I can say I enjoyed it.*

In extracts 1-4 above, the Saudi EFL teachers said that they enjoyed expressing their views on various critical and controversial matters in the thread of tweets. Most of them usually debated in Arabic. Participant K showed enthusiasm for expressing his thoughts on these topics. Twitter's limitation of words in each tweet made him phrase his opinion to be within that limit.
4.4.1.2. The Influence of Provided Issues

Example 1: Controversial/Taboo Topics

Extract 1:

Participant B: *I think they are debatable; we can debate some questions that you posted because it is really touch most problems that we have in the field.*

Extract 2:

Participant F: *they are controversial. Such as "the comparison between men and women, who is most serious in performing job,“*

Extract 3:

Participant K: *I would not say taboos, but I remember one topic (female students are smarter than male students), this may come as controversial, but I would not say any of the topics was taboo, I would say debatable, most of the topics or all of them are debatable but I cannot recall any taboo topics.*

Extract 4:

Participant M: *they are debatable, some of the topics are debatable which receive different opinions, some are agreed, and some are not.*

Extract 5:

Participant A: *Racism is considered taboo topic in Saudi culture because it is not a part of dissuasion or criteria to decide to people to enroll in universities based on race.*

As can be seen in extracts 1-5 provided above, the majority of Saudi participants believed that posted topics in the threads are good for debates, but they did not consider any topic to be taboo in either Saudi or American culture. For them, the most controversial topics were gender differences in either doing jobs or being better students. On the other hand, participant A assumed
that racism was a taboo topic in Saudi culture due to the fact that it is not permitted to be discussed there and did not apply for university admission.

**Example 2: Specific Culture or Universal Issues**

**Extract 1:**

Participant B: *They are debatable in both Saudi and American cultures.*

**Extract 2:**

Participant K: *I think some of them are global issues, some of them are mutual, I remember one of the topics was about (the assessment exam or the IELTS/TOFEL score and what are the indication for language proficiency), men versus women when it comes to abilities to work on certain jobs, I think they are connected and therefore, they might have controversy as it exists in almost all societies, so it is not only confined or restricted in one society over the other.*

**Extract 3:**

Participant H: *Most of them related to Saudi culture*

**Extract 4:**

Participant L: *I believe these issues are controversial in both Saudi and American cultures, depending on the environment, ... however, I believe that even actually in the scientific context, they are still controversial.*

**Extract 5:**

Participant S: *These topics are trendy in Saudi Arabia, we discussed them many times not just in social media but also in real life.*
Extract 6:
Participant A: A lot of them are controversial, some of the questions are debatable in Saudi culture, other issues like gender and race are mostly in the west and American culture but it is not necessary here in Saudi culture.

Extracts (1-6) indicated that most Saudi participants perceived the posted topics in the thread of tweets and hashtag #ExpressYourOpinion to be controversial in both Saudi and American cultures. Participant K highlighted that there are global issues that are not restricted to only one society, by saying that "the assessment exam or the IELTS/TOFEL score and what are the indication for language proficiency, men versus women when it comes to abilities to work on certain jobs". However, Participant A thought that gender and race issues were mainly present in American culture. On the other hand, Participants H and S argued that these matters are widely discussed in Saudi society, with Participant S adding "not only in social media but also in real life".

4.4.2. The Influence of the Perlocutionary Effect of Other Replies in the Thread of Tweets on Saudi EFL Teachers

This super theme indicates the influence of other participants' tweets' perlocutionary force on Saudi EFL teachers; first, the effect of American ESL teachers' responses, followed by the impact of other Saudi EFL teachers' replies on Saudi participants in the thread of tweets.

4.4.2.1. American ESLTeachers' Disagreement Performance

According to the Saudi EFL teachers’ responses, a few perceived American participants’ replies in the thread of tweets as confused due to the advanced language used; others received them as usually using short disagreement utterances which is confusing, while the rest saw their disagreement utterances as logical, clear, detailed and persuasive.
4.4.2.1.1. Confusion

Example 1: English Language Proficiency

Extract 1:

Participant H: The tweets of Saudi participants are so clear for me, but the Americans’ replies, I tried to translate and search on Google to understand what they mean. Maybe they are direct but the language some words of them are not clear for me. When I search in Google and try to translate, I found most of them are direct.

Saudi participant H stated that he could comprehend the responses given by Saudis since they spoke in simple language. On the other hand, he had difficulty understanding the American replies as they used more complex language, requiring him to translate their utterances in order to understand them.

Example 2: Direct and Short Utterances

Extract 1:

Participant A: I read some responses, I do not know if they are lazy, or they did not have opinion to justify so they just keep it short to say I agree/ I disagree. I think it is probably language and the interest of being real in the situation because not all of us, I mean humans or people have the same energy to participate sufficiently. They may not put energy and effort to express their opinions.

Extract 2:

Participant K: I remember, one of the participants was like I agree on both (period) and that is it. Which I find not very thoughtful, not helpful, I am not sure if that person were busy, or we cannot understand why that participant put short answer, but I cannot recall any impolite responses to the tweets.
Extract 3:

Participant A: *I read some responses, I do not know if they are lazy, or they did not have opinion to justify so they just keep it short to say I agree/ I disagree.*

SA participants L, K and A showed that the illocutionary force of the short replies (*"I agree"/*"I disagree"*) was confusing, making them interpret that those who produced these kinds of answers may be lazy or not put effort into expressing their opinions. Participant L thought that those who answered with short utterances might lack linguistic proficiency or interest. However, participant K believed those answers were *"not very thoughtful, not helpful"* but did not identify any impolite tweets in the threads.

4.4.2.1.2. Clarity

Example 1: Expressive and Detailed Answers

Extract 1:

Participant B: *I read tweets from American teacher, I like his opinions and some of his tweets, because he actually replies to some issues from logical point. Not like us. Saudi participant either force our opinions or give a short and simple answers. But Americans express and explain, they give reasons for the opinion.*

Participant B, in this utterance and others, always claimed that Americans tend to be more polite and expressive in expressing their disagreements than Saudis. He thought that Saudis forced their opinions or gave short utterances while Americans tended to justify their views. He liked the responses provided by an American male ESL teacher in the thread, since he managed to be expressive and persuasive; as he mentioned, *"he actually replies to some issues from a logical point"*. 
Example 2: Directness/Indirectness

Extract 1:
Participant L: What caught my attention is that the directiveness of personal standpoint, most of the cases and most of the replies... Some have strong responses and very direct replies.

Extract 2:
Participant J: some of them are direct, others are indirect

Extract 3:
Participant A: it was straightforward, I remember the replies or responses I read are straightforward ...... and it harmless as well. Even we talked about race or gender I think nobody can disagree of that; no body want to being racist..... So, the responses I read were clear and obvious.

Extract 4:
Participant B: I think they are clear. There is nothing unclear. There are no aggressive or impolite tweets. I did not see any hidden messages or words in the tweets.

Extract 5:
Participant F: most of them are understandable, clear, obvious. never noticed any hidden meaning or intention, everything was clear to me.

Extract 6:
Participant M: their way of disagreements is understandable, very clear and sometimes persuasive.

Extract 7:
Participant S: They were clear.

All the responses in the extracts (1-7) mentioned above indicated that all replies employed by American participants were clear, straightforward and understandable. Participants F and B
revealed no hidden meaning in the illocutionary force in the Americans’ disagreement implementations. Participant L demonstrated that some replies were direct and strong. Participant A showed that American disagreement utterances in the thread were "harmless"; similarly, participant B mentioned that there were no aggressive utterances offered. However, participant J believed that not all replies provided by American participants were direct, but also there were indirect statements.

Example 3: Interactions

Extract 1:

Participant A: Some of them gave liked to my tweets and responses as well.

In the thread of tweets, there were no interactions between all the study participants. They replied only to the primary tweet in the thread, but they did not interact with each other in the same thread. When participants were asked about that, only participant A showed that she received likes to her responses to the thread and tweets in her Twitter account from some American participants.

4.4.2.2. The Influence of Saudi EFL Teachers' Disagreement Performance

4.4.2.2.1. Clarity

Extract 1:

Participant H: The tweets of Saudi participants are so clear for me.

Extract 2:

Participant A: If Saudi and Arabs try to express their opinions the language affect because it is not their language and the level of education, they have would affect the strategy of disagreement. If Arab disagree in English, they will follow the English structure which is trying to praise and partially agree like gradually disagree and basically not saying I disagree but showing why they
disagree. Showing the other point of view, it is indirect disagreement, but it is obviously disagreement.

SA participant H showed that Saudi participants’ disagreement utterances were clear. However, SA participant A indicated that Saudi participants tended to adapt the English structure to express their disagreements by showing partial agreement and indirect disagreements. For this reason, for participant A, the language and education level affected the disagreement strategy.

4.4.2.2.2. Similarity

Extract 1:

Participant H: *I don’t think on the replies I read there is a gap between our opinions.*

SA Participant H indicated that there are similarities in the ways in which Saudi EFL teachers conveyed their opinions, as shown in their participation in the thread of tweets and the hashtag #ExpressYourOpinion.

To address the second question (RQ 2. What factors influence Saudi EFL teachers’ use of politeness strategies in expressing disagreements?) the themes and subthemes are provided in Figure 39.
Figure 39

Themes and Subthemes of RQ 2

Factors

- The 1st language influence
- Personality
- The nature of online communication
- Differences of FTF and online communication
- The absence of voice intonation
- Representing a real identity in (bio)
- The absence of facial expression
- Interactions with native English speakers
- Anonymous
- Linguistic proficiency
- Teaching background
- Teaching experience
- School curriculum
- Pragmatic knowledge
- Age
- context (type of issue)
4.4.3. Factors that Influence Saudi EFL Teachers’ Use of Politeness Strategies in Expressing Disagreements

4.4.3.1. The Influence of the First Language

Extract 1:
Participant L: (students) express their disagreements differently in their 1st and 2nd language. Because the performance and competence are very different between the L1 and L2, so I believe that the language will differ. They will be more direct in the 2nd language unless the L1 culture tends to use the direct language.

Extract 2:
Participant A: 1st. language played a big role.

Extract 3:
Participant K: (students) express/ use their opinions naturally, the way they grow up with the language. They will tend to be direct as opposed to their L2 use. They will tend to be more direct in their 1st language in expressing their opinions.

The factors mentioned in the above extracts are performance and competence, the first language influence, and the transfer of first language pragmatics. Participant L indicated that if the disagreement strategies in the first language were direct, it would affect the performance of disagreement in the target language to be direct as well.

4.4.3.2. Interactions with Native English Speakers

Extract 1:
Participant J: I do not have experience to interact with native Americans face to face, but I saw them in Tv series and shows and maybe in social media like Instagram.
Extract 2:
Participant A: Yes, because I am interested in languages and language learning, so mostly the people I follow in the same field. I would not see a lot of American people discuss or express opinions in general matters in the world but language. I see the trendy hashtag in America about the strong storm, I do not remember the name of the hashtag, but I noticed how people express their opinions and how people handling this in the hashtag, from what I see, they tend to list points to try to convert the other party with their opinions and why they think like that.

Extract 3:
Participant D: I did communicate (with native Americans) in my job, I used to be the professional development unit’s supervisor, so I contacted with foreign trainers, I used to work with them, through emails and sometimes in sessions and they tend to be very polite and very nice and still very assertive.

Extract 4:
Participant B: I follow some (American) teachers Twitter accounts on Twitter (males/females).

Extract 5:
Participant H: Actually, I did not (have interactions with native Americans).

Extract 6:
Participant M: I usually do not follow any American accounts.

It can be concluded that most Saudi participants did not interact with native American English speakers. However, Participant A followed some accounts of Americans who work in the same field of teaching; she noticed some American hashtags about a "strong storm", in which she
found Americans expressed their opinions as she said, "they tend to list points to try to convert the other party with their opinions and why they think like that". Participant D had interacted with Americans in her work; she found that they tend to be polite, persuasive, and sometimes assertive.

4.4.3.3. Years of Teaching Experience

Extract 1:

Participant A: 2nd language teaching definitely changes people nature, high tempered people that are not patients, teaching would help and train you to have this cool personality to express your ideas because this information you teach so you play your part do a role play or set a model for your students and when you set a model every time is going to be your personality. This is my experience of 10 years.

From her teaching experience for 10 years, participant A believed that teaching plays a significant role in changing people's nature to be patient in arguments. As long as their teaching experiences grow, it will be their personality to be open-minded in expressing their opinions and accepting others’ opinions.

4.4.3.4. Age

Extract 1:

Participant B: I think it's both my educational life and personality. And maybe also the age. When you grow up, when you become over 30 or 40, you change a lot of things in the way you speak, not like a young person or a teenager. So, when you grow up and you see a lot of life, a lot of people, you change with the time.

Because (students) are teenagers, they disagree immediately in both Arabic and English language, they say anything. I think age is a crucial factor that affect the way of expressing disagreements.
Extract 2:

Participant J: *I noticed that people in the teenager age tend to be direct to express their opinions more than elder people.*

From extracts 1 and 2, it is clear that Participants J and B added age as an essential factor that plays a vital role in disagreement expressions. They assumed that as people grow up, they tend to express their disagreements more politely, whereas teenagers express them directly without mitigated or redressive action. Participant B also mentioned that besides age, academic life and personality affect his agreement performance.

4.4.3.5. The Nature of Online Communication

Extract 1:

Participant K: *I think online platforms or virtual platforms gave a freedom of being direct. Depending on persons or the individual’s linguistic background. Whether native speaker or L2 speaker. Online platforms give the freedom to be direct. So, this is the reason behind it.*

Participant K supposed that the nature of online platforms offers the freedom for people to express their disagreements more openly and direct regardless of linguistic proficiency.

4.4.3.5.1. Representing a Real identity in a Biography

Extract 1:

Participant A: *It does, (bio affects the style of interaction) for sure, affect the language I would use and the personality I would like to appear with. But it doesn’t influence how rude or how polite I would be. I have other personal accounts in different social media platforms on snapchats and Instagram and I do not have tolerance for this kind of arguments, I remember a trendy issue in Egypt that one killed a girl who said no for his*
marriage proposal, I just share my sad emotions in this issue. I am not online to argue. I am not anywhere to argue.

Extract 2:

Participant D: It did affect what I say and how I say, especially, what I say, for example, in Twitter space, and I noticed my dean of my institution among audience, I would watch what I say. I would try to maintain my image as a teacher. ... but you share basic challenge in public space. Not just in professional side but also in personal side, you have to be careful ... I have to show a certain image of me, no one know how I look, no one knows how I do in my classroom, no one knows me as a mother, no one knows me as a wife, people only know you through your words in public spaces. This is the only concern. I am very spontaneous person in person, sometimes I do the same in social media but still I would blame myself why did I say this, am I the right person to talk about this. These are some of the concerns because it is the part of yourself image.

