

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**an analysis of politeness strategies in the *Editorials* of
Daily Graphic and *Daily Guide* Newspapers in Ghana.**



MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

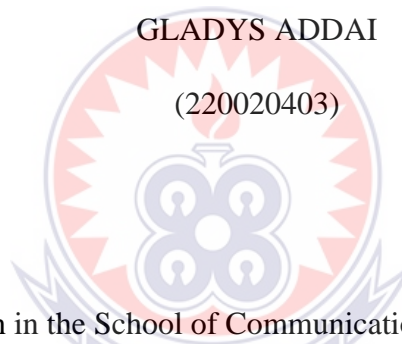
2024

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

AN ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN THE *EDITORIALS* OF
DAILY GRAPHIC AND *DAILY GUIDE* NEWSPAPERS IN GHANA

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A dissertation in the School of Communication and Media Studies,
submitted to the School of Graduate
Studies in partial fulfilment of

the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Communication Instruction)
in the University of Education, Winneba

JANUARY, 2024

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

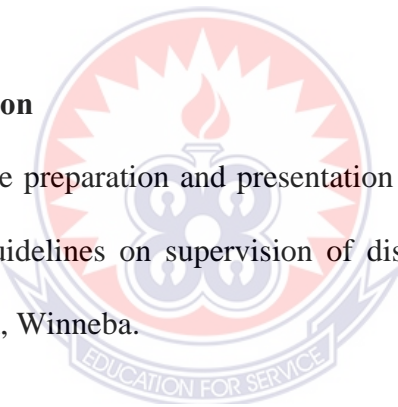
I, Gladys Addai, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

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Supervisors' Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.



Supervisor: Ms. Abena Abokoma Asemanyi

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband Mr. Stephen Kwesi Agyei and to my adorable children Nana Yaw Osarfo Agyei, Maame Yaa Konadu Agyei, Ohemaa Yaa Amparbeng Agyei, Obrempong Yaw Asafoakaa Agyei and Okatakyie Kwame Obeng Agyei.



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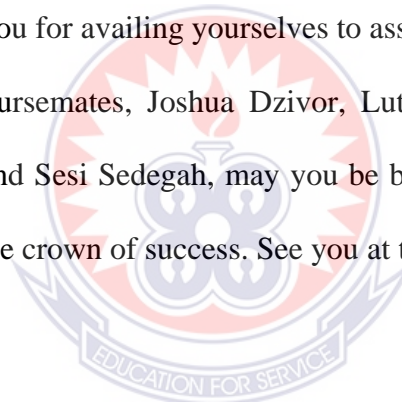
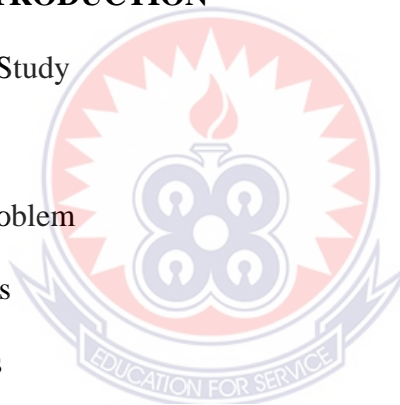


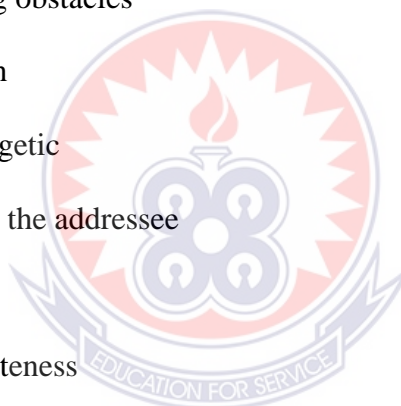
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLE(S)	xii
LIST OF FIGURE(S)	xiii
ABSTRACT	xiv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.1.2 Editorials	5
1.2 Statement of the Problem	7
1.3 Research Objectives	9
1.4 Research Questions	9
1.5 Significance of the Study	10
1.6 Scope of the Study	11
1.7 Overview of the newspapers	11
1.7.1 Daily Graphic	11
1.7.2 Daily Guide	13
1.8 Organization of the Study	13
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	15
2.0 Introduction	15
2.1 Concept of Politeness	15



