

# How To Be Polite With Emojis:

## A Pragmatic Analysis Of Facework Strategies In An Online Learning Environment

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# OVERVIEW



1. Current state of linguistic research on emoticons and emojis.
2. Outline of the politeness theory on which our presentation is based on.
3. Our analytic approach to it, and present the findings of a qualitative analysis of how emojis support politeness strategies when performing peer feedback in the learning scenario.



## DOWN MEMORY LANE....

In ITL1, a presentation by a few of our classmates threw light upon- Cuneiform Writing.

Keeping that in mind, we revisit the mentioned definitions and further expand on them.

Emoticons are modern examples of pictograms combined with cuneiform since they use a similar system of symbols in different combinations to represent different concepts :)

# EMOJIS

Emojis are colourful images or pictorial symbols that are listed in the Unicode character set.

Emoji deals with pragmatic functions and identifies 3 major categories-

1. Adding tone
2. Injecting a positive mood
3. Interactional Navigation

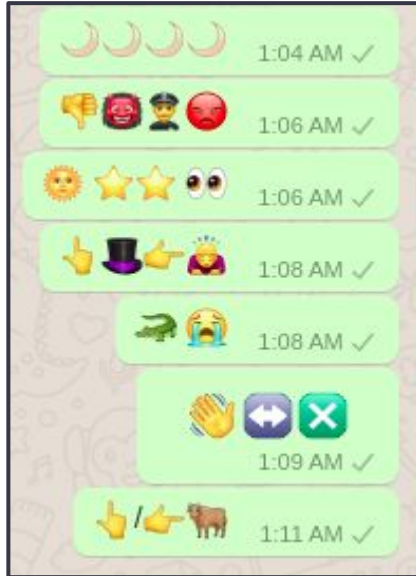
Recently, emoji sequences can function pragmatically like verbal utterances and form relations with textual propositions.

Assist with riffs and narrative sequence.

On an emotional level, emojis were majorly used to indicate-

1. A low-cost means of maintaining a connection through the 'pinging' of another individual.
  2. Engage in playful interaction with one's partner.
  3. Build forms of meaning that are uniquely interpretable within a particular relationship.
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# Hindi Idioms Represented By Emojis



1. चार चाँद लगना
2. उल्टा चोर कोतवाल को डाटे
3. दिन में तारे दिखाई देना
4. इसकी टोपी उसके सर
5. मगरमछ के आँसू
6. एक हाथ से ताली नहीं बजती
7. जिसकी लाठी उसकी भैंस

## 8 Pragmatic Functions Of Emojis

- (1) To signal the propositional attitude that underlies the utterance and which would be difficult to identify without the aid of the emojis.
- (2) To communicate a higher intensity of a propositional attitude which has already been coded verbally.
- (3) To strengthen/mitigate the illocutionary force of a speech act.
- (4) To contradict the explicit content of the utterance (humor).
- (5) To contradict the explicit content of the utterance (irony).
- (6) To add a feeling or emotion toward the propositional content of the utterance (affective attitude toward the utterance).
- (7) To add a feeling or emotion toward the communicative act as a whole (feeling or emotion in parallel to the communicative act).
- (8) To communicate the intensity of a feeling or emotion that has been coded verbally.

# The Two Main Categories



1. Adding Tone: a category that corresponds to the function of 'tone modification'. This function also includes, among other, the use of emojis as modelizers for criticizing.

दोपहर के भोजन के बाद मुझसे मिलने  
आओ। हमारे पास बात करने के लिए कुछ  
है। 😡

दोपहर के भोजन के बाद मुझसे मिलने  
आओ। हमारे पास बात करने के लिए कुछ है  
। 😡😡😡

2. Injecting A Positive Mood: This category adds to the functions described by the aforementioned authors as it emphasizes the function of emojis as devices for “visualization of the mood or sentiment expressed by the writer”.

दोपहर के भोजन के बाद मुझसे मिलने आओ।  
हमारे पास बात करने के लिए कुछ है। 😊

# Are Emojis A Form Of Language?



Definition of Language: It is an open source project. It is an ever-evolving construct that works when a message sender successfully communicates information to the receiver.

Seeing that definition, you might argue that emojis are a new language. They help communicate ideas and allow humans to express themselves.

Contradiction: But both definitions also point to the key issues with emojis-

1. These images don't follow a conventional system
2. They don't necessarily allow messages to be communicated successfully.