Participants A and D believed that representing their official identity in the biographies on their Twitter accounts affected the way they interacted publicly on Twitter. Participant A, since she represented her professional identity in her bio, cared about the language used in her account to appear as she wanted. However, she claimed that her personality also affected her politeness, and she would not tolerate any impolite arguments in all her personal accounts, even those in which she did not supply her official information. Participant D followed her colleagues at work and her dean at a college on Twitter. She was careful with her language usage because of her professional and personal identity since no one knew how she looked or who she was unless she was in a public platform like Twitter.
4.4.3.5.2. Anonymous Accounts

Extract 1:
Participant L: *I will stay the same. There are some hidden accounts express their opinions more aggressively.*

Extract 2:
Participant A: *I have never faked accounts and I don’t like people who hide behind the screen. I never tend to express their real opinions that I cannot express in their real account. I’ve never thought to have a fake account.*

Extract 3:
Participant B: *I think I will change my strategy. I do not anyone to know me, so I changed my personality and words. And styles. I will express disagreements more openly and aggressively. Because this account is anonymous and there is no one knows who I am.*

Extract 4:
Participant K: *This maybe optimal use of online platforms uses as persons hide behind a fake identity just to be freer and more flexible to express their opinions. I have never done it myself, but I would imagine if one day if I get chance to establish a new online identity and get to express my opinions on different topics, then yes, I will probably take my time to figure out ways of dealing with online community in expressing my opinions. Then I would be more direct.*

Participants A and L claimed that they would keep their language style, which is polite if they used anonymous accounts. On the other hand, participant B declared that he would express his opinions even more aggressively since no one knows him. At the same time, participant K also demonstrated that if he had a fake account, he would express his opinions more directly since it is
the optimal use of online platforms for many users to hide behind fake accounts to enable them to utter more free and flexible opinions.

4.4.3.5.3. The Absence of Facial Expression

Extract 1:

Participant J: reluctant to disagree directly on Twitter. Because I do not want to be misunderstood. Because people cannot watch my expression or take my words as it should be. But in face-to-face communication, they see your body expression, so they can understand you clearer but in social media, may be people use the direct words and they may be understood that as aggressive and impolite. The words in social media are so important to avoid misunderstanding. You have to be aware to use them.

Extract 2:

Participant K: I am more polite in face-to-face communication than on online platforms since there are a lot of face threatening in interaction, you tend to present the best yourself I would say when expressing your opinion or asking for a favor.

It can be inferred from these extracts that the lack of facial expressions in online communication affects how people express their opinions and how they are interpreted. Participant J was concerned about expressing her views online because she could not use facial expressions to convey her message, and her words could be taken as rude or impolite. Additionally, Participant K noted that he is more polite in FTF interactions than in online ones, as there is "a lot of face threatening in interaction" which requires one to consider the other person's feelings when expressing opinions or making requests.
4.4.3.5.4. The absence of voice intonations

Participant D: *I always try to be aware of my voice, I am a kind of person .mmm I cannot get very fast, so my voice can show, very high pitch it can be a bit annoying, so I am always aware of my voice, especially in a formal situation .. in meeting or something... I have to watch my voice... so I don’t like to sound like an attacking people... you know... I am just excited about the topic and not attacking anyone.*

Participant D indicated that the voice intonation in face-to-face communications played a role in interpreting the utterances, e.g., "very high pitch it can be a bit annoying".

4.4.3.6. Differences Between Face to Face and Online Communication

Extract 1:

Participant L: *As a language instructor, I believe the nature of written language is very different from spoken which includes being more polite, more structured when you use written language. Yeah, I believe so, I tend to be polite in Twitter as a written language than face to face communication.*

Extract 2:

Participant J: *in general, I find myself explicit and direct in expression when I speak face to face whether I agree or disagree, so I feel more convenient and comfortable in face-to-face communication than on Twitter. I feel free to express my opinion in face to face than on Twitter even if it’s faceless platform.*

Extract 3:

Participant D: *Just because Twitter is considered for me as more formal (than face to face), because I do not familiar with open space, this why I considered it as a formal, even when*
I interact with a friend there, I do not use it for a sarcasm, whatever it is an open space after all.

**Extract 4:**

Participant K: *Using virtual platform ‘Twitter’ gives sufficient amount of time and space to phrase and think about your opinion before putting it out to the public. This can come in two ways, people being rude sometimes on Twitter, being direct and feeling more freedom of hiding behind fake name and identity, this is one side of it, the other side, being face to face interactions, the kind of situations that we go through every day, this tends to be different not very direct as being as compared to virtual online ways of expressing opinions... This is my take on real life vs virtual ways of expressing opinions. This is not restricted to Saudi culture; this is global thing right now not only on Twitter in all other platforms.*

As shown above, some participants tended to be more polite on Twitter than in face-to-face interactions. For example, Participant L gave her opinion from his identity as a teacher that people tend to be more polite in written language, and Twitter is an application where people share their tweets in written form, so this affects his way of being more polite on Twitter than in face-to-face communications. Participants J and D tended to be more formal on Twitter since it is a public platform and open to everyone. However, Participant K tended to be informal on Twitter since there were not as many face-threatening acts as in face-to-face communication.

**4.4.3.7. Linguistic Proficiency**

**Extract 1:**

Participant D: *proficiency affects the way of communication definitely, I think, the students’ repertoire of words and techniques and sentences and voices used, intonation I mean affect.*
Because you cannot object with other than no if you do not have other words than no, for example.

Extract 2:

Participant H: I think students disagree in Arabic very well than in English because the level of their English is not good as in their 1st language.

Extract 3:

Participant K: I believe the more language you have in store, the more strategies you get. So, as your language capacity increases over time, so does the culture aspects you acquire, so does the language strategies as well. So, I believe, yes there is a difference between beginner users of the language or students and advanced users of the language or teachers. It is not the same in my opinion.

Saudi EFL teachers claimed that English proficiency played a significant role in expressing disagreements in English. Thus, EFL speakers could not express their opinion appropriately when they did not have a good repertoire of English words.

4.4.3.8. Personality

Extract 1:

Participant A: Probably it depends on the situation, but it is the same I am a conversational person meaning I like to converse and talk, discuss, and express my thought... So, in informal situations, I have a friend who changed his religion and when we discuss he surprises that I am cool and relaxed even we have different beliefs, so I am not going to cut our relationships because of our different beliefs and opinions. You do yours I do mine. So, our different beliefs are not harm or affect...
Extract 2:

Participant D: *I argue respectfully but in clear idea and I do not want to be weak I am not shy to share my opinion with people I am interacting with.*

It is evident that personality affected how Saudi participants employed their disagreements. For example, Participant A declared that she was a patient conversational person to have a long debate without forcing her opinion, and she liked to know about things from different perspectives. Participant A indicated that disagreeing with others did not mean cutting off relationships with them. She gave an example of one of her colleagues who changed his religion and was surprised that she was calm and relaxed even though they had different beliefs. However, Participant D clarified that she was not a shy person about expressing her opinions directly but in a respectful way as well.

4.4.3.9. Cultural Background

Extract 1:

Participant A: *And yeah mmm... maybe this is a different topic... but I just recalled a situation. I had a Saudi male friend, and I had a phone call with him, and he sometimes would choose to not say words in Arabic but in English, even though he does not speak English well. Because some issues in Saudi background is inappropriate, in Saudi culture/background it is not appropriate for a male to say nice words to stranger girl who is not a member of his family, so when he wants to praise or say nice words to me, he chose to praise or say nice words in English even though his English is not good. He is trying to normalize the situation. Because in Saudi culture it is not appropriate to a random man to say you look beautiful for a girl, but he wanted to make it normal, so this normalization goes through stages, it happens gradually.*
Extract 2:

Participant L: *it has some roots in the Islamic culture as far as I know, there are some roots to be more implicative person than to be directive person. Except in some aspects that need to be more decisive.*

As demonstrated by Saudi EFL teachers, cultural background significantly affected the interaction with different languages and different speech acts. Participant A gave an example of her Saudi male colleague; he was not good in English, but when he wanted to praise her, he was shy to utter it in Arabic because it is inappropriate in Saudi culture for a male to utter praise to her female colleague. Hence, he tried to praise in English to naturalize the situation. On the other hand, Participant L showed that the Islamic religion influenced his pragmatics to be more implicative than direct, except in serious situations.

4.4.3.10. Pragmatic Knowledge

4.4.3.10.1. The Presence of Pragmatic Knowledge in School Curriculum

Extract 1:

Participant A: *No, I don’t see of that, to be honest, I never see this knowledge in our English textbooks that it is culturally appropriate or inappropriate, however, they do not explain that they are straightforward just after the language itself, and they mostly give situations where you could use the target language but not necessarily explaining any background linguistic knowledge about pragmatics…. Here, it depends on the teacher, if the teacher is interested in linguistics and interested in sharing this knowledge with their students. The students will be lucky, if not, students would have this shallow in the kind of knowledge of the language not that deep.*
Extract 2:

Participant H: *Some of school textbooks have a good knowledge of a topic. Other topics there are just grammar instruction and skills of English. And focus on learn specific skills to just pass the exams.*

Extract 3:

Participant M: *there is no pragmatic instruction/information in curriculums and students should know how to express their disagreement in a proper way in real life situation in L2.*

Participants A and M asserted that textbooks don’t contain pragmatic knowledge. However, participant H said that some school textbooks indeed described pragmatic knowledge while other curricula "*only focus on learning specific skills to pass the exam*". On the other hand, participant A argued that it depended on the teachers if they were interested in acknowledging their students and teaching them pragmatic knowledge, which is necessary to understand L2 contexts; otherwise, "*students would have this shallow in the kind of knowledge of the language, not that deep*".

4.4.3.10.2. Teaching Pragmatic Knowledge in the Classrooms

Extract 1:

Participant A: *It is very important for me to do so every time I get chance. We show the differences between cultures and how context is very important. So, I try to show why translation Arabic- English is not very good, I mean it is not necessarily accurate. Two languages are two different cultures. That could be mean something in our culture but mean different thing in another culture. So, they have just to be careful and to be understood to make successful communication.*
Extract 2:

Participant D: *In terms of pragmatics, in general, I always remember that I mention some of differences to my students, it is not only words that you use, it is important to know how to use it, where to use it, and with whom you use it and formality and these other aspects of language. I always, for example, in Arabic we said [which can be translated as ‘ she does not know how to speak’] it does not mean she cannot speak Arabic, she did but she does not know how to communicate, and this is about culture.*

Participants A and D were interested in teaching and presenting pragmatic knowledge in their classrooms. They clarified that it was a personal effort since the textbooks did not include it. Participant A believed in the importance of understanding the target language's culture, which leads to successful communication since the two languages display two cultures. Participants A and L attempted to clarify for their students to avoid literal translations from one language to another and instead to understand the context to know how to communicate appropriately. Participant L, to convey the importance of understanding the target language culture, provided an example in Arabic that she told her students, e.g., "["she does not know how to speak"], saying, "it does not mean she cannot speak Arabic, she did, but she does not know how to communicate, and this is about culture".

4.4.3.11. The Context

Extract 1:

Participant D: *gender and pronouns they are sensitive topics now in American culture.*

*I have more freedom in informal situation, but I do not want to be perceived impolite…… I argue in social topics such as women or family.*
Extract 2:

Participant F: *it's based on the issue itself... based on the question, based on what's being said. Some of them is provoking and the others are not but I only participate with those provoking ones.*

The context was also mentioned as a factor that affected disagreement utterances. Participant D thought that for her, the social issues of family and topics provoked her disagreement, and she suggested that the issues of gender and pronouns were trendy and controversial issues now in American society. Participant F, like other Saudi participants, argued that context affected disagreement performances.

The themes and subthemes organized for RQ 3 (*"What are the different politeness strategies used in expressing disagreements by Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers are shown in Figure 40 below.*
Figure 40

Themes and Subthemes of RQ 3

Comparison between Saudis' and Americans' disagreement strategies

- Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions toward disagreement strategies in American culture
- Saudi participants' rating their disagreement uses with those of Americans in the thread of tweets
- Different disagreement strategies in L1 and L2
- Saudi participants’ disagreement strategies in Saudi Arabic

- Providing explanation
- Based on the context and giving suggestion & apology
- Hedging opinion
- Direct and polite
- Depending on the context
- Argument avoidance
- Respect for other opinions

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4.4.4. Comparison Between Saudis' and Americans' Disagreement Strategies

4.4.4.1. Saudi EFL Teachers' Perceptions Toward Disagreement Strategies in American Culture

Extract 1:
Participant L: I would say they will use some implications that can include or imply their preferences and stances for example, even in the non-professional environment I would say "if it is me, I would prefer to do so, such and such" they tend to imply and give implication and instruction, this is the case.

Extract 2:
Participant D: When I usually read American tweets regarding politics, they are very harsh when they express their opinions, they would make fun of politician, may be because of social media. But I think they are more bold when it comes to expressing their opinions probably because of culture and critical environment there.

Extract 3:
Participant B: Based on what I have seen, I think Americans discuss in more polite way (discussion or disagreement), they do not force or try to approve their opinion. They discuss in a good manner and way, may accept or refuse with each other not like Arabic culture, in Saudi context, 80% force their opinion but in American context is not the same 100%.

Extract 4:
Participant F: I lived a long time in America and based on what I have seen is that the most important thing is to make the argument clear, and you develop your argument in an understandable way.
Extract 6:

Participant K: *in American culture, it tends to be more indirect I believe to express disagreement. But once again it depends on whether it is virtual platforms or real-life situations. As compared to Saudi culture, Americans tend to be more indirect when expressing disagreements.*

Participants L and K perceived that Americans tended to be more indirect when expressing disagreements than Saudis. Participant L provided an example of how Americans disagreed based on what he had seen when he was in America; he thought that they provided suggestions to mitigate their disagreements, e.g., *"if it is me, I would prefer to do so, such and such".* Participant B asserted that Americans tended to be more polite than Saudis and argued that in Saudi contexts, 80% forced their opinions. Participant D observed how Americans interacted with political hashtags on Twitter as they *"would make fun of politicians" and assumed that mocking occurred due to social media and their cultures, where there was more freedom to express their disagreements boldly.* Participant F lived for many years in the United States and noticed that Americans expressed clear arguments and disagreements.