2.1.1 Communicative Functions	16
2.1.2 Communicative functions of politeness strategies used in the Editorials of the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide newspapers	17
2.1.3 Empirical Studies on Politeness	19
2.1.4 Politeness Studies from International Perspective	19
2.1.5 Politeness studies from the local perspective	33
2.2 Studies on Editorials	37
2.3 Theoretical Review	38
2.3.1 The Concept of Face	39
2.3.2 Face Threatening Acts (FTAs)	40
2.3.3 Strategies for Doing FTAs	42
2.4 The Politeness Strategies	44
2.4.1 Bald on-record strategy	44
2.4.2 Positive Politeness	45
2.4.3 Negative Politeness	46
2.4.4 Off - record Strategy	46
2.5 Chapter Summary	50
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	51
3.0 Introduction	51
3.1 Research Approach	51
3.2 Research Design	52
3.2.1 Qualitative Content Analysis	53
3.3 Sampling Technique and Sample Size	54
3.4 Data Collection Method and Procedure	56
3.5 Data Analysis Plan	57

3.6 Trustworthiness of Data	61
3.7 Chapter Summary	63
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	64
4.1 Introduction	64
4.2. RQ1: What are the forms of politeness strategies used in the Editorials of Daily Graphic and Daily Guide newspapers?	64
4.2.1 Negative politeness strategies	66
4.2.2 Passionate Appeal	67
4.2.3 Hedging downplaying obstacles	68
4.2.4 Downplaying obstacles	70
4.2.5 Minimization	70
4.2.6 Being Apologetic	71
4.2.7 Not coercing the addressee	72
4.2.8 Indirectness	73
4.3 Bald on-record politeness	75
4.3.1 Appealing or Requesting	75
4.3.2 Asserting obligation	76
4.3.3 Invitation	77
4.4 Command	79
4.4.1 Pressing	80
4.4.2 Warning	81
4.5 Positive politeness strategies	83
4.5.1 Optimism	83
4.5.2 Giving compliments	84
4.5.3 Asserting hearer's wants	84



4.5.4 Claiming common grounds	87
4.5.5 Giving reasons	87
4.5.6 Expressing empathy	89
4.5.7 Exaggerating interest	89
4.5.8 Joking	90
4.6 Off-record politeness strategies	91
4.6.1 Metaphors	92
4.6.2 Irony	93
4.6.3 Hyperbole	94
4.6.4 Vague language	95
4.6.5 Understatement	95
4.7 RQ2: What are the communicative functions of politeness strategies used in the Editorials of the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide newspapers?	98
4.8 RQ3. What are the similarities and differences in the use of politeness strategies in the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide newspapers?	104
4.9 Positive Politeness Strategies	105
4.10 Off-record Politeness Strategies	105
4.11 Negative Politeness Strategies	106
4.12 Bald-on-Record Politeness Strategies	106
4.12.1 Differences	107
4.13 Discussion and Conclusion	107
4.14 Chapter Summary	108
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
RECOMMENDATIONS	110
5.0 Overview of the study	110

5.1 Summary of Key Findings	110
5.2 Conclusion	111
5.3 Recommendations	112
5.4 Suggestions for further studies	114
REFERENCES	115



LIST OF TABLE(S)

Table	Page
1: Types of politeness strategies used in editorials	65



LIST OF FIGURE(S)

Figure	Page
1: Strategies for doing FTAs	43



ABSTRACT

The study seeks to explore the use of politeness strategies in editorials of *Daily Guide* and *Daily Graphic* newspapers. The study explores the communicative functions and similarities and differences that exist in the use of politeness strategies in the *Daily Guide* and *Daily Graphic*. Grounded in the qualitative approach of research, the study employed a constructed month sampling to select weekly editorials of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* within a specific time frame. A qualitative content analysis was used to analyze the data sampled. The findings of the study revealed that all the strands of Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies were used in the editorials of the selected newspapers. Positive politeness is the most used strategy in the two editorials while negative, bald-on-record and off-record politeness strategies were sparingly used. Again, the findings revealed that whereas positive politeness aims to enhance closeness and camaraderie through friendliness, jokes and adhering to the readers' interest, negative politeness sought to mitigate threats through deference and respect. The study recommends newspaper editors to employ courteous language in their presentation so that their readers may employ fewer impolite words in their interactions. Again, the study recommends writers of the editorials to aim at inculcating politeness strategies through instruction.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Politeness phenomenon is one key pragmatic feature of human communication employed by participants during interactions to ensure harmony in our social interactions and also to witness good interpersonal relationships. In order to ensure effective communication, there is the need to employ politeness phenomenon in our everyday activities (Borris & Zecho, 2018). Politeness theory was proposed by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) to explain how face needs are negotiated in interactions. The theory draws heavily on Erving Goffman's concept of face and on how and why we are to be polite to others.