For Example, the emoji- 🙏



# Emojis Corrupting Language?



Fear that younger generations will permanently corrupt the sacred rules of language isn't new.

Popular opinion: Language is ever-evolving.

As the younger generation incorporates emojis into informal conversations, they aren't killing language. Instead, they are making it easier for others to clearly understand what they are trying to say.

We should understand the impact of visual cues in our learning and understanding.

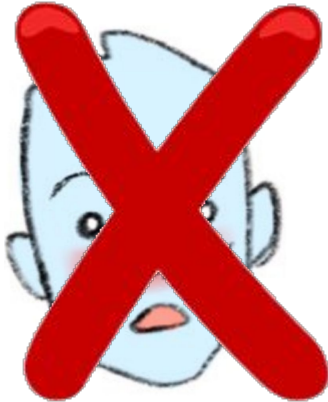
# Politeness Theory

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- Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson

# Face and Politeness

- According to Erving Goffman, **face** is the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself/herself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact.
- In simpler terms: Face is the public self image you have established by yourself for others to recognize



# Face and Politeness

- This concept of face, is considered fundamental for any form of social interaction, as they are about saving or losing face. People usually cooperate (and assume each other's cooperation) in maintaining face in an interaction, such cooperation is based on the mutual vulnerability of face.
- Everyone's face depends on everyone else's being maintained.
- For example: A child addressing their parent as “mata ji” or “amma garu” implies 2 things
  - The child respects their parent. (child's face).
  - The parent is respectful and taught her child to respect her properly. (parents face).

# Face and Politeness

- Since everyone's faces are so dependent on each other, it is very important to learn how to maintain your face as well as other's faces in order to be socially acceptable.
- Brown and Levinson (1987) expanded on Goffman's approach and developed a model of linguistic 'politeness'.
- Let's dive into the model.

# The Two Main Faces

## Positive Face

The positive face refers a person's desire for appreciation. The desire for others to value, and need them.



- He likes to be seen as a friendly person
- He likes to help people when it comes to the subject

## Negative Face

The desire for freedom. The desire to be left alone. Nobody wants to be told what to do or what not to do.



- He does not want others to call him
- He does not want to be told what to do about his assignments

# Face threatening acts

- A face threatening act is an act that inherently damages the face of the addressee or the speaker by acting in opposition to the wants and desires of the other.

Uncle tum hato

Chotu tu itne acche se  
padhte ho. IIT join karlena



# Negative Face threatening acts

## Threats to Hearer

- Creating pressure through acts like orders, requests, suggestions, advice, reminders, threats, or warnings. (tum hatu, jerugu) [Cheyyi - Cheyyava]
- Expressing speakers sentiments over hearer through acts like compliments, envy, admiration, hatred etc.
- Forcing to reject or accept something through acts like offers and promises.

## Threats to speaker

- Expressing thanks, apology, excuse(student not doing homework), accepting offers, unwilling promises.



# Positive Face threatening acts

## Threats to Hearer

- Through acts which show that the speaker does not value hearers feelings. (aasarle)
- Expressing dislike through acts like ridicule, criticism, accusation, complaints.
- Not caring about the hearers positive face through acts like profanity, non cooperation, wrongly addressing. (aap, meeru)

## Threats to speaker

- Apologies, Accepting compliments(everyone likes to be honest), self contradicting, unable to control oneself physically/mentally(burps, laughter).

Denying some requests are considered both +FTA and -FTA

# Politeness Strategies

- Clearly, faces are too vulnerable and have to be dealt with carefully.
- Linguistically speaking, The act of avoiding FTAs and saving ones face is considered being polite.
- But how exactly does it happen?

Lets ask for a deadline extension!



# What's the FTA here?

- He likes to be seen as a friendly person
- He likes to help people when it comes to the subject