4.4.4.2. Saudi Participants' Rating Their Disagreement Uses with those of Americans in The Thread of Tweets

Extract 1:

Participant L: *I was just like normal personality; I always tends to be indirect than American as I observed they are direct.*
Extract 2:

Participant B: *I think my tweets are medium not weak in comparison to Americans due to the cultural differences.... I am more direct than Americans. I tend to be direct in my disagreements all the way in social media or in real life.*

Extract 3:

Participant K: *I remember two or three American participants, I think they were more elaborate on giving out their opinions, I also can recall they express their disagreements by giving out elaboration on what they think about the topic compared to my tweets or to other Saudi participants’ tweets. I believe Arabs tend to more direct. American participants tend to be indirect maybe due to the language competency, how much the English language they use is not enough to be more indirect or use more fluent language to express our opinions.*

Extract 4:

Participant H: *I found their opinions are different from our culture. Not all of them depend on the culture maybe also depend on the way the person how found ideas or statements.*

Extract 5:

Participant M: *I assume that I expresses my disagreements in better way then American participants since most of them tend to disagree directly without providing explanations like me.*

Extract 6:

Participant S: *They are more direct than me.*

Saudi EFL teachers rated their disagreement strategies to those of Americans differently. Participants L, M, and S perceived that they were more indirect, polite, and expressive. On the contrary, participants K and B believed that they were more direct than Americans. However, participant H argued that different cultures affected Saudi and American participants employing
different disagreement expressions. However, participant K suggested that language competence and fluency affected Saudi participants to produce direct disagreement utterances. On the other hand, participant L indicated that his personality made him indirect in expressing his disagreements. In contrast, participant B’s personality drove him to express his disagreements directly in face-to-face and online interactions.

4.4.4.3. Saudi Participants’ Different Disagreement Strategies in L1 And L2

Extract 1:

Participant J: It is different in just a manner to express the words. In English, I used to be more polite and more non-aggressive.

Extract 2:

Participant K: NO, actually, learning a different language means adopting a new identity for yourself. So, when you learn English, for instance, you will use the strategies of that language and not transfer L1 strategies, at least in my case. For beginner users of the language, I would say they transfer some of the strategies between Arabic and English. But for me, I tend to be more indirect. In Arabic, I see myself to be direct in expressing my thoughts.

Most Saudi EFL teachers shared that they employed the same strategies in expressing disagreements in their first and second languages. On the contrary, participants D and J said that they implemented different strategies in these two different languages: they tended to be more direct in their first language. Participant K pointed out that when he learned a new language, he adopted a new identity, in which he attempted to use the L2 strategies and did not transfer those of the L1.
4.4.4.4. Saudi Participants’ Disagreement Strategies in Saudi Arabic

The following examples are from the participants' answers to explain how they produce their disagreements in their first language (Saudi Arabic). The participants’ explanation of their use of disagreements will be interpreted in this section and related it to their participations in the thread of tweets and the corpus of tweets.

Theme One: Disagreement Expressions in the First Language

Example 1: Direct and Polite

Extract 1:

Participant J: *Usually in Arabic, I use direct words to express my opinion but in non-aggressive way or words. It is direct but more polite than aggressive.*

In this extract, Participant J clarified that she tended to express her disagreements explicitly and appeared polite more than aggressive. When she expressed her disagreements in English in the thread of tweets, she provided hedges, apologies, and token agreement to show partial agreement and address the positive face of the addressee. On the contrary, in her corpus, she produced aggravated disagreements in Arabic in different tweets when she replied to defend the right of social media influencers’ privacy.

Example 2: Hedging Opinions

Extract 1.

Participant L: *For me personally I usually tend to clear my responses, usually I more to hedge my stance and point, I am not very directive, usually I would leave some connotation that may imply my agreement or disagreement as well. I mean usually I am not direct. I do not tend to just say yes or no I usually give it as hedge or give it in a hedge language. It is clear in my replies in the thread.*
Participant L clarified that he tended to hedge his opinion to imply his disagreement. It is evident in his argument, in the corpus of his tweets and in his participation in the thread of tweets, he provided suggestions, hedged his opinion and did not utter a direct disagreement "I disagree”, examples of his utterances in the thread are: "I cannot trust my opinion here, ……, yet ……..”, "I would suggest that... “and he produced aggravated disagreement toward the issue of the fame of social media influencers by uttering that "I personally cannot locate any plausible reason for this exaggerated fame."

Example 3: Based on the Context

Extract 1:
Participant D: *It depends on the situation, of course, in some situations, I can be more open and more straightforward. I always have an opinion about things. Usually, people describe me as polite. But in my opinion, I never hesitate to express my opinion. Probably I succeeded in expressing these opinions in polite way. Also, I think I am aware when I disagree, I do not disagree with a person, I disagree with the idea. So, I don’t attack the person, I usually tackle the idea not the person. That what I am aware of when disagreeing with people.*

Participant D claimed that the situation had an impact on how she expressed her disagreements. She asserted that she did not hesitate to express her disagreements and always disagreed with the act, not the person. She employed different disagreement utterances according to context, sometimes softening her disagreements while other times being more direct. In her corpus of tweets, she expressed aggravated disagreements on how society perceives women.

Extract 2:
Participant K: *I tend to express my opinion in my 1st language, depending on the interlocutor, to whom I am exchanging the thought, or the argument with, depending on who I am talking with,*
the situation, whether the person being superior to me or not, but when it comes to the first language, it is easier to become direct and taking shortcuts to your thoughts and opinions other than using other means of expressing your opinion.

Participant K clarified that his disagreement utterances differed depending on the situation, person, speaker's power over him, and the argument. He shared that he tended to be more direct in the first language than in English. According to the corpus and thread of tweets, participant K mainly employed positive politeness, in which he claimed the common ground with the addressee, e.g., providing token agreement and hedging opinions.

**Example 4: Based on the context and Giving Suggestion and Apology**

**Extract 1:**

Participant A: In general, my strategy in both first and second language would be based in a situation and the other point of view, showing my perception on the topic or idea or suggestion, my strategy is always suggestive like "I suggest something" and we can get an agreement. I show partial agreement and then try to show my point of view, and the discussion would go on because I believe I could be wrong I could be seen it from an angle and the person see it from another angle, it is not apparent for me, so I always be patient I do not rash to disagree. Not in all situations, it depends, some issues it is so clear which we can’t agree with this, but it depends. I always care of how the other person receive my disagreement, when we apologize before the disagreement it is respectful way and makes the addressee accept it.

It had been evident from the analysis of the corpus and thread of tweets that participant A tended to provide suggestions in her disagreements. She also confirmed in the interview that not in all situations she mitigated her disagreements. In the corpus of her tweets, she strongly expressed her disapproval toward how people interacted in Twitter spaces.
Example 5: Argument Avoidance

Extract 1:

Participant H: *I explain them with good words, I try discussing others in a polite way. If I get a bad reply or a bad react from others, I did not reply to them I close the discussion with them. If the discussion turns to be in a bad way, I stopped.*

Participant H shared that he did not like to force his opinions on others and when the arguments turned offensive, he stopped and closed it. It is evident in his replies to the thread of tweets, he mostly avoided to provide opinions and responded with short and direct disagreement utterance, e.g., "disagree" without providing justifications.

Example 6: Providing Explanation

Extract 1:

Participant M: *Direct disagreement such as ‘I disagree with you’ without providing reason or apologize. I think that if one disagrees directly without providing explanation, this strategy is impolite. I believe that if ones provide a reason after the expression "I disagree" it is polite way. I prefer to provide a reason to support my disagreement to be polite. I applied this strategy in both first language (Arabic) and second language (English), as well as in online platforms and in face-to-face communication. It is my personality. I tend to respect the speakers’ opinion and be respectful in my disagreement. I usually use polite expressions and respect others’ opinion.*

Extract 2:

Participant F: *I just express my opinion and argument in a polite way ... I just focus on argument and problem or issue itself. I like to explain, I do not like people ‘I disagree’ and full stop. I like to provide explanation, justification, examples based on the argument itself and it requires. But I always avoid to saying just disagree.*
Participants M and F expressed disapproval toward people who provided short disagreement statements without explaining and perceived that as impolite behavior. They preferred to employ direct disagreement and provide explanations or examples to justify their oppositional stances and considered it polite, which was evident in their participation in the thread of tweets.

4.5. Summary

Although Twitter is a faceless online platform, it has been discovered from the data of this study that the participants used different politeness strategies. In the thread of tweets, Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers generally employed positive politeness strategies, with few instances of negative politeness. In contrast, the data from the participants’ corpus of tweets demonstrated that the strategy of bald on-record without redressive action is mostly found when participants employed aggravated disagreements on different issues.

From the corpus of tweets, Saudi EFLs and American ESLs employed bald on-record without redressive action strategies when expressing their disagreements. All study participants mainly combined over two strategies of disagreement to intensify their disagreement utterances. However, American participants produced disagreements not softened or strengthened more than Saudis in the corpus of tweets, for example, the verbal irony, "Excuse me, but I ate Panera today". However, all participants employed positive politeness strategies to mitigate their disagreement. Negative politeness was only used by Saudi EFL teachers and was absent in the corpus of tweets of American ESL teachers. This finding supports previous studies that found American speakers prefer employing positive politeness more than negative politeness in disagreements (Khammari, 2021; Lakoff, 2005). Notably, Saudi participants provided supplications in most disagreement
utterances to strengthen their disagreements in the corpus of tweets, as a culture- and religion-related feature.

American participants produced more verbal irony to indicate their disagreements; one utterance contained cursing. All participants (Saudis and Americans) produced verbal attacks using intensifiers and judgmental vocabulary. The differences in utterances were: complaints, challenges, suggestions, and exclamations appearing in the Saudi EFL teachers' tweets corpus. Conversely, exaggerating and expressing anger were only found in the corpus of American ESL teachers' tweets. Both participants gave arguments on teaching, writing, and COVID-19.

Saudi participants produced aggravated disagreements on social issues, such as the role of women, parents' issues, social media influence on life, governmental responsibilities, and education. No arguments were found in the corpus of Saudi participants' tweets on religion or political issues. Conversely, American participants discussed their opposite opinions more openly on different issues, such as politics, racism, gender pronouns, and academia. This finding aligns with LoCastro's (1986) opinion that Americans expressed their preferences on controversial issues, such as politics.

From the thread of tweets, it can be concluded that Saudi EFL teachers produced more aggravated disagreements than American ESL teachers, as 22 utterances show compared to nine (9). Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers employed the strategy of direct disagreement and explanation the most in 16 and 24 disagreement utterances, respectively. This finding means American ESL teachers produce more disagreements, which are neither softened nor strengthened, aligning with Kobayashi and Viswat's (2010) finding that Americans prefer to provide explicit disagreements with straightforward explanations or justifications for their opposing views. However, American participants produced short, contrary statements without justifying the second
frequently used strategy in their thread of tweets in 22 utterances, compared to ten (10) from Saudi EFL teachers. Saudi participants employed politeness strategies when expressing disagreement in 26 utterances, compared to 14 from Americans. Findings also showed that Saudi ESL teachers used ten negative politeness utterances to soften their strong disagreements by providing apologies or conditional statements and suggestions, compared to only two conditional utterances from American ESL teachers. None of the participants employed an off-record strategy since all participants clearly expressed their opinions in the thread of tweets, unlike what is seen in their natural disagreement performances in the corpus of tweets. Saudi EFL teachers did not employ FTAs in four instances, compared to only one by American ESL teachers, to express a neutral opinion.

From the interview data, Saudi EFL participants did not experience misunderstandings or find impolite tweets in the thread of tweets. However, some found short disagreement statements like "I disagree" impolite. They proposed many factors affecting disagreement utterances, such as context, age, personality, linguistic competence, the nature of online communication, identity, and cultural background (e.g., Islamic culture and society), teaching experience, first language influence, and interactions with native speakers of the target language. Also, some Saudi EFL teachers perceived their participation versus American’s participation as more direct, while others perceived themselves as more indirect in disagreements. Some Saudi EFL teachers believe the speech act of disagreements in American culture is more polite than in Arabic culture, particularly that of Saudi Arabia. They thought Americans tend to accept other opinions more openly and use different hedges to mitigate their disagreements than Saudis.

To sum up, both Saudi and American participants provided on-record strategy the most in their corpus, which is aggravated and might be perceived as impolite, inappropriate, non-politic,
and negatively marked. However, all participants (Saudis and Americans) produced on-record strategies to employ disagreement not softened or strengthened in the thread of tweets, such as direct disagreement and explanation, which can be seen as polite, politic, appropriate, and positively marked behavior. The second frequently occurring strategy by Saudi EFL teachers is positive politeness, while for American participants was short contrary disagreements perceived by Saudi EFL teachers as impolite. However, Americans employed positive politeness in 17 utterances in the thread of tweets, while negative politeness occurred only in 2 utterances, compared to 10 utterances of negative politeness employed by Saudi participants.
CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

The main findings of the current study are that both Saudi and American participants mostly employed aggravated disagreements in the corpus of tweets. In contrast, they performed disagreements that were neither mitigated nor strengthened during their participation in the thread of tweets. Although there are similarities in the disagreement expressions among the Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers, they vary in choosing politeness strategies when expressing their disagreements. Saudi participants tend to use positive and negative politeness strategies in many instances of their disagreements. At the same time, Americans employed nearly positive politeness, as found in their corpus and thread of tweets. In contrast, they rarely performed negative politeness when uttering their disagreements, with no examples found in the corpus of their tweets. Only two instances were employed by American ESL teachers in the thread of tweets, e.g., giving the suggestion "Agree if ". Furthermore, American participants used more straightforward disagreements than Saudis. More results are discussed with relation to previous studies' findings in this chapter.

This chapter represents discussions of the most significant findings of my investigation. Furthermore, the findings are interpreted in light of the theoretical frameworks of previous studies. The discussion of the results will be provided in this chapter for the following research questions:

**RQ 1.** What are the politeness strategies used in performing disagreements on Twitter by Saudi EFL teachers
1.1 How do Saudi EFL teachers apply the face threatening act (FTA) in performing disagreement?

1.2 What is the perlocutionary effect of tweets on Saudi EFL teachers?

**RQ 2.** What factors influence Saudi EFL teachers’ use of politeness strategies in expressing disagreements?

**RQ 3.** What are the different politeness strategies used in expressing disagreements by Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers?