Politeness is not an innate thing but something a person should intentionally hope for or acquire in order to socialize. For example, if we do not employ politeness theory in our verbal and written discourse, communication will break down, hence there is the need to be polite to make people comfortable in our interaction with them. Politeness is defined as a rational behavior aimed at the strategic softening of face-threatening acts (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Similarly, Politeness behavior is essential to ensure that there is a good relationship between interlocutors in order to achieve the desired outcome in interaction (Akuka et al, 2021). The ability to establish good communication can be seen in the ability to use polite language (Sulastriana, 2018). Brenner (2012) also defines politeness as a necessary pragmatic behavior that ensures that communications between interlocutors are orderly to achieve the desired goal. conversations so that People try as much as they can to be good to individuals, they engage in their there would peace. These pragmatic behaviors are associated with the

ideas like being tactful, modest, and nice to other people (Yule, 2017). In the case of social interaction, people need to be aware of the face wants of one another in order to maintain good relationships. Face can be seen as the public image that individuals seek to establish in social interaction. Undoubtedly, people strive to safeguard their image wish to portray a positive image of themselves to others. The use of impolite communicative behavior undermines interpersonal conversations and demonstrates that a speaker is communicatively incompetent (Agyekum, 2015). This explains the need to consider the face-need of participants in any conversation for a successful communication. According to Yule (1996), face means the public self-image of a person. The face is the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact (Goffman, 1967). The politeness theory works on assumption that we have two types of face positive face and negative face. Positive face refers to the desire to be approved of and for one's wants to align with others. Negative face involves the want for autonomy and freedom from imposition. Both are universal human face needs that must be negotiated in interaction. More recent research has shown how face orientations are also culturally variable. For example, in collectivist societies, positive politeness strategies such as giving compliments or invoking common ground may threaten face by appearing too direct or highlighting individual qualities (Gu 1990; Wang & Rojas-Drummond 2017). There is also a link between politeness and power dynamics. Powerful individuals have more freedom to directly enact FTAs while maintaining face, whereas the powerless must employ negative politeness strategies like hedges and indirectness (Brown & Levinson 1987). Politeness expressions thus index social hierarchies and subtly shape relations between interlocutors. Studying politeness therefore reveals deeper insights into cultural values and communication styles prevalent within a sociolinguistic community.

It provides a pragmatic lens for examining not just linguistic choices but also how speakers navigate relationships and negotiate social identities through language. Brown and Levinson posit that all individuals have positive face (desire for approval) and negative face (desire for independence/autonomy). During speech acts that threaten face, known as Face Threatening Acts (FTAs), speakers employ politeness strategies to mitigate potential damage. These include baldly stating the FTA, use of positive politeness (in-group language, jokes), negative politeness (hedges, questions) or going off-record. Later work refined concepts of direct/conventional indirect FTAs (Blum-Kulka 1987). Whereas critics argued that Brown and Levinson over-generalized from individualistic Western cultures (Watts 2003) conceptions of politeness were found to vary cross-culturally according to individualism-collectivism orientations (Mao 1994; Gu 1990). Other factors like power, gender and age were also shown to influence face needs and strategies (Parkinson 1985; Holtgraves & Yang 1992).