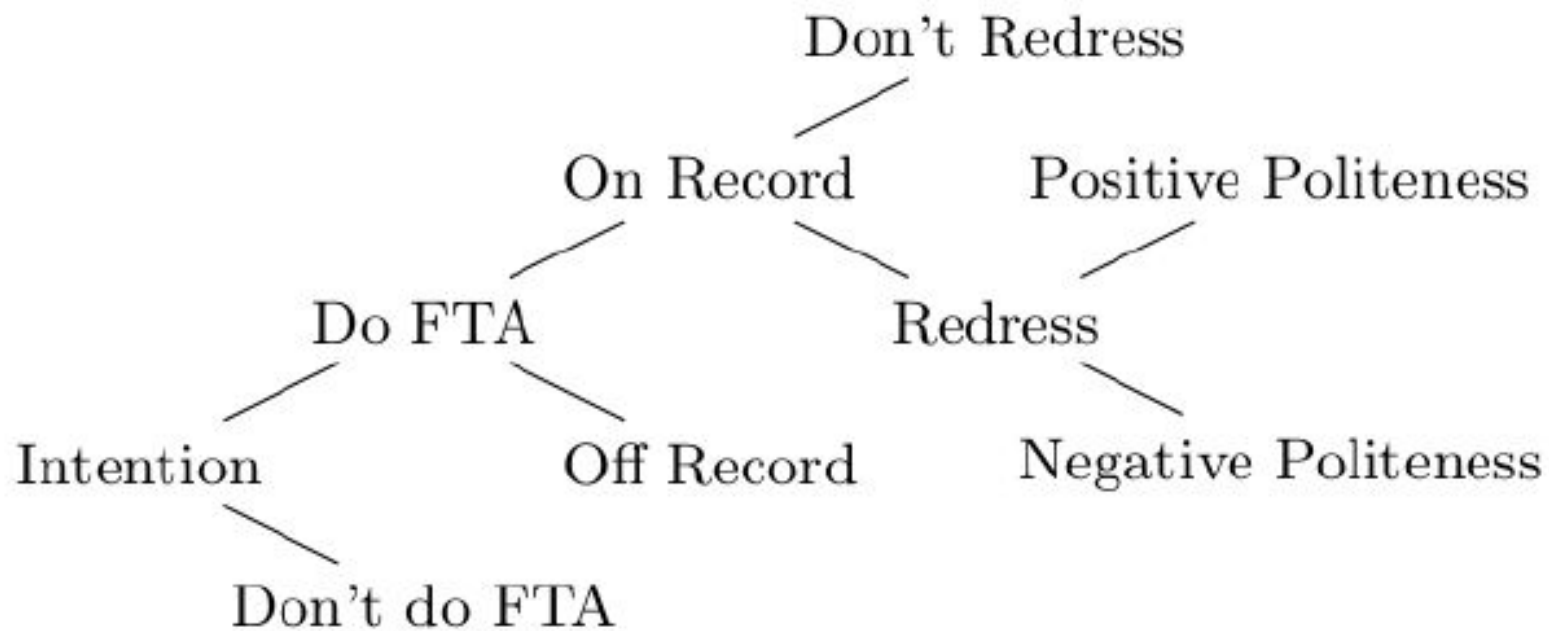
- He does not want others to call him
- He does not want to be told what to do about his assignments

## Dead Line

- Unfriendly
- Not helping in the course

- You are telling him what to change something in his assignment
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# Politeness strategies