5.1. Discussions of the First Question of the Study

**RQ 1.** What are the politeness strategies used in performing disagreements on Twitter by Saudi EFL teachers?

The findings, as shown in Table 22 below, show that Saudi EFL teachers implemented four politeness strategies in the corpus of tweets, with bald on-record employed the most followed by off-record, negative politeness, and the least used being positive politeness. On the other hand, in the thread of tweets, the results indicate that Saudi EFL teachers mainly used bald on-record politeness strategies, followed by positive politeness and negative politeness. The least used was not performing face-threatening acts (FTAs).
Table 22

The Politeness Strategies used in Performing Disagreements on Twitter by Saudi EFL Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The politeness strategies used by Saudi participants in expressing disagreements in the corpus of tweets</th>
<th>The politeness strategies used by Saudi participants in expressing disagreements in the thread of tweets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bald on-record strategies (representing 61%) [Aggravated disagreements occurred in 14 utterances].</td>
<td>Bald on-record politeness strategies (occurred in 55 utterances (representing 58%), [22 aggravated disagreements &amp; 33 disagreements not aggravated or strengthened]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-record strategies (17%) [disagreements not softened or strengthened were found in 4 tweets].</td>
<td>Positive politeness (27%) [mitigated disagreements occurred in 26 utterances].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative politeness at 13% [mitigated disagreements occurred in 3 utterances].</td>
<td>Negative politeness (11%) [mitigated disagreements found in 10 utterances].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive politeness (9%) [mitigated disagreements found in 2 instances].</td>
<td>Do not do the FTA (4%) [disagreements nor mitigated or aggravated found in 4 instances].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brown and Levinson (1987) assume that to mitigate the FTAs when producing disagreements, speakers should avoid disagreement by employing positive politeness to claim common ground with the addressee. The analysis of this study data revealed that Saudi EFL teachers also employed negative politeness to mitigate the threat of their utterances, with both interlocutors’ negative face in the thread and corpus of tweets, as seen when giving an apology: ”I beg to differ because people who experience depression are unaware of their case” or giving a suggestion, e.g., ”Oooor as well very simply assign some students to teach part of a lesson. They’ll help you know about some digital apps and technologies as you observe them teach”. However, generally, Saudi participants tended to use positive politeness more frequently when expressing disagreement than negative politeness. The following section represents the findings of the politeness strategies used by Saudi EFL teachers.
5.1.1. On-Record Strategies

In the thread of tweets, Saudi EFL teachers employed on-record strategies in 62 disagreement utterances; 40 were disagreements not softened or strengthened, while 22 were aggravated disagreements. Different levels of on-record strategy have been found, which can be classified as disagreement, not softened, or strengthened; one can be perceived as impolite, inappropriate, and unmarked behavior, while another is likely to be polite and appropriate and positively marked behavior. The former was employed by providing short, contrary statements such as "I disagree" without providing any justification for the opposite opinion, as found in the thread of tweets; Saudi EFL teachers perceived this strategy as impolite according to their answers during the interviews (e.g., Participant M said that "I think that if one disagrees directly without providing explanation, this strategy is impolite"). The latter strategy is direct disagreement and explanation, such as "I disagree as we have recently seen decisions made in favor of labor market demands". It can be categorized as an on-record strategy, with the disagreement not softened or strengthened, and it has been seen as polite and appropriate by Saudi EFL teachers as they have showed in the interview (e.g., Participant F noted that "I just express my opinion and argument in a polite way ... I just focus on argument and problem or issue itself. I like to explain, I do not like people ‘I disagree’ and full stop. I like to provide explanation, justification, examples based on the argument itself and it requires. But I always avoid to saying just disagree"). Six Saudi participants employed the act combinations of direct disagreement and explanation to express their disagreements in 15 utterances in the tweet thread, which was perceived by Saudi EFL teachers as polite.

In the corpus of tweets, most Saudi EFL teachers implemented the bald on-record strategy without redressive action when expressing their disagreements in 14 utterances, representing 61%
of the total utterances. The results of the Saudi participants’ disagreement employment in the corpus of tweets align with Almutairi’s (2021) study, finding that aggravated disagreement has the highest occurrence in the corpus of Saudis’ corpus of tweets. The same result is found in Niroomand’s (2012) study, which revealed that non-native speakers of English employed more direct and bald on-record strategies when expressing disagreement.

In the corpus of tweets, the most frequent strategy found in most disagreement expressions is the supplication, which is employed by Saudi EFL teachers with other strategies (act combinations) to intensify their disagreement utterances, such as: challenges, using personal accusatory ‘you’ and supplication, verbal attacks, supplication, and scolding and supplication, and judgmental vocabulary. For example, "Allah is Sufficient for me" also occurred in Harb’s study (2016) such as "حسبى الله ونعم الوكيل"/hasbi: Allahu wa: naşmal- waki:l/, which translates as "Allah is Sufficient, and He is the Best Trustee." Harb (2016, p. 184) considers this statement as "hasbla" and "the use of hasbla indicates disagreement on the part of an interlocutor to a prior claim and/or proposition". Harb (2016, p. 28) describes supplication as a "culturally specific" strategy, suggesting that it is particular to Arabic speakers' cultural values, which is evident in Islamic culture, where people pray to God for various things. Finding supplications in Saudi participants' disagreement expressions is consistent with the study of Harb (2016) and Almutairi (2021), in which they found supplications in most Arabic speakers' disagreement performances on Facebook, representing 45% of the utterances (Harb, 2016). Almutairi (2021) also finds examples of the supplications in the utterance of disagreement among Saudis on Twitter in Almutairi’s study, such as "the use of al-hawqalah" which means "لا حول ولاقوة إلا بالله"/la: hawla wa la: quwata illʔ billa:hl/,” which could be translated in English as "There is no power or might except by Allah" (p. 39).
The second most frequent occurred on-record strategy is a verbal attack representing 9%, which is employed independently without other strategies, such as in Arabic "نصب واحتيال ودجل وعمکاسب هائلفة وانتشار مخيف" which translated to "Fraud, cheating, massive gains, and frightening spread" and in English such as "Talkative people on Twitter spaces 😧 I hope I don't quit Twitter too soon." In these tweets, Saudi participants expressed bald on-record statements without attempting to mitigate their disagreements. They intensify their disagreements to directly attack the addressees' faces, the former on the issue of spiritual energy and the latter on how people interact on Twitter Spaces. Moreover, the strategy of verbal attack was combined with other strategies, such as: ‘verbal attack, supplication, and scolding’ and ‘protest, verbal attack, and supplication,’ ‘rhetorical questions, personal accusatory you, verbal attack, and scolding,’ and ‘supplication, verbal attack, and judgmental vocabulary.’ The paralinguistic feature " 😧" occurred in this instance to indicate strong disagreement with those people who talk in the audio chat rooms on Twitter (Twitter Spaces). This strategy occurred in previous studies among Arab speakers on Facebook (Harb, 2016) and Saudi users of Twitter (Almutairi, 2021).

Furthermore, another instance of on-record strategy is the use of intensifiers, which were found in eight disagreement utterances during Saudi EFL teachers’ participation in the thread of tweets. For example, "Totally disagree! Admission should see no color, race, or gender. Everyone, no matter their cultural or racial background, has the right to pursue their education". In this example, a male Saudi EFL teacher used an intensifier followed by scolding to intensify his disagreement.

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2 Audio chat rooms on Twitter
To sum up, while participating in the thread of tweets, Saudi EFL teachers mostly used an on-record strategy in which the disagreement was not softened or strengthened the most. In contrast, in their informal interaction in their corpus of tweets, they only applied an on-record strategy when expressing aggravated disagreements on different issues, such as: governmental responsibilities, the role of women, parental issues, the privacy of social media influencers’ lives, the COVID-19 vaccine, challenging other people, and how people interacted on Twitter spaces. Some examples of on-record strategy are given in Table 23 below.

Table 23

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politeness strategy</th>
<th>Disagreement taxonomy</th>
<th>Place of occurrence</th>
<th>Frequency of occurrence</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Bald On-record      | Aggravated disagreement | The corpus of tweets | 14                      | Act combinations: e.g., giving question, personal accusatory you, and challenge. For example: ايش مزعلك طيب انا اصححلك المعلومات مه واقفه ف كلاامي روحي نوري نفسك
Translation: "So what makes you annoyed? I corrected your information; if you do not trust what I say, go and search yourself.” 2. Challenge, e.g., "(نا مو "اقدها لا تسويها)" The translation: "If you’re not up to it, don’t do it.” |
| On-record           | Disagreement not softened or strengthened | The thread of tweets | 40                      | Act combination: direct disagreement and explanation. For example, "I disagree. Exams could reflect what extent learners have achieved out of a given content" |
| Bald On-record      | Aggravated disagreement | The thread of tweets | 22                      | Using personal accusatory (you) "As for the activities, you can’t call it a waste of time. They show results." |
In the interview data, some Saudi participants declared that they tend to employ an on-record strategy but are perceived as polite in both first and second languages (e.g., Participants J and B). Other Saudi participants demonstrated that they prefer to be suggestive to mitigate their disagreements (e.g., Participant A) or provide indirect disagreement to imply their disagreement utterance as it is reflective in Islamic culture (e.g., Participant L), who claimed that "it has some roots in the Islamic culture to be a more implicative person than to be a directive person. Except in some respects that need to be more decisive".

5.1.2. Off-Record Strategies

Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that the off-record strategy is more polite than the on-record. They argue that being more direct is considered less polite than being direct. The politeness strategy of off-record is the second most occurring in the corpus of tweets, whereas it was not employed by Saudi EFL teachers in the thread of tweets. For example, one male Saudi EFL teacher provided an inquiry in Arabic to indicate his disagreement:

memo يلاحظ أن جدول المواصفات وفرض الرأي الانفرادي في نمط ونوع الأسئلة لا يوجد إلا في مادة اللغة الإنجليزية بينما بقية المواد لديهم الحرية في تنوع الأسئلة ووضع الأنسب لمستوى طلابهم

Translation:

It has been noted that the table of specifications\(^3\) and imposition of a unilateral opinion in the design and type of the questions are found only in the English

\(^3\) A table of specifications is an outline that defines test content and relates subject matter content to behavioral instructional objectives.
language subject, while other subjects have the freedom to set a variety of questions that are appropriate for their students’ level. Why?

It seems that the issue of the Ministry of Education’s educational policies influences the expressions of the teacher who tries to criticize and disagrees indirectly. While participating in the thread of tweets, Saudi EFL teachers did not produce off-record strategies since they explained their opinions clearly regarding the provided issues. Instead, they employed off-record strategies in their corpus of tweets in replying to matters they chose to provide their arguments to and hide their disagreements due to the sensitivity of the issues, such as teaching policies.

From the interview data, some Saudi EFL teachers demonstrated that they prefer to employ an indirect disagreement strategy and be off-record, and they perceive this strategy as polite. Conversely, Kobayashi and Viswat (2010) find that Americans perceive indirect disagreements produced by EFL speakers (Japanese) as ineffective and negatively marked behavior. Table 24 below shows some examples of off-record strategies.
### Table 24

**Examples of Off-Record Strategies Used by Saudi EFL Teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politeness strategy</th>
<th>Disagreement taxonomy</th>
<th>The place of occurrence</th>
<th>Frequency of occurrence</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Off-record           | Disagreement not softened or strengthened | The corpus of tweets | 4                        | 1. Complaint, e.g., "Having to paraphrase, in my opinion, is one of the leading forces behind language change. 😞”  
2. Exclamation, e.g., "من المستغرب تمسك هيئة تقييم التعليم عندما بضرورة إجراء الاختبار التحصيلي حتى لو كان عن بعد والإصرار على تقييم قد يصعب الاعتماد عليه كمعيار صادق للقبول في ظل الأزمة الراهنة.”  
Translation: "Surprisingly, our Education Evaluation Commission sticks to the need to conduct a standard achievement test—even if it is done remotely—and demands an evaluation that may be difficult to rely on as an authentic criterion for admission in light of the current crisis.” |

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5.1.3. Positive Politeness

In the thread of tweets, Saudi EFL teachers employed positive politeness strategies in 26 disagreement utterances, accounting for 27% of the total disagreements. At the same time, they performed it in only two instances in their corpus of tweets, representing 9% of the total. Examples of positive politeness are hedging opinions and token agreement in the exchange between the male Saudi EFL teacher and his colleague in the same thread of tweets, as shown in example (12). An example of a positive politeness strategy used by EFL participants in the thread of tweets is a partial agreement, which was found in 17 utterances, hedging opinion in three instances, and in six instances of act combinations, such as making a personal stance and respecting other opinions. The strategy of partial agreement is the second most frequent strategy used by Saudi EFL teachers in the thread of tweets.

Although Brown and Levinson (1987) assume that speakers should employ positive politeness to claim common ground with addressees to save other interlocutors’ face when expressing disagreements, Saudi EFL teachers employ politeness strategies other than positive politeness strategies, such as: on-record, off-record, negative politeness strategy, and they sometimes do not do the FTA at all.

Saudi participants employed positive politeness in the thread of tweets more than in their corpus of tweets. It can be argued that they were more careful with their language and showed mutual understanding while participating in the thread of tweets. In contrast, they tend to use the on-record strategy and unmitigated disagreements in the corpus of tweets. Some examples of positive politeness strategy are given in Table 25 below.
Table 25

*Examples of Positive Politeness Strategy Occurred by Saudi EFL Teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politeness strategy</th>
<th>Disagreement taxonomy</th>
<th>The place of occurrence</th>
<th>Frequency of occurrence</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive politeness</td>
<td>Softened disagreement</td>
<td>The corpus of tweets</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;You’re right! But ....&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive politeness</td>
<td>Softened disagreement</td>
<td>The thread of tweets</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>&quot;To some extent, I do agree&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.4. Negative Politeness

Negative politeness is the least common strategy employed by Saudi EFL teachers in expressing disagreements in the corpus and the thread of tweets. They performed negative politeness strategy in ten utterances in their participation in the thread of tweets whereas in three disagreement utterances in the corpus of tweets.

Saudi EFL teachers employ negative politeness, especially when they attempt to mitigate their strong disagreement. For example, "I am afraid this is hard to agree with", and "I’m afraid I have to disagree with that very much". This result agrees with what Brown and Levinson (1987) assumed "the more an act threatens S’s or H’s face, the more S will want to choose a higher-numbered strategy "to minimize any potential risk" (p. 60)

A female Saudi EFL teacher, Participant A, tended to suggest in her disagreement with employment in the corpus and thread of tweets. She demonstrated that her personality drives her to suggest indirectly in her disagreement utterances, even in face-to-face communication and not only on online platforms like Twitter.
Saudi EFL teachers attempted redressing their disagreements during their participating in the thread of tweets, since they employed negative politeness. In contrast, they tend to be more direct in expressing disagreements in their corpus of tweets. Some examples of negative politeness strategy are given in Table 26.