In discourse studies, politeness lenses reveal power dynamics, ideology construction and cultural values underlying interactions (Hill et al. 1986; Shigemitsu 2004). Importantly for this study, media language balances obligations to report facts while maintaining credibility and readership through polite voices (Ravi & Parameswari 2018; van Dijk 1988). Brown and Levinson's (1987) differentiation between positive and negative face remains very relevant. Positive face refers to the desire to be approved of and for one's wants to align with others. Negative face involves the want for autonomy and freedom from imposition. Both are universal human face needs that must be negotiated in interaction. More recent research has shown how face orientations are also culturally variable. For example, in collectivist societies, positive politeness strategies giving compliments or invoking common ground may threaten face by appearing too direct or highlighting individual qualities (Gu 1990; Wang & Rojas-

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A positive face is an individual's quest to be liked and appreciated by others. This is considered as a person's self-esteem. Negative face is an individual's quest to protect their personal rights, such as their freedom of speech and action. To avoid embarrassing someone or making them feel uncomfortable, there is the need to use politeness strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Acts that infringe on the hearers' need to maintain his/ her self-esteem and be respected are called "Face- Threatening Acts or FTAs (Brown & Levinson, 1987). To maintain and save a person's face, people are supposed to use politeness strategies. There are four types of politeness strategies namely bald on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In the context of media, analyzing *Editorials*, politeness strategies can uncover ideological stances as well as rhetorical techniques for maintaining credibility and persuading readerships. This makes it a worthwhile area of inquiry for sociolinguists and discourse scholars alike. Brown and Levinson's (1987) differentiation between positive and negative face remains very relevant. Positive face refers to the desire to be approved of and for one's wants to align with others. Negative face involves the want for autonomy and freedom from imposition. Both are universal

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In summary, politeness theory evolved into a sophisticated framework examining facework, social identity performance and pragmatics of communication across diverse contexts using multiple methodologies (Arundale 2010).

1.1.2 Editorials

An editorial is a journalistic essay that seeks to inform, explain, persuade, and stimulate insight in an entertaining or humorous manner (Jones, 2020). It represents the institutional stance of news organizations and serves as the official opinion piece, shaping public discourse and influencing audience perceptions on matters of governance, society, and politics. Editorials are critical evaluations, interpretations, and presentations of significant contemporary events to inform, educate, entertain, and influence readers. They are seen as an important element of journalism that facilitates

the "watchdog" function of media as an institution holding power to account (Smith, 2020).

Editorials are opinion pieces published in newspapers, magazines, and scholarly journals that address topics of current interest or concern (Williams, 2018). They aim to influence readers' opinions on issues and position themselves as significant opinion holders in terms of issues of national interest. In scholarly journals, editors or senior editorial board members typically oversee writing the editorials. They address emerging research, debates, and policy issues in the field, providing analysis and commentary on recently published research articles or ethical concerns in the field (Thompson, 2019).

One fundamental role of editorials is to shape and direct public discourses. Style-wise, editorials take a clear stance but are also thoughtful and balanced in discussion. Important elements of editorials include a clear thesis, background on the issue, addressing counterarguments, and a call to action. In some cases, tone tends to be authoritative given the Editorial role.

Editorials are hinged on collaborative opinions, examining issues from a profound viewpoint and entertaining the average reader with its constituents and in-depth analysis. They seek to analyze, criticize, persuade, and entertain their readers, communicating with different groups of people in society. The relevance of their communication can only be appreciated when there is meaning and understanding. This study considers the politeness strategies in the Editorials of two Ghanaian newspapers, Daily Graphic and Daily Guide, to understand the politeness strategies in their editorials.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Politeness studies have been widely explored both internationally and locally. This study focuses on analyzing politeness strategies in the editorials of Ghana's *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers. Internationally, Saleem and Alattar (2020) examined how British and Iraqi politicians use (im)politeness strategies in parliamentary blame and blame avoidance situations. They found that British MPs employed impoliteness strategies during the blame stage and politeness at the blame avoidance stage, while Iraqi MPs used impoliteness in both stages. Murphy (2014) studied (im)politeness during UK Prime Minister's Questions, noting opposition MPs used impoliteness while government MPs employed politeness strategies. Sagala et al. (2022), in a social media study, identified five types of positive politeness using Brown and Levinson's (1987) model, such as making offers and expressing optimism.