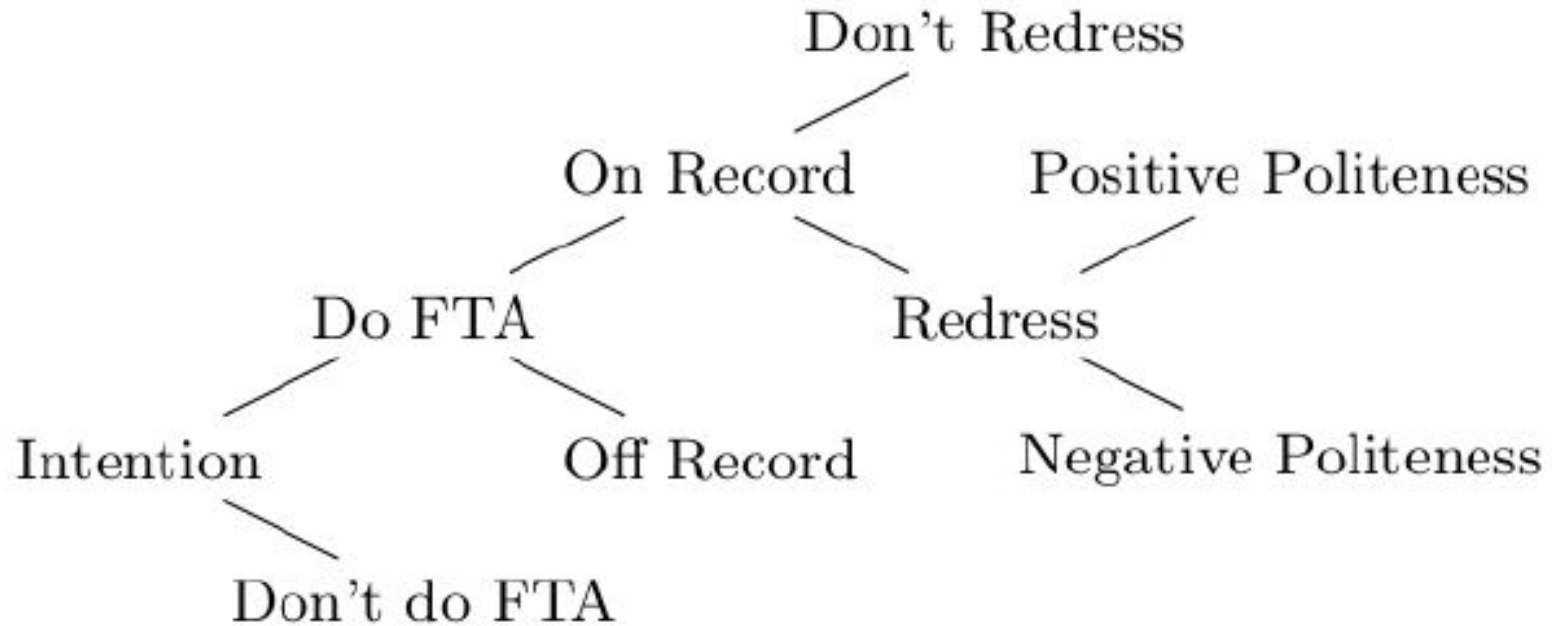


# Politeness strategies

## Off-record politeness

- The act is done off record in such a way that it is not possible to understand the exact intention of the act and the responsibility of doing an FTA is avoided.
- Linguistic tools like metaphors, irony, rhetorical questions, tautologies etc help in such situations.
- I am too exhausted from this term, there are too many deadlines to manage, and everything is crowded up near one date.
- Infact, me bringing this up here might be an off-record sign of asking mukund to extend the current deadline 😂

# Politeness strategies



# Politeness strategies - On Record

## Bald-on record ( no regression)

- Straight to the point, making the FTA clear.

Mukund, extend the deadline.

## Negative Politeness

- I feel really bad for asking this, I know that I am supposed to plan my schedule properly and manage my acads. I failed in doing so, but is it possible to extend the deadline by few days? Just this once

## Positive Politeness

- Hey warnak, you are my closest friend and the best TA I've ever had, and you always try to help us out. Is it possible to get a deadline extension?

## Is The Model Perfect?

- The model only talks about FTAs and how to avoid them, but does not really focus on face-encouraging expressions like appreciation, gratitude, or compliments, which can serve to deepen relationships.
- Kerbrat-Orec-Chioni suggested the term **FFA- Face Flattering act**, acts which reinforce other's face.
- There is a lot more research going on in this topic such as improving the existing model, politeness detection using computational models etc.

We talked about how the model stands in general, but how does it differ from online to offline?



# FaceWork Using Emojis

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# German Orthography Game

An orthography is a set of conventions for writing a language, including norms of spelling, hyphenation, capitalization, word breaks, emphasis, and punctuation.

1. Collection of data - finding “cases of doubt” through newspapers , posters etc.
2. Investigating the data - finding the solution of the data
3. Reviewing others solutions - giving feedback with text and emojis

# Peer Feedback And Face Threats

Giving someone feedback may result in face-threats for both the critic and the addressee.

1. Negative Face(addressee) - Criticising someone's work implies instructing the addressee to do work according to someone else.
2. Positive Face (addressee) - Criticising someone's work implies he/she is not performing the task well enough.
3. Positive Face (Critic) - Criticising someone's work is dispreferred as they are face-threatening someone else.