**Table 26**

*Examples of Negative Politeness Strategies Used by Saudi EFL Teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politeness strategy</th>
<th>Disagreement taxonomy</th>
<th>Place of occurrence</th>
<th>Frequency of occurrence</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative politeness</td>
<td>Softened disagreement</td>
<td>The corpus of tweets</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Giving suggestions: &quot;Oooh as well very simply assign some students to teach part of a lesson. They'll help you know about some digital apps and technologies as you observe them teach. 😎&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative politeness</td>
<td>Softened disagreement</td>
<td>The thread of tweets</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Giving an apology: &quot;I beg to differ; as we have physical diseases, we also have mental diseases.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5.1.5. Did do the FTA**

This strategy was only employed in four utterances in the thread of tweets, indicating that Saudi EFL teachers employ different FTA strategies, even on a faceless online platform like Twitter, for example, in the counterclaim "No matter to consider age, but rather a maturity and willingness to take responsibility". In this utterance, a female Saudi EFL teacher gave a counterclaim without mitigating or strengthening her disagreement. Thus, she did not employ the
FTA, and her disagreement might be seen as polite, appropriate, and unmarked communicative behavior. The participant’s attitude toward the issue of the proper age for marriage makes her give a logical opinion by focusing on the context rather than taking that subject personally.

Only in the thread of tweets did Saudi EFL teachers provide contradictory statements that do not threaten the interlocutors, as there is no attempt to mitigate or strengthen their oppositional stances in teaching and educational matters. Some examples of neutral opinions in which Saudi participants did not do an FTA, are given in Table 27.

**Table 27**

*Examples of did not do the FTA Occurred by Saudi EFL Teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politeness strategy</th>
<th>Disagreement taxonomy</th>
<th>The place of occurrence</th>
<th>Frequency of occurrence</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do not do the FTA</td>
<td>Disagreement is not softened or strengthened</td>
<td>The thread of tweets</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Counterclaim, e.g., &quot;Both are equally important. Grammar knowledge covers the theoretical part, and conversational skills cover the practical&quot; Giving opinion, e.g., &quot;For me stability and consistency are more important than keeping up&quot;.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2. Discussion of the RQ 1.1

**RQ1.1. How do Saudi EFL Teachers apply the FTA in performing disagreement?**

The Saudi EFL teachers applied an FTA by employing different politeness strategies. Although Twitter is a faceless platform, the participants consider their image while using polite language when expressing their disagreements by employing positive politeness and negative
politeness strategies. However, participants tended to be direct and employ the bald on-record strategy, which seemed more aggravated, in their natural use of disagreements, as evident in their corpus of tweets. This finding aligns with that of Harb (2016) and Almutairi (2021), in which Arabs and Saudis implemented the strategy of bald on-record without redressive action the most in online interactions—i.e., on Facebook and Twitter. However, Saudi participants employed on-record strategy in their thread of tweets, but these were more disagreements not softened or strengthened, than aggravated utterances. This strategy was followed by positive politeness, then negative politeness in the thread of tweets. However, the corpus of tweets shows that the on-record strategy is the most frequently used, followed by off-record, positive politeness, and, finally, negative politeness.

Herring and Androutsopoulos (2015) proposed that the language used in online interactions, particularly in asynchronous platforms such as Twitter, is similar to offline verbal communication, where social, contextual, and cultural elements contribute to how people interact. Thus, as the authors demonstrate, some Saudi participants employed FTAs on Twitter as they did in face-to-face acts. However, some participants claimed that the absence of facial expressions and voice intonations resulted in their utterances on Twitter being misunderstood. As a result, the participants tried using different mitigators and posted smiley faces to avoid threats or impositions regarding their addresses. Thus, during the interviews, Saudi EFL teachers showed that they tend to be more polite and formal on Twitter and more direct in verbal communications. For example, participant J said that "I reluctant to disagree directly on Twitter. Because I do not want to be misunderstood. Because people cannot watch my expression or take my words as it should be. But in face-to-face communication, they see your body expression, so they can understand you clearer but in social media, may be people use the direct words and they may be understood that as
aggressive and impolite". However, some Saudi EFL teachers tended to be more direct on Twitter since there are no FTAs like those in face-to-face interactions. For instance, participant K showed that "I am more polite in face-to-face communication than on online platforms since there are a lot of face threatening in interaction, you tend to present the best yourself I would say when expressing your opinion or asking for a favor".

Furthermore, some Saudi EFL teachers implemented the same politeness strategies when expressing disagreements in verbal and online communications. One female Saudi EFL teacher demonstrated that she paid more attention to her language online than in verbal communication, as people on Twitter likely did not know her. Another female Saudi EFL teacher added that in online communication, words are the only tool to express opinions and present one’s identity, so those words are vital on Twitter.

5.3. Discussion of RQ 1.2

RQ1.2. What is the perlocutionary effect of tweets on Saudi EFL teachers?

The participants during the interviews demonstrated that all the disagreement utterances were clear. However, they argued that they did not understand why some participants responded with short disagreement utterances without providing any justification. They consider this kind of short disagreement performance as impolite. One of the Saudi EFL teachers was hesitant to participate in sharing ideas in the thread of tweets; however, after noticing the topic posted in that thread, she found that the perlocutionary force of these tweets was explicit and harmless, making her eager to share her opinions freely and flexibly.

Linguistic competence also played a significant role in misunderstanding American participants’ tweets, as mentioned by a male Saudi participant, who needed to translate their utterances to clarify them. The same participant demonstrated that Saudi participants employed
clear and simple language, while Americans used "advanced" language. This finding is in line with Maíz-Arévalo’s (2014) study that having a high level of linguistic ability is essential for enhancing pragmatic proficiency.

The length of stay in the U.S. and interactions with American native speakers allowed some participants to better understand the Americans’ opinions in the thread of tweets. One male Saudi participant reported that he adopted the target language’s culture as his linguistic competence grew, as evidenced by his utterances in the thread of tweets. He mainly produced direct disagreements and straightforward explanations and sometimes gave evidence to support his disagreements, similar to some American participants’ replies.

The perlocutionary force of American participants' disagreement utterances was perceived differently by Saudi EFL teachers. Most Saudi EFL teachers viewed the perlocutionary force of American participants' replies in the thread of tweets as polite and expressive, and sometimes persuasive. However, some Saudi EFL teachers thought that their own disagreements were more straightforward than those of Americans, while others thought they were more indirect than American participants in expressing their disagreements.

Saudi EFL participants did not recognize any taboo topics in the thread of tweets except the issue of race, which is forbidden to discuss in Saudi culture, as a female Saudi EFL teacher mentioned. Most Saudi participants found the posted topics controversial and the most discussed in everyday life in Saudi society and educational fields.

From participating in the thread of tweets, most Saudi participants disagreed with considering depression an illusion and visiting a psychiatrist as harmful. They also produced aggravated disagreement about considering race a requirement for university admission. Thus, the influence of these tweets compelled them to produce mostly aggravated disagreements such as
scolding and objection, e.g., "I disagree.... No prejudice of any kind, especially race. The education for everyone."

5.4. Discussions of the Second Question of the Study

RQ 2. What Factors Influence Saudi EFL Teachers’ Use of Politeness Strategies in Expressing Disagreements?

The remarkable result of my study demonstrate that context plays a significant role in how one expresses disagreement and applies politeness and FTAs, which is consistent with Miller (2000): contexts affect the choice of linguistic markers in disagreement utterances. For example, the topic posted in the thread of tweets, "Universities should admit students partly on the basis of race", which considered race a criterion in the university admission requirement, was the biggest issue that triggered the Saudi participants' aggravated disagreement utterance in the thread of tweets. Furthermore, Saudi EFL teachers mentioned many different factors that affect their disagreement expressions in the target language, such as: their personality, cultural background, age, and cultural norms (see section 4.4.3 in Chapter IV).

Some Saudi EFL teachers see the topic as a major factor in the severity of disagreements. Locher (2004) reveals that topic engagement and familiarity and whether topics are controversial influence how disagreements unfold. A male American ESL teacher refrained from debating issues like depression, gender distinctions in doing jobs and better students, visiting a psychiatrist, and race since they were too sensitive for him to discuss. For example, his response regarding cancel culture was, "Nah, don't love that one." This result is consistent with Pourmohamadi, Abaszadeh, and Samar's (2014) study findings that the topic threatens some participants' beliefs and identity, which provokes them to express aggravated disagreement. The issues that triggered Saudi
participants’ disagreement utterances and arguments in the corpus of the tweets were society, the role of women, family, education, teaching methods, COVID 19, and human rights.

However, the variables of social distance (D), the relative power (P), and the ranking of imposition (R) that Brown and Levinson (1987) provided are almost absent in the online data on Twitter. Because Twitter users rarely consider the social distance between interlocutors since the communication is online, usually neither the speaker nor addressee has power over the other. The only exceptions are official Twitter accounts of governments or persons with the authority to punish Twitter users if they are disrespectful in expressing their disagreements. Moreover, the variable (R) is also rarely found in online interaction since there is no imposition or pressure on Twitter users to post their opinions or disagreements. In contrast, they express their disagreements whenever they want to participate publicly in any argument.

In addition, cultural norms significantly influence how differences among various cultures are expressed. For instance, as my study found, supplications are associated with Muslim culture, which is congruent with Bavarsad, Eslami-Rasekh, and Simin's (2015) study where they find that supplications in relation to the religion in Iranian Muslims' culture. This result is in line with what Locher (2004) claimed that cultural norms influence how disagreements are resolved.

Furthermore, identity significantly influences how Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers express disagreement. During my interviews, Saudi EFL teachers were found to be cautious in their Twitter posts since they represented their real identities in their biographies and knew that their colleagues and even the college dean might be viewing them. They strove to maintain a positive image when sharing their opinions online. For example, a female Saudi EFL teacher mentioned during the interview, "I would try to maintain my image as a teacher". In comparison, another Saudi female participant revealed that her personality was reflected in how she expressed
disagreement on Twitter, whether she included her true identity or not, while some American ESL teachers initially hesitated to participate when I asked them to share their thoughts on various topics on Twitter. One female ESL teacher created an anonymous account and set it to private to respond to the thread of tweets.

The factors of linguistic competence and English fluency also affected Saudi participants’ ability to produce short disagreement statements without attempts to soften or provide illustrations to support their oppositional stances. This result is confirmed by one Saudi participant, who produced a short disagreement utterance, as he did not have the English language proficiency to express his opinion. Meanwhile, the American participants were motivated by personality and context factors to utter brief disagreement statements without expressing their opinions.

In addition, the absence of facial expressions on Twitter, as mentioned by Saudi EFL teachers during the interviews, caused misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the utterances. This result is aligned with the discovery of Maros and Rosli (2017) that misunderstanding can still happen on Twitter “due to the absence of other communication cues in virtual ‘faceless’ communication” (p. 132).

The nature of formal interactions in online interactions, since all the participants were teachers, may have affected the Saudi EFL participants to produce positive politeness as the second most common strategy in the thread of tweets but the least common in the corpus of tweets. The natural use of language, as in their corpus of tweets, was more similar to the face-to-face interactions, which made them feel free and flexible to express their disagreements directly. In contrast, in the thread of tweets with the prepared hashtag #ExpressYourOpinion, they were more aware of their disagreement performances, employing more positive politeness to appear more polite and promote the opinion expressed in the thread’s original tweets. Maros and Rosli (2017)
claim that performing a positive politeness strategy among their study participants on Twitter occurred the most, given the nature of computer-mediated communication (CMC), which encourages interpersonal communication and expression among users. Consequently, all the participants in the thread of tweets were teachers who attempted to appear more favorable among what they considered as colleagues in the same field of teaching English, whereas in the corpus of tweets, the participants shared arguments on various issues with different individuals worldwide.

During the interview, most Saudi EFL teachers mentioned the lack of pragmatic knowledge as a significant factor that affects EFL learners/teachers to communicate appropriately in English. This result was also found in Khammari (2021), who argues that the absence of pragmatic knowledge about sociolinguistic and cultural norms can be a major cause of difficulty for those EFL learners, resulting in pragmatic failure. He recommended that EFL learners need to become familiar with the social and cultural conventions of the language they are studying.

Additionally, as one female Saudi EFL teacher mentioned, her years of teaching experience affect her way of providing arguments objectively without taking them personally. Miller (2000) revealed a similar finding: professors tend to be more polite in their disagreements than their students.

It is worth mentioning that no substantial distinctions were noticed in how different genders disagreed. However, female Saudi participants were observed to be more expressive than males. Of all the disagreement utterances, two Saudi males and four Saudi females provided explanations. Three Saudi males mostly employed direct disagreement with no redressive actions compared to the females. This finding is similar to that of other research studies, which suggest that females employ more polite language than males (Guodong & Jing, 2005; Masoumeh, Abbass, Azizollah, & Davood, 2013). However, gender-related issues did not affect Saudi EFL participants’ opinions;
instead, some male Saudi participants agreed that female students are better than males, while most female Saudi participants disagreed, e.g., "I disagree. Both of them have abilities that can make them better students." Only one female participant showed that she was affected by her identity as a female with a smiley face to agree with this issue, e.g., "As a female, I say yes ;)."

Many Saudi EFL teachers demonstrated that as linguistic proficiency progressed, pragmatic competence also grew. They mentioned that if EFL learners have a sufficient repertoire of English terms, they can use appropriate language in expressing different speech acts while adopting the target language's culture. This argument differs from the discovery of Kreutel (2007) that no relationship between pragmatic skills and proficiency levels exists.

However, some Saudi EFL teachers assumed that they tended to be more polite on Twitter than in oral communications since they tended to be more formal and polite in written language; since Twitter includes written forms, the teachers use more polite language. This argument is in favor of what Xu, Chang, and Long (2021) found: "Usually, students are more careful and serious in their written communication, and they will use more polite ways to express their disagreement" (p. 208).

Finally, the transfer of first-language pragmatics to the target language was rarely mentioned by Saudi EFL teachers as a factor that affected their choice of disagreements. Some EFL teachers showed that they employ similar disagreement strategies in both the first and target language as their personality drives them. However, other Saudi participants explained that they tend to be short in the target language if they lack linguistic and pragmatic knowledge instead of transferring the first language strategies when they disagree. This result contradicts what Yan (2016) found that Chinese speakers mostly transfer expressions from their first language into the English language.
5.5. Discussions of the Third Question of the Study

RQ 3. What are the different politeness strategies that Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers use in expressing disagreements?

In the corpus of tweets, there are similarities between Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers in favor of using politeness strategies when expressing disagreements. Both Saudi and American participants used the bald on-record without redressive approach followed by off-record strategies. The distinction was in the use of negative politeness, as Saudis employed it more than positive in their tweets. On the other hand, there were no instances of American participants using negative politeness in their tweets. Instead, they used positive politeness more than Saudis in their corpus of tweets. The comparison of politeness strategies that employed by Saudi and American participants in the corpus of tweets are shown in Figure 41. The disagreement classification that used by Saudi and American participants in the corpus of tweets are visualized in Figure 42 below.