Gender differences in politeness strategies have also been explored. Yulandari (2022) found that men used blunt politeness strategies and positive strategies in social media contexts. In Africa, Yuliana and Farida (2019) studied politeness in WhatsApp interactions among Sudanese students and lecturers, while Odebunmi (2009) examined politeness in doctor-patient interactions in Nigeria. Njuki and Ileri (2021) explored politeness strategies used by Kenyan parliamentary members. Within the African context, Ngoka (2016) conducted a study analyzing the use of politeness principles in *Editorials* from three Nigerian newspapers. The researcher applied Leech's Politeness Maxims framework to investigate how *Editorial* language observed or violated politeness norms. The study identified features of the maxims of Approbation, Tact, Agreement, Modesty and Consideration in the *Editorials*. It was found that the editors did not always employ considerate language sensitive to the potential effects on readers. While Ngoka (2016) analyzed Nigerian newspapers using Leech's maxims, the present

study proposes investigating *Editorials* from two Ghanaian newspapers *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide*. It aims to apply Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies theory as the analytical framework. This will allow for identification and examination of specific politeness strategies utilized by editors in their address to readers. The current research therefore seeks to build on Ngoka's foundations by shifting the context to Ghana, employing an alternative established politeness model, (Brown and Levinson, 1987) and conducting an in-depth analysis. The goal is to provide further insights into *Editorial* language usage and audience consideration patterns within a different sociocultural setting through a focused politeness theory lens.

In Ghana, studies have focused on politeness in various contexts, including political concession speeches (Hammond, 2021), adversarial radio discussions (Afful, 2017), and hybridized politeness in English (Anderson, 2009). Akuka et al. (2021) analyzed politeness in parliamentary discourse, and Dzameshie (1992) studied how politeness mitigates face-threatening acts. However, despite the extensive research, there is little work on politeness strategies in Ghanaian newspaper editorials. Similarly, Sarfo-Adu and Osei (2021) looked at politeness strategies in media talk shows where the study reported that 43.35 % of discussants marked politeness by addressing the positive face of their interlocutor (s) as against 38.93 and 15.70% for negative politeness and FTAs, respectively. This indicate that panelists in Ghanaian MPDs show awareness of the face wants of one another. On the other hand, Wornyo (2022) discussed the rhetorical strategy preferences in newspaper editorial where the study indicated that newspapers mostly employ the rhetorical strategies of expressing worry about political actions and social issues and proposes a solution to the issues.

Per the review of these related literature, it appears not much has been done on politeness strategies in the Ghanaian context. Closely related to this is the study Wornyo (2022) who attempted to explore rhetorical strategies in newspapers editorials. The study was a comparative study between the *Daily Graphic* and the *New York Times* citing the argument that text vary across cultures however, the rhetorical strategy preferences employed by media personnels are the same. Ultimately, the study limited to rhetorical strategies, leaving politeness strategies unexplored. Sarfo-Adu and Osei (2021) also attempted to explore politeness strategies limiting the study positive and negative politeness in live TV show discussions. This leaves other strategies unexplored. This necessitates the need to do a comprehensive study to explore the politeness strategies that are employed by editors in the writing of editorials in Ghana. To avoid biasness, the current study predominantly explored politeness strategies in a government and private-owned newspapers in Ghana.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To identify the forms of politeness strategies used in the *Editorials* of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers.
2. To explore the communicative functions of the politeness strategies used in the *Editorials* of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers.
3. To examine the similarities and differences in the use of politeness strategies in the *Editorials* of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the forms of politeness strategies used in the *Editorials* of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers?

2. What are the communicative functions of politeness strategies used in the *Editorials* of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers?
3. What are the similarities and differences in the use of politeness strategies in the *Editorials* of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Politeness is a universal phenomenon that seeks to save the face of people on any social discourse (Brown and Levinson, 1987) and should be accorded scholarly attention from different stance.

Therefore, this study is appropriate in many ways because it will add up to the existing literature on politeness strategies and knowledge bank of the politeness phenomenon in newspaper *Editorials*. The study will also create the awareness of editors on the need to use polite language in their writings.

The study further seeks to draw attention to politeness as an essential tool for successful *Editorial* writing. The research on politeness strategies would help in the realization that in our everyday interactions with the people in society, there is a face that needs to be protected, hence our utterances should be guided by the tenets of politeness so that there may be tranquility. Researchers interested in the phenomenon can also replicate the study in different dimensions using other politeness theories.