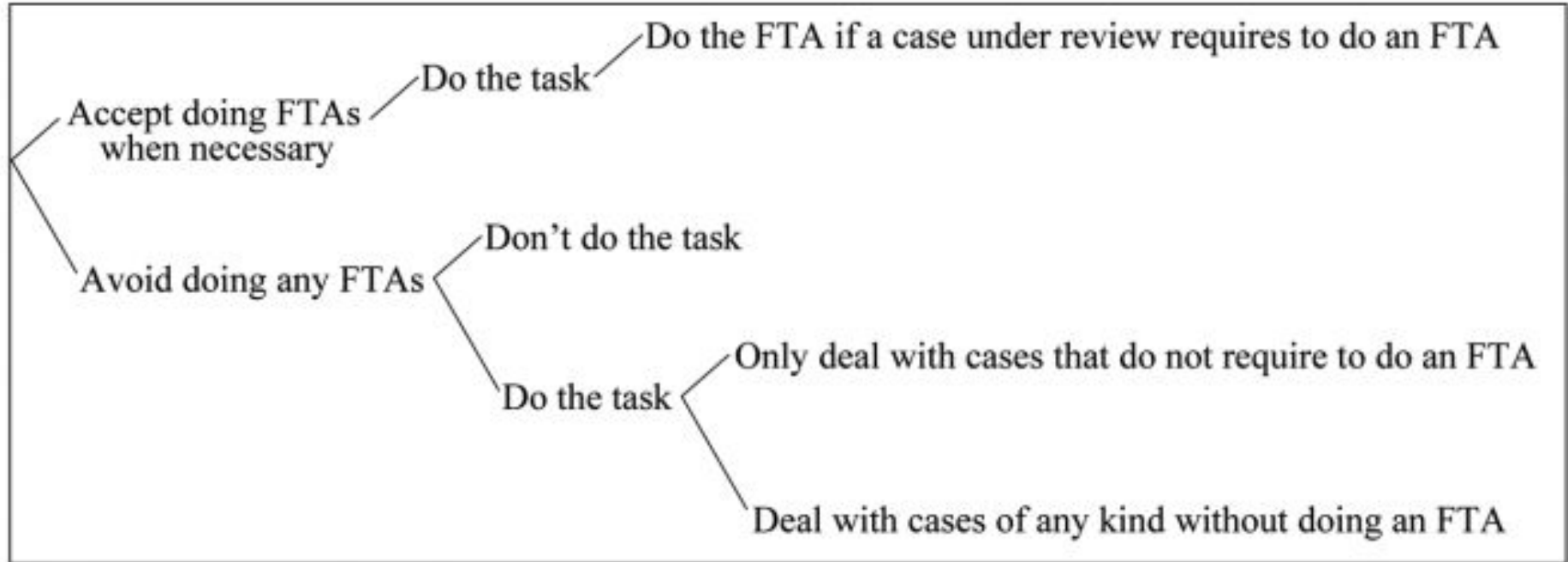
# Avoiding Face Threats

Since there exists the risk of face-threats to others and self , we may try avoiding it by -

1. Abandoning the task - Not at all doing the given work.
2. Dealing with perfect cases - Reviewing cases which do not require criticism.
3. Not-committing FTAs - Giving review without any criticism.

But committing to these would itself result in FTA to one's own positive face. 

# Flow Chart Of Reviewing Someone's Work



# Feedback Using Emojis

Several emojis were allowed to be used in feedback.

The usage of the emojis showed a common pattern which was their contribution to face-work.

Some ways in which emojis are used in feedbacks -

- Softening FTAs
- Emphasizing FFAs
- Attention seeking



# Analyzing a “Feedback with emojis”

*Orthoduo's case file is great!*



The thumbs up is boosting the fact that the given case was well handled.

*They based their evaluation of the case on the basis of the official set of rules in a very*

*detailed manner.*



The clap hands is also FFA emphaziser

*But the allocation to a department is missing. And I found a spelling mistake.*

The finger pointing is trying to catch the reader's attention towards something important .



The shocked emoji is acting like a softener to the FTA before it.

*It's „infinitive“ and not „infiitive“.*



The teacher emoji is a humorous way to soften the FTA on the post as a whole and the last line too.

# **CONCLUSIONS**

1. The dataset used found at least 1 emoji in all the feedbacks adding to facework, hence showing their extensive usage.
2. Emojis are being used as FFA boosters and FTA softeners.
3. Emojis have structure of their own (with respect to acts they are combined with).
4. Emojis help in conveying our criticism in a polite and socially-acceptable manner , without cause a face-threat to our positive face.
5. Emojis have a particular semiotic quality, interacts with the pragmatic context of the post or thread in which it is embedded, and – as a visual “eye catcher” has the potential to directs the readers’ visual attention to the position where it is placed.



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*Thank You Very Much!!!*