Figure 41

The Comparison of Politeness Strategies Employed by Saudi and American Participants in the Corpus of Tweets
The Disagreement Classification Used by Saudi and American Participants in the Corpus of Tweets

In the thread of tweets, both Saudi and American participants shared similarities in the preference for using politeness strategies when expressing their disagreements, with the on-record being the most frequent strategy followed by positive politeness strategies and the least occurred strategy negative politeness. The differences were found in the classification of disagreement strategies; the first strategy employed by both participants was that disagreements were not softened or strengthened in 40 of the Saudi participants’ utterances and 59 of the American participants’ utterances. As shown in Figure 49 below, the aggravated disagreement was the second most frequent strategy used by Saudi participants in 22 statements and the third most common tactic employed by American participants in nine statements. Despite negative politeness being the least frequent strategy among Saudi and American participants, positive politeness was the third most common among Saudis in 26 utterances and the second most frequent among Americans in 14 instances. The comparison of politeness strategies used by Saudi and American participants in the thread of tweets are provided in Figure 43. The summary of the comparison
between Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers’ use of disagreement strategies are displayed in Figure 44.

**Figure 43**

*The Comparison of Politeness Strategies Used by Saudi and American Participants in the Thread of Tweets*

**Figure 44**

*The Comparison between Saudi EFL and American ESL Teachers’ Use of Disagreement Strategies in the Thread of Tweets*
I argue that disagreements are preferred in American culture to strengthen solidarity rather than to risk relationships. This finding is consistent with previous research that goes against Pomerantz's (1984) assertion that disagreement is dispreferred. Studies conducted in Greek and Anglo-American cultures have found that direct disagreement is preferred and that being hesitant in expressing disagreement is dispreferred (Kotthoff, 1993; Tannen & Kakavá, 1992). However, Saudi participants tend to consider disagreement a threatening act and attempt to soften it by claiming common ground with the other person, as suggested by Brown and Levinson (1987), since it is seen as a face-threatening act.

Overall, both Saudi and American participants implemented act combinations to intensify their disagreements in the corpus of tweets, in twelve and seven utterances, respectively. Also, both produced verbal attacks and made personal instances in the corpus of tweets. Hedging opinion and token agreement occurred by Saudi and American participants in argument exchanges (see examples 12, 26). Saudi participants performed complaints, giving suggestions, challenges, raising questions, exclamations, and counterclaims. In contrast, American participants gave irony, expressions of anger, exaggeration, scolding, and judgmental vocabulary as found in their disagreement expressions in the corpus of tweets. Examples of participants’ disagreements utterances in the corpus of tweets are provided in table 28.
Table 28

Examples of Participants’ Employment of Disagreements in the Corpus of Tweets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Saudi participants’ disagreement utterances in the corpus of tweets</th>
<th>Examples of American participants’ disagreement utterances in the corpus of tweets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Act combinations: (bold on record/aggravated disagreement): e.g., supplication, personal accusatory pronoun ‘you’, protest, and Judgmental vocabulary for example: Participant (S) expressed an aggravated disagreement in Arabic to the tweet that has been deleted by a creator:  
الحمدالله انهم منعوك من الدخول عشان لو انتا مو ماتخذ اللقاح راح تأذي المسلمين اللي يصلون داخل .. والمثل اللي ضربته بعد كل البعد عن حالتلك اللي تتخيل فيها ان الكون متآمر ضنك.. ولا يشبه من يرضي اذية الناس بررسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.  
Translation:  
“Thank God, they prevented you from entering because if you did not take the vaccine. You would harm the Muslims who pray inside...and the example you gave is unrelated to your position in which you imagine that the universe is conspiring against you...and whoever accepts harming people does not resemble the Messenger of God: peace be upon him.” | Act combinations: (bold on record/aggravated disagreement) e.g., verbal irony, personal accusatory ‘you’ and raising rhetorical questions, for example:  
You know bullying is bad, right? |
| Making personal stance (on-record)  
“Didn’t like using the word "lesson". We should make our students understand that we teach them a language, not a course.” | Making personal stance (on-record)  
“I hate it ....” |
| Verbal attack (bald on-record/aggravated disagreement)  
Talkative people on Twitter spaces 😃 I hope I don’t quit Twitter too soon. | Verbal attack (bald on-record/aggravated disagreement)  
Audism disguised as "research" 😔 |
| Challenge (On-record/aggravated)  
“مومواقف فلاامي روجي نجسك” | Scolding: in a reply to Politian’s tweet:  
“You should probably just worry about yourself “ |
| Exclamation (off-record)  
من المستغرب تمسك هيئة تقوم التعليم عدننا بصوره إجراء الاختبار التحضيري -حتى لو كان عن بعد. والإصرار على تقييم قد يصعب الاعتماد عليه كمعايير صادق للقبول في ظل الأزمة الراهنة. | Verbal irony (off-record)  
“Ugh I'm gonna have to talk to those Facebook people again.” |
“Surprisingly, our Education Evaluation Commission sticks to the need to conduct a standard achievement test - even if it is done remotely - and demands an evaluation that may be difficult to rely on as an authentic criterion for admission in light of the current crisis.”

Boo.

I enjoy discord the most and have a few streams there. Will keep adding to them.”

“Oooor as well very simply assign some students to teach part of a lesson. They’ll help you know about some digital apps and technologies as you observe them teach. 😊”

Partial agreement (positive politeness/mitigated disagreement)

“I am ok with them being able to call someone in emergencies. But...”

On the contrary, in the thread of tweets, all the participants (Saudis and Americans) did not employ the off-record strategy, instead, as seen in Figure 35, they similarly performed on-record strategies followed by positive politeness and rarely used negative politeness. Examples of the participants’ employment of each strategy in the thread of tweets are given in Table 29.

Table 29

Examples of Participants’ Employment of Disagreements in the Thread of Tweets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Saudi participants’ disagreement utterances in the thread of tweets</th>
<th>Examples of American participants’ disagreement utterances in the thread of tweets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Act combinations (on-record, disagreement not softened or strengthened)  
"I disagree, still humans are in control” | Act combinations (on-record, disagreement not softened or strengthened)  
"Disagree. All Ts and Ss need to be exposed to extracurricular events for social and lang dev. ” |
| Partial agreement (Positive politeness)  
“To some extent, I agree with this, but we do not deny that....” | Hedging opinion (Positive politeness)  
"Not sure, because although I may not be interested in most of it, people who follow them can better determine how deserved it is.” |
| Conditional (Negative politeness) | Conditional (Negative politeness) |
I agree, if their content is suitable or interesting to some people so why not

Agree if the university has a record of not being diverse.
If the University is already diverse, (w students representing multiple cultures, races, backgrounds in equitable numbers) then it wouldn't be necessary.

It can be argued that the nature of online communication (i.e., Twitter) affects their strategies to be mostly on-record and direct since they usually interacted with strangers and lack interpersonal relations not as in the face-to-face interactions. This finding is against Al-Shalawi's (2001) argument that, despite the debates in the literature regarding whether computer-mediated communication produces less natural richness and interpersonal interaction than face-to-face interaction, e-mails could transmit natural richness and interpersonal interactions among Saudi students and also contributes to forming a distinct realization of politeness. However, since Twitter is an open space for everyone to share opinions instantly, it likewise instantly has an impact on producing more direct disagreements and communicating with strangers. This argument is similar to Almutairi’s (2021) claim: "the majority of users on Twitter do not necessarily have a personal connection with each other, and the relationship does not have to be reciprocated" (p. 20).

My study also reveals that Saudi EFL teachers generally provide arguments and disagreement phrases in Arabic in their corpus of tweets; only a few argue in English. This result may occur since Saudi participants feel more comfortable expressing their disagreements in their mother tongue than in the target language. During the interview, some participants showed that they rarely disagreed in the target language to avoid any misunderstanding due to the different cultural norms. Conversely, the teachers utilize English when tweeting to express speech acts, such as: gratitude, compliments, or congratulations, and share accomplishments. In general, the
American participants tend to be explicit and straightforward, while the Saudis tend to hedge their disagreements unless the type of issue motivates their aggravated disagreements.

It is worth mentioning that cursing was only found in one utterance from an American ESL teacher, which Saudi participants did not employ. This result differed from Almutairi's (2021) results, in which she found cursing among Saudi Twitter users, such as, "الله يلعنه و يلعن اشكاره" meaning “May Allah damn him and damn those like him.” It can be argued that the qualification and professional identity of Saudi EFL teachers made him avoid employing cursing in their disagreement utterances. Cursing was only found in one utterance provided by an American ESL teacher when he argued about some of his friends who were kind people, but he was surprised by the news that they committed a murder. For example:

Participant G initiates a thread of two tweets:

Tweet 1:

*All the goddamn eugenics people went to Ivies. I met some absolutely terrible people in undergrad (and some cool ones), but I don't think they've done anything like that. Yet.*

Tweet 2:

*although two of them killed people later, so.*

Otherwise, cursing did not occur in the participants’ tweets, which corresponds with Miller’s (2000) findings that professors use more linguistic markers of politeness in their disagreements than their students.

Another remarkable difference about cultural and religious terms is the employment of supplication in most Saudi EFL teachers’ utterances. All the instances of supplication were combined with other strategies, such as: a verbal attack, judgmental vocabulary, objection,
exclamation, challenge, and use of personal accusatory ‘you’ to intensify their disagreements. However, only in one instance, the use of supplication used with other strategies such as asking a question and verbal irony (see example 13) to blur the disagreement by using off-record and disagreement not softened or strengthened disagreements. The use of supplication is evident in previous research that investigated the speech act of disagreements among Arab and Saudi speakers (Harb, 2016; Almutairi, 2021), on Facebook and Twitter, respectively.

However, in the corpus of tweets, American participants were found to be more likely than Saudi participants to engage in multiple arguments in their corpus of Twitter. Their arguments usually ended with understanding, indicating a shared interest among participants to save each other’s positive faces, as example (26) shows. Seemingly, arguments and disagreements are more favorable to American participants than Saudis. Saudi EFL participants during the interview demonstrated that Americans are more flexible in accepting opposing opinions, while Saudis negatively reacted to those who disagreed with them by blocking them or taking their comments personally.

Saudi participants provided no arguments or disagreements on political or religious issues in their corpus of tweets. This finding is consistent with Zamakhshari’s (2018) claim that despite the rapid social changes that have taken place and will continue to take place in Saudi Arabia, conservatism remains a significant aspect of the Saudi culture. Conversely, American participants argued in many utterances to freely express their disagreements on political and racial issues. These results best support the arguments in LoCastro’s (1986) study, finding that social factors may affect how different language speakers express their disagreements. She found that Americans were more willing to share their opinions on food and discuss controversial topics, such as politics, religion, and money, than Japanese speakers. Furthermore, Samovar and Porter (2001) state that
expressing opinions freely and assertively in American culture is accepted and regarded as a positive quality, as cited in Kobayashi and Viswat (2010, pp. 1-2). Thus, I argue that in Western culture, expressing opinions, even on controversial issues, is more favorable than in Eastern cultures.

American participants employed positive politeness more than negative politeness in the thread of tweets. However, no negative politeness strategies were observed in the corpus of tweets. This study’s findings align with Khammari’s (2021) exploration, which showed that American English speakers tended to use more positive politeness strategies than negative ones. Yan’s (2016) study outlined a similar finding: American undergraduates tend to use the positive politeness strategy most, regardless of relative power and social distance.

On the other hand, Saudi participants employed more aggravated and direct disagreements and negative politeness in Arabic more than positive politeness, as found in their corpus of tweets. In their participation in the thread of tweets, since they have to provide their disagreements in English, they tend to be used more disagreements not softened or aggravated, followed by positive politeness strategies. In the interview, a female Saudi EFL teacher stated that she tends to express disagreements more indirectly and mitigated when communicating in English or on Twitter, compared to when communicating verbally in Arabic. This is done to prevent any potential misunderstandings. This finding is against the argument that Kotthoff (1993, p. 214) provided that language learners may sometimes cause frustration when they unexpectedly give in during a conversation by providing many hedges and appear more reluctant in expressing opinions. He claims that native speakers do not usually accept this. Kotthoff (1993) suggests that if learners fail to identify the appropriate time to concede and do not provide a thorough explanation, they may be perceived as someone unable to defend their opinions. The result of Saudi EFL teachers'
employment of more positive politeness in the thread of tweets than Americans is in line with Alzahrani’s (2021) findings that Saudis employed positive politeness more than British speakers.

Another difference is that when a Saudi EFL employed the linguistic marker of raising a rhetorical question, they performed it off-record to blur their disagreements, such as "Can we call them "friends"?" Meanwhile, American participants employed it as verbal irony to indicate their disagreement, e.g., "You’re tweeting this today?".

It is hard to draw a conclusion about the universality of politeness and speech acts of disagreement, as LoCastro (1986) argues. My study concludes that the similarities are more salient than differences between Saudi and American participants’ using of politeness strategy in performing disagreements. I argue that CMC has a significant role in the similarities of politeness strategies and how different speech acts are produced. This finding is similar to Alzahrani’s (2021) conclusion that there are similarities between how Saudi and British speakers produce disagreements more than differences in casual verbal conversations. However, although there are similarities in implementing politeness strategies, there are different strategies in employing disagreements that are related to culture, such as supplications employed by most Saudi participants in the corpus of tweets. American participants employed more verbal irony, direct disagreement and explanation, and short contrary statements like "I disagree", which seen like disagreement not softened or strengthened. This finding could be specific to the speech act of disagreements. In contrast, other speech acts in face-to-face interactions are more cultural-specific, such as: invitations, replying to compliments, and accepting gifts, as mentioned by Kreuz and Roberts (2017). Americans may accept compliments, but they are more likely to downplay it or add a qualification. For instance, if someone says they look nice in a dress, they may reply with something like, "Do you really think so? It's just a hand-me-down from my sister".
hand, Germans tend to accept compliments more readily without using phrases such as "Thank you," which is commonly used in English. Instead, they often give assessments like schön ("That's nice") or ja ("yes") (Kreuz and Roberts 2017, pp. 168–170).

5.6. Results of the Hypotheses of this Study

After presenting the discussion of the research questions above, the research hypotheses are tested below.

a. Saudi EFL teachers are not familiar with the politeness strategies of American English culture.

This hypothesis is not supported completely. From their responses to the questionnaire, 50% of Saudi EFL teachers had a pragmatic knowledge of politeness and speech acts, and 20% had limited knowledge and general understanding. In comparison, 30% did know something about the pragmatics of English as the target language, which suggests that further investigation is needed to determine if EFL teachers have a pragmatic knowledge of the target language.

b. Saudi EFL teachers may tend to be direct and use impolite linguistic and non-linguistic forms such as (emojis) in their disagreements due to the nature of the online context and language differences.

This hypothesis is supported in the corpus of tweets where most Saudi EFL teachers employed bald on-record direct and aggravated disagreements, including supplications, verbal attacks, judgmental vocabulary, challenges, and using personal accusatory "you". Americans used emojis to intensify their disagreements more than Saudis. In contrast, in the thread of tweets, this hypothesis is not entirely supported, as Saudi EFL participants produced disagreements that were not softened or strengthened and positive politeness to mitigate their disagreements utterances more than aggravated disagreements, which might be perceived as polite, politic, appropriate, and
positively marked behavior. Still, 22% of Saudi EFL teachers' disagreement utterances were aggravated in the thread of tweets, which can be perceived as impolite, inappropriate/non-politic, and negatively marked communicative behavior.

7. Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers use different politeness strategies when applying their disagreements.

This hypothesis is not completely supported. Since the participants of the current study were Saudi EFL teachers, some of them hold post-graduate degrees, they may understand the pragmatic norms in American English. Therefore, it has been found that there are more similarities than differences between Saudi and American participants in using politeness strategies when expressing their disagreements in the thread of tweets. In the corpus of tweets, there are differences in employing American participants of off-record strategies more than Saudis. However, no negative politeness strategies occurred by Americans in the corpus of threads and only in two utterances in the thread of tweets. In comparison, Saudi participants employed negative politeness in ten disagreement utterances in the thread of tweets and three instances in the corpus of tweets.

8. The years of EFL teaching experience do not guarantee pragmatic competence among Saudi EFL teachers.

This hypothesis is, to some extent, supported, since two of the Saudi EFL teachers worked in the field of teaching English for almost ten years, but they did not have pragmatic knowledge and limited linguistic competence, as they confirmed during the interviews. However, I found that the qualifications of the participants play a role in promoting pragmatic knowledge, as evidenced by Saudi EFL teachers who attribute their good knowledge of pragmatic knowledge to their M.A.s and Ph.Ds.
9. Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers may express their disagreements more severely regarding cultural background, beliefs, identity, and personal involvement topics.

This hypothesis is supported in both corpus of tweets and the thread of tweets, since most Saudi EFL teachers produced aggravated disagreements toward cultural and social issues, such as the issues that threatened participants' identities as female when the tweet included utterances that underestimated woman's role by comparing her relationship with her boss and her husband, also issues that threaten the participant's identity as a mother (as in the comments of the case of a mother who tortured her daughter). Also, personality, beliefs, and severity of the issue/context affect Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers to produce strong disagreement in the thread of tweets. Nonetheless, cultural background affects the use of disagreement strategies in these two cultures (Saudi and American); most Saudi teachers employed supplications to intensify their disagreements, while Americans produced aggravated disagreements in common issues in their culture, such as gender pronouns and racism. Consequently, this research suggests that further investigations should look into the effect of cultural background on the performance of speech acts of disagreement.

5.7. Paralinguistic Features in CMC

Paralinguistic features in CMC are evident in this study, significantly influencing communication and how disagreement is employed and interpreted. Examples of paralinguistic features in this study are emojis, e.g., "😔, 😔, and 😊😊". Harb (2016) states, "paralinguistic features help in the interpretation of the disagreement, for they can be seen as either mitigators or aggravators, depending on how they are communicated to the hearer" (p. 233). He calls for examining the paralinguistic features in CMC among Arabic speakers. American participants employ emojis in their corpus of tweets, significantly influencing how the disagreement utterances
are understood. For example, a smiley face emoji with tears 😢 employed by a female American ESL teacher in the thread of tweets was employed not to aggravate her disagreement utterance regarding the necessity of marrying before 30 years of age. She provided an ironic statement to show disagreement that was neither softened nor strengthened, such as "I disagree 😢. I’m about to be thirty and happily single". However, the paralinguistic features used by Saudi EFL teachers in the thread of tweets were a smiley face, e.g., :) which is used to soften the utterance and as a signal of solidarity with the addressee, such as in the utterance "In short, I partially agree... it will take me an article to fully express my opinion regarding this :)". Participant D posted a smiley face in her replies throughout the thread to soften her opinions because she was aware of the importance of facial expression and voice tone in face-to-face communication which is absent in online interactions. In the corpus of tweets, Saudi EFL participants posted different emojis to express their disagreement utterances, such as "إنجاب٧+ أطفال 😅" which means "to have 7+ children 😅" to express the surprise and irony that indicates the disagreement. Also, the use of the emoji "✍" combined with supplication. Another emoji used to provide an idea, such as "For someone to have an open mind, they need to know their own mind first. Otherwise, an open mind will equal no mind at all 😄". One emoji reflects the exclamation by implying wonder and surprise, such as "that’s a first. 😳", "and another emoji expresses disappointment and complaint "Having to paraphrase, in my opinion, is one of the leading forces behind language change 😞❤️". Finally, in giving suggestions such as "Ooor as well very simply assign some students to teach part of a lesson. They’ll help you know about some digital apps and technologies as you observe them teach 😍". However, only one emoji was used by Saudi EFL teachers to intensify the disagreement, such as "Talkative people on Twitter spaces 😳 I hope I don’t quit Twitter too soon". On the
contrary, I found that American ESL teachers used emojis to aggravate their disagreements such as "Of course he’d find a way to blame women 😞", "This 🙄- every word" and "Audism disguised as "research” 😞." Some examples of paralinguistic features are displayed in Table 30 below.

**Table 30**

*Paralinguistic Features of Online Communication*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paralinguistic features of online communication</th>
<th>The disagreement strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That’s a first 😆 .</td>
<td>Exclamation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Verbal attack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oooor ….😊</td>
<td>Suggestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOL</td>
<td>Verbal irony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of course he’d find a way to blame women 😞</td>
<td>Expression of anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This 🙄- every word</td>
<td>Exaggeration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.8. Summary of the Discussion

Saudi and American participants employed on-record strategies, aggravated disagreements in the corpus of tweets and disagreement nor mitigated or strengthened in the thread of tweets, more than addressing the negative or positive faces of the addresses. However, when using mitigated disagreements, Saudi participants tend to apply positive and negative politeness strategies more than Americans in the corpus and thread of tweets. Saudi EFL teachers employed positive politeness more than negative politeness in the thread of tweets, e.g., partial agreement (e.g., "I partially agree...") using the inclusive 1st person pronoun ‘we’ and hedging opinion (e.g., although....). It has been found that both Saudi and American participants employed positive politeness strategies when disagreeing on Twitter which may support Brown and Levinson (1987)
claim that to mitigate the disagreement that speakers have to employ the positive politeness strategies. However, it has been found that Saudi EFL teachers used negative politeness in the corpus of tweets more than positive politeness strategies, e.g., giving an apology, suggestions, conditional, and raising questions. On the other hand, when they employ mitigated disagreements, American participants use positive politeness more than negative politeness strategies in the thread of tweets, e.g., partial agreement and hedging opinion. At the same time, no negative politeness strategy is found in the corpus of tweets.

It is evident that context plays a crucial role in how individuals express their disagreements; this result Miller's (2000) findings that the context in which the disagreements occurred affect the disagreement utterances more than relative power and social status. In a thread of tweets, American ESL teachers were more direct in expressing their disagreements, while Saudi EFL teachers tended to be more mitigated. However, in the corpus of tweets, both Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers produced aggravated disagreements on various issues. The issues that provoked disagreements among Saudi participants were social issues, such as: women's rights, family, marriage, and the private lives of social media influencers, as well as educational, teaching, and governmental responsibilities. In contrast, American participants had aggravated disagreements on politics, academia, gender, pronouns, racism, teaching, and COVID19 issues. It was observed that American participants had arguments in different turns in the corpus of tweets more than Saudis. Regarding metalinguistic cues in online data, Americans tend more to use emojis to express their aggravated disagreements while Saudis used emojis to mitigate their disagreements. On the other hand, in the thread of tweets, it has been found that the issues of mental health, such as: 1) "Visiting a psychiatrist is more harmful than positive" and 2) "Depression is a mental illusion rather than an actual disease", provoked both Saudi and American participants to produce
aggravated disagreements e.g., a Saudi EFL teacher, ‘SA Participant F’, replies as "I totally disagree with both statements because: 1. It’s positive since psychiatrists are specialized to deal with such issues and taking suffering out of chest could help as well. 2. Depression is a real disease that could lead to negative impacts" and an American ESL teacher, ‘AM Participant C’, replied as "I hard disagree ...- it’s a mental and physical reality and even if it weren’t, it’s still the real lived experience of many people”. However, the issue of regarding race as a standard for university admission is totally disagreed with by Saudi EFL teachers while more tolerated by American ESL teachers as they provide different opinions. For example, SA participant K replied to the issue "Universities should admit students partly on the basis of race" as "Totally disagree! Admission should see no color, race, or gender. Everyone, no matter their cultural or racial background, has the right to pursue their education". In contrast, AM participant C replied, "I softly agree, considering that Unis are historically white and male institutions and generally remain so. In order to change the status quo unis need to do things to actively change that".

From the questionnaires' and interviews' data gathered from Saudi EFL teachers, it was revealed that pragmatic knowledge was absent in school textbooks. Additionally, various factors influenced their disagreement utterances, such as: linguistic proficiency, cultural background, personality traits like age and first language influence. According to the perceptions of Saudi EFL teachers, short statements of disagreement without any explanation are considered impolite. The following chapter will provide the conclusion, limitations of the study, pedagogical implications, and recommendations for future studies.
CHAPTER VI. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, conclusions are drawn from the findings and limitations of this study, and recommendations are made for future work. This chapter informs how this study contributes to other linguists and educators by filling a niche and extending a field of sociopragmatics of speech acts across cultures and languages. The pedagogical implications of considering pragmatic knowledge in the school curriculum will also be provided.

6.1. Summary of the Findings

This study investigates the politeness strategies performed by Saudi EFL teachers in expressing disagreements on Twitter. It also examines the perlocutionary force of the disagreement utterances provided by other participants (Saudis and Americans) in the thread of tweets on Saudi EFL teachers by conducting follow-up interviews. This study explores the factors that affect the disagreement strategies performed by Saudi EFL teachers and the choice of politeness strategies in expressing disagreements. Lastly, this study compares between the disagreement strategies performed by the participants with different cultural backgrounds (Saudi Arabian and American).

The most significant results of each research question of this study will be provided. The key findings of the first question: RQ1, "What are the politeness strategies used in performing disagreements on Twitter by Saudi EFL teachers?" are as follows: in the corpus of tweets, the most used strategy by Saudi EFL participants was on-record without redressive action (aggravated disagreement), e.g., verbal attack and supplications, followed by off-record strategies.
(disagreement not aggravated or mitigated), e.g., providing inquiry, then negative politeness, e.g., providing question, and the least used is positive politeness, e.g., token agreement. However, in the thread of tweets, the most used strategy is on-record strategy (disagreement nor aggravated or mitigated), e.g., direct disagreement and explanation, followed by positive politeness, e.g., partial agreement. The least used strategies are negative politeness, e.g., providing suggestions. The fact that the Twitter users knew they were under observation in their participation on the thread of tweets could have affected their disagreement performances. The results showed that they tend to employ more politeness strategies to express their disagreements in the thread of tweets than in their corpus.

The significant result of RQ1.1. "How do Saudi EFL Teachers apply the FTA in performing disagreement?" are as follows. Although Twitter is a faceless online platform, it has been discovered from the data of this study that the participants used different politeness strategies. In the thread of tweets, Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers generally employed positive politeness strategies, with few instances of negative politeness. In contrast, the data from the participants’ corpus of tweets demonstrated that the strategy of bald on-record without redressive action is mostly found when participants employed aggravated disagreements on different issues.

The key findings of RQ1.2 "What is the perlocutionary effect of tweets on Saudi EFL teachers?" are as follows: the perlocutionary force of disagreement utterances of other Saudi participants were mostly clear and the language used was simple as participants displayed in the follow-up interviews. For example: Participant H said that: "The tweets of Saudi participants are so clear for me, but the Americans’ replies, I tried to translate and search on Google to understand what they mean. Maybe they are direct but the language some words of them are not clear for me. When I search in Google and try to translate". For instance, Participant B said that: "I think they
are clear. There is nothing unclear. There are no aggressive or impolite tweets. I did not see any hidden messages or words in the tweets”. It is worth mentioning that some participants perceived short disagreement statements that were provided by some of Saudi and American participants as impolite. For example: Participant M demonstrated that, "Direct disagreement such as ‘I disagree with you’ without providing reason or apologize. I think that if one disagrees directly without providing explanation, this strategy is impolite”.

The key findings of RQ2, "What factors influence Saudi EFL teachers’ use of politeness strategies in expressing disagreements?" are as follows. The most important finding is that contextual factors play a significant role in how participants expressed their disagreements and what politeness strategies they chose; this finding lends support to the findings of Miller (2000) that the context plays a significant role in how disagreements are produced, which is evident in what most Saudi participants displayed in the interviews: their disagreements depend on the context. For example, SA participant B in how he expressed his disagreements, demonstrated that "It depends on the context, whether it is face-to-face or virtual communication”.

In addition, the nature of online communication where the facial expressions and voice tones are absent, the misunderstanding of the utterance may occur. For this reason, as a foreign speaker of the English language, some Saudi participants show that they tend to use mitigators such as "I beg to differ" or "I am afraid I have to disagree" to avoid this misunderstanding. For instance, SA participant J said: "Because I do not want to be misunderstood. Because people cannot watch your expression or take your words as it should be. But in face-to-face communication, they see your body expression, so they can understand you clearer but in social media, may be people use the direct words and they may be understood that as aggressive and impolite. The words in social media are so important to avoid misunderstanding. You have to be
Moreover, the prior relation that were mostly absent in online data, when it exists, affects the performance of the disagreement. For instance, when the participant argued with a colleague in the same field on Twitter, they employed positive politeness strategies to promote the positive face of the addressee, like in example 12 (in chapter IV) when participant K provided his disagreement to a linguistic issue and exchanged argument turns with a female colleague in the field of linguistics, he attempted to provide token agreement and provided his disagreement (e.g., You’re right! But I still ....).

The most significant results of RQ3, "What are the different politeness strategies used in expressing disagreements by Saudi EFL teachers and American ESL teachers?" are as follows: this study’s participants, both Saudi and American, employ different politeness strategies when expressing their disagreements. Saudis and Americans employ similar strategies in favor of Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness strategies in their corpus and thread of tweets. However, Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers differ in linguistic terms that are used to express their disagreement e.g., supplication (particularly performed by Saudi participants), swearing and verbal irony (found in American’s corpus of tweets). They used on-record without redressive action strategies the most in their corpus of tweets to produce aggravated disagreements. The data of the corpus of tweets show that Saudis and Americans provide their disagreements in different issues. For Americans, most argued about political issues more freely than Saudis. However, Saudi participants are more conservative in expressing their disagreements, and they argued about issues that concerned women and family, governmental responsibility, social and educational issues, and there were no disagreements provided about religious or political issues.
6.2. Conclusion of the Study

The current study examines the politeness strategies used by Saudi EFL teachers in expressing disagreement on Twitter. It also investigates the factors behind Saudi EFL teachers’ employment of different disagreement strategies in online interactions on Twitter. Finally, it highlights the differences in disagreement strategies employed by Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers on Twitter. Four instruments were employed to address this study’s research questions. The first is retrieving the corpus of the participants’ tweets, and the second is observing the participants’ replies to the thread of tweets over two months. The third is the questionnaire and the fourth are the interviews conducted with Saudi EFL teachers. This study also explores how Saudi EFL teachers implemented the FTA by employing different politeness strategies in their disagreement utterances in their corpus of tweets and the thread of tweets.

The analysis of the corpus of tweets indicates that Saudi EFL teachers employed bald on-record the most, followed by off-record, negative politeness, and lastly positive politeness. At the same time, the results indicate that in the thread of tweets, Saudi EFL teachers used bald on-record strategies the most, followed by positive politeness, negative politeness, and lastly not performing face-threatening acts (FTAs). The perlocutionary force of the original tweets and the replies provided by Saudi and American participants were perceived by Saudi EFL teachers as clear and harmless, and they did not notice any impolite or hidden/misunderstood utterances. The only texts that Saudi EFL teachers found impolite were the short disagreement messages, such as "I disagree" throughout the thread of tweets. Some Saudi EFL participants perceived some American ESL teachers' disagreement utterances as polite, indirect, and sometimes persuasive.

Many factors impacted how EFL teachers produced their disagreement utterances. The most significant factor is the severity of the context, as found from their disagreement strategies.
on Twitter, which is in favor of Miller’s (2000) finding that context is the greatest factor influencing disagreement strategies. Also, teaching experience, and linguistic competence are significant factors that affected the disagreement utterances of Saudi EFL teachers. Cultural background also plays a significant role in how EFL produced their disagreements, e.g., providing supplications in their most disagreement expressions in the corpus of tweets.

This study finds more similarities in using politeness strategies in expressing disagreements between Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers than differences. Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers employed the bald on-record without redressive action the most in their corpus of tweets in the form of aggravated disagreements. On the other hand, both Saudi and American participants employed on-record strategies the most in the thread of tweets by expressing disagreements that were not softened or strengthened. Saudi EFL teachers used more mitigators (positive and negative politeness) to soften their disagreements. Meanwhile, American participants tended to be more straightforward in expressing their disagreements. This finding is in accordance with Kobayashi and Viswat (2010), who found that Americans expressed their disagreements more directly than EFL Japanese speakers. It is hard to draw conclusions about the universality of politeness strategy, speech act pragmatics, and the concept of face as many variables other than culture-specific aspects (e.g., context, age, personality, identity, and educational factors) affect how one uses disagreement strategies. This study recommends that more research be done to explore the various ways of expressing disagreement in different languages and cultures in different contexts (verbal or online), especially in Arabic, as there is currently limited information available on this topic. More research could enhance our understanding of the pragmatics of speech acts of disagreement across languages and cultures.
6.3. Limitations of the Study

The present study has some limitations. It is limited in participants, since it only investigates Saudi and American cultures and one speech act of disagreement. It is also limited in gathering the data from one online platform—Twitter. This study is also limited to Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers who teach English as a foreign or second language in Saudi Arabia and the United States. The study is limited to surveys and interviews with few Saudi participants. Furthermore, another limitation of the current study is the small sample size; thus, it is recommended for future studies have a larger sample. There are no surveys or interviews conducted with American participants. The duration of the observation of the thread of tweets was over two months on specific issues concerning educational, social, cultural, mental health, and gender matters, with no political or taboo topics in either Saudi and American cultures. The disagreement strategies found in the corpus of tweets are few compared to a general audience other than teachers on Twitter. Furthermore, I faced some challenges in recruiting participants for my research as I concentrated on Saudi EFL and American ESL teachers who used Twitter. As a result, I could not obtain a balanced number of male and female American participants.

6.4. Contributions

My study contributes to sociopragmatics and computer-mediated communications (CMC) fields. It extends the literature on the pragmatics of speech acts of disagreement in two cultures (Saudi and American). It highlights the importance of how disagreements are produced in different cultures to make speakers understand how they communicate appropriately in the target language. Disagreements are inherent in everyday communications across all languages and cultures since there is no absolute opinion on any matter, even on those global issues. Hence, investigating the pragmatics of speech acts of disagreement in different languages is an intriguing area, especially
in the online platform where many people communicate daily in different languages and freely produce their disagreements.

In the methodology, this study applies new techniques of collecting data (an online medium, i.e., Twitter) since there is rich content of linguistic and pragmatic data occurring daily across cultures and languages in different online platforms, e.g., social media platforms such as Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, etc. Thus, this study contributes to the understanding of how people digitally provide disagreements on different issues in their first and second languages. This study contributes to a new methodology that can be used to gather the naturally occurring data of disagreements (e.g., the corpus of tweets, the hashtags, and the thread of tweets), as most of the previous studies conducted Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) (e.g., Alzahrani, 2021; Dogancay-Aktuna & Kamisli, 1996; Guodong & Jing, 2005; Khammari, 2021; Kreutel, 2007; Salehipour, Abbass & Shahla, 2015; Yan, 2016), or in school/colleges classrooms/contexts (e.g., Miller, 2000; Yu, Chang & Long, 2021).

Looking at analytical procedures, my research extends Brown and Levinson's (1987) universality of politeness theory by testing speech acts of disagreements in two cultures (Saudi Arabian and American). A rubric was designed to analyze the data based on the politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), the disagreement classification (Miller, 2000), and finally refer to the relational work of Locher and Watts (2005). My study prepared a rubric for analyzing the speech act of disagreements that further studies can use.

6.5. Pedagogical Implications

As displayed in the interviews with Saudi EFL teachers who worked in Saudi public schools and universities, school textbooks in Saudi Arabia lack pragmatic knowledge, which is foundational in assisting students in communicating successfully in the target language. Examples
of some extracts provided by Saudi EFL teachers during the interviews when they were asked about the presence of pragmatic knowledge in the Saudi textbooks and curriculum of the English language are what SA participant H, a Saudi male teacher who worked in Saudi secondary public schools, demonstrated that "there are just grammar instruction and skills of English. And focus on learning specific skills to just pass the exams". Another example was provided by SA participant A, a Saudi female teacher who worked in teaching the English language for a preparatory year in a Saudi university, "No, I don’t see of that, to be honest, I never see this knowledge in our English textbooks that it is culturally appropriate or inappropriate, however, they do not explain that they are straightforward just after the language itself, and they mostly give situations where you could use the target language but not necessarily explaining any background linguistic knowledge about pragmatics”.

The interview data indicated that participants believed grammatical competence to be essential, but communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) is equally important. Hymes’ concept of communicative competence is the ability to use language effectively in various contexts, considering the situation’s social and cultural norms, involving knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and discourse conventions, as well as understanding how to use language appropriately in different contexts. Thus, including pragmatic knowledge in the school curriculum is crucial to enable students to use the target language correctly and appropriately and avoid any misunderstandings or misinterpretations as a result of pragmatic failure. My research suggests that future research could invest in writing pragmatics lesson plans. It is essential to teach students not only the grammar and vocabulary of a language but also how to use it appropriately in different social situations. Thus, by incorporating pragmatics into language learning, students will be better equipped to communicate effectively and confidently in real-life situations.
6.6. Suggestions for Further Studies

This study recommends that future investigations examine the politeness strategies for employing different speech acts across cultures in different online platforms where different speakers of different languages can communicate with each other. Scholars still argue about politeness strategies and speech acts as universal or culture-specific, so it is an interesting area to consider, especially in online platforms such as social media, which are open to all people and cultures for a chance to deliver different speech acts in different languages representing different cultures. This study also recommends examining disagreement strategies among Saudis in informal face-to-face communications to enrich the pragmatics of speech acts of disagreement in Saudi Arabian culture. Future studies should also examine the relational work from the participants’ perceptions of how disagreement strategies could be seen in their cultures. Since this study focuses on investigating teachers’ use of disagreement who are considered to have an advanced level of English, future studies are recommended to examine students’ use of disagreements in verbal and online communications. This study recommends investigating Americans’ perception of Saudis’ disagreement performances to extend the findings of this study. In order to investigate the linguistic and pragmatic features of different speech acts in different languages, it is suggested that future research should focus on the abundance of data available on online social media platforms, e.g., YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, etc. Also, I recommend investigating the arguments in specific threads of tweets or hashtags to examine the speech acts of disagreements in multiple argument turns. I recommend that future studies examine the disagreement strategies used in different languages and cultures in other contexts (verbal or online) to enrich the speech act pragmatics of disagreements across cultures, as this area has not been studied extensively.
In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of considering context when analyzing disagreement performances among people from different cultural backgrounds.
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

List of 16 topics that posted in the thread of tweets

1. Teaching grammar is more important than teaching conversational skills.
2. Extracurricular activities are a waste of time for teachers and students.
3. Exams are not the ideal criteria for testing students' knowledge.
4. A high IELTS/TOEFL exam score does not guarantee English language fluency.
5. Salary is the most crucial aspect of a job.
6. Men and women can do all jobs equally well.
7. The education system is not updated to accommodate current job demands.
8. The human world is progressing very quickly, but education is not keeping pace with this progress.
9. New social-media celebrities deserve their fame.
10. Cancel culture results in bullying or censorship that is usually worse than the original offense.
11. Machines have become superior to humans in many functions.
12. Females are better students than males.
13. Universities should admit students partly on the basis of race.
14. Men and women should get married before they turn thirty.
15. Visiting a psychiatrist is more harmful than positive.
16. Depression is a mental illusion rather than an actual disease.
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Demographic Background.

Please tick (√) the appropriate category.

1. Gender:
   (A) Male (B) Female

2. Age: ______________

3. Years of EFL teaching experience:
   A) less than three years (….)
   C) three to five years (….)
   D) more than five years (…….)
   F) other: ----

4. The highest degree earned:
   A) Bachelor (…..) B) Master (…..) C) PhD (…..) d) Other: -------

5. Where did you study:
   a) Saudi Arabia
   b) Arabic country
   c) Native English country (How many years) ---------
   D) Nonnative English country

6. The linguistic proficiency:
   A) beginner
   B) intermediate
   C) upper-intermediate
D) advanced

7. The IELTS/TOEFL score, or any standardized test of English:

____________________________________________________

Section B: Open-ended Questions (some parts adapted from Mishaud (2007), as found in Maros & Rosly, 2017, pp.147-148) and other parts modified or deleted, and I also added questions)

Please answer the questions below.

1. How did you come to join Twitter and what attracted you?

2. The most style of the language used in Twitter:
   (polite/impolite) (direct/indirect) (formal/informal) or Other:

3. Do you usually express your disagreements in English or your native language (Arabic)? If so, how do you usually express your disagreements?

4. What kind of topics that provoke your disagreements?

5. Do you usually interact with Saudi EFL teachers or American ESL teachers, or both on Twitter?
6. Do Saudi EFL textbooks include pragmatic knowledge? If so, to what extent the pragmatic knowledge presented in Saudi EFL textbooks?

7. Are you familiar with politeness strategies and speech acts in pragmatics? If so, briefly explain what did you know about these issues in pragmatics?

8. Do you teach any pragmatic knowledge in your classrooms? If so, do you teach politeness and speech acts in your classroom?

9. Do you study abroad or study in Saudi Arabia? If you study abroad, how many years did you spend in native English-speaking country?

10. Do you agree that most Twitter users use Twitter impolitely? Explain.
11. How did you reduce the risk of threatening or intimidating your followers’ faces in your exchanges? Explain.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

12. Have you experienced any misunderstanding on Twitter between your followers? Explain

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________


______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The interview contains the following ten questions:

Q1. How do you perceive your participation in the thread of tweets on Twitter?

Q2. How many years of EFL teaching experience do you have?

Q3. How do you produce your disagreement in your first language (Saudi Arabic)?

Q4. What do you know about disagreement strategies in American English?

Q5. What is the perlocutionary effect\(^4\) of tweets in the thread and #ExpressYourOpinion on you? (I clarified the meaning of the perlocutionary effect to the interviewees.)

Q6. How do you rate your implementation of the politeness strategies in expressing disagreements by comparing them with those of the American English native speakers (NSs) in the thread of tweets and the hashtag #ExpressYourOpinion?

Q7. Do you use different strategies when expressing disagreements in face-to-face (FTF) communication other than on Twitter? Explain.

Q8. Do you tend to be more polite in verbal and FTF communication than in a faceless online platform (Twitter)? Explain.

Q9. Do students express their disagreements in the same way in their first (Arabic) and second language (English)? Explain.

Q10. Do students use the same disagreement strategies in the English language? Explain.

\(^4\) Perlocutionary effect: the effect of an utterance on an interlocutor. (Austin, 1962)
VITA

EDUCATION

2015 M.A. Applied Linguistics, Al Baha University, Saudi Arabia.

2011 B.A. English Language, Al Baha University, Saudi Arabia.

CONFERENCES PRESENTATIONS

2022 "Teachers' Attitudes Toward Feedback for English Writing Skills Among Students." 2022 MFLA Conference, Mississippi Foreign Languages Association (MFLA), November 4, 2022.

2022 "EFL Teachers' Perspectives on the Effectiveness of Feedback in Promoting English Writing Skills among EFL Students" at Arizona Linguistics Circle (ALC) 16. 21st and 22nd October 2022.

CONFERENCES ATTENDANCE

2022, American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL), Pittsburgh, March 2022.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2015, Teaching Assistant of "Research methods, Second Language Acquisition, Modern drama, English for Specific Purposes at Al Baha University, Saudi Arabia

2016, Teaching Assistant of "Writing, English for Specific Purposes" at Al Baha University, Saudi Arabia

LANGUAGES

Arabic: Native Speaker | English: Advanced | Turkish and German: Elementary Proficiency