This study explores the employment of politeness strategies in newspaper editorials, revealing how editors utilize context- specific communicative functions to convey politeness in their discourse. The findings intrinsically serve as guide to improve the use of politeness strategies in our everyday interactions. This will go a long way to educate and inform the public on the need to be polite when communicating with others.

Consequently, it will also add knowledge to academia and media since an *Editorial* is an assigned article expressing a newspaper's opinion on a matter of public interest.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on politeness as a pragmatic phenomenon in sociolinguistics. The study investigates politeness strategies used in newspaper editorials in Ghana and how these newspaper editorials influence the lives of people during their editorial presentations.

Although the study of politeness is pertinent to social interactions, this study focuses on analyzing politeness in two newspaper editorials in Ghana.

The main documents for the data collection for the study are from the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers published in February ,2023 to July, 2023. The issues in the editorials are narrowed to democracy, politics, health and social issues.

1.7 Overview of the newspapers

1.7.1 *Daily Graphic*

The Graphic Communications Group (GCG) was established in 1950 as Ghana's state-owned publishing house by the country's first president, Kwame Nkrumah. Its goal was to contribute to national development and integration through public discourses disseminated via mass media. GCG's flagship publication, the *Daily Graphic* newspaper, served this objective of promoting inclusive debates and shaping socio-political discourse. However, over decades as GCG diversified into commercial printing and events, *Daily Graphic* came to reflect a pro-establishment stance due to its close ties with successive governments. Studies by scholars such as Nothias (2014) and Bokor (2007) illustrate how under military regimes from the 1960s-1980s, *Daily*

Graphic's Editorials aligned with and framed issues favorably towards the regime in power. This was attributed to GCG's dependency on state financing and censorship laws curtailing independent reporting. However, with democratization in the 1990s, an opening up of the media landscape saw the launch of the *Daily Graphic* newspaper in 1998. *The Daily Graphic* as a state-owned daily newspaper was introduced on the news stand on 2nd October, 1950 as one of a chain of newspapers owned by private interest, the *Daily Mirror Group* of London. According to Hasty (2005), the *Daily Graphic and Mirror* were not an indigenous effort like the *Accra Evening News*, *Gold Coast Chronicle*, *Ashanti Pioneer* and *The Accra Herald*. Unlike the local press, the *Daily Graphic* had access to transnational capital, to modern technology, ran a more efficient business organization, and demonstrated better journalistic expertise. The *Daily Graphic* has carved out a certain niche market based on its distinctive house style (Hasty, 2006). The *Daily Graphic* has the largest nationwide readership and leads the newspaper industry with a daily circulation of over 100,000 copies.

Though a state-owned newspaper, the *Daily Graphic* still operates as an independent newspaper. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana provides for the appointment of the Board Chairman and the Board Members, and it is conducted by the National Media Commission in consultation with the President. Thus, apart from the universal factor of newsworthiness (proximity, newness, controversy, prominence among others), the *Daily Graphic* considers other issues that border on national security, peace and unity in selecting news for publication. Its content includes current affairs, political, economic issues and foreign news.

1.7.2 Daily Guide

Positioning itself as an alternative to *Daily Graphic*, *Daily Guide* was established and run by private investors. The *Daily Guide* is published six times in a week, and it is regarded as the most circulated independent paper in Ghana with a readership of about 50,000 copies a day. The *Daily Guide* has recently been adjudged the Best Newspaper at the 12th edition of the Radio and Television Personality (RTP) Awards in Accra (Daily Guide Network.Com). Authors including Nelson (2000) and Amfo-Tekyi (2010) note how its editorials adopted a far more antagonistic tone towards the government compared to its counterpart. With less restrictions on content, *Daily Guide* also saw rising circulation publishing investigative stories on political scandals shied away from by others. Content analyses by researchers like Amisah (2009) found *Daily Guide* offered Ghanaian readers access to a diversity of viewpoints during John Kufuor's presidency. Nonetheless, studies by Allah-Mensah (2005) and more recently Bello (2018) recognize both newspapers have faced commercial pressures eroding quality journalism in the era of market-driven media. In summary, this literature highlights the differing editorial stances and evolution of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* reflecting Ghana's political transitions and shifting media landscapes since the post-independence period.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. The chapter one is the introduction, which is made up of the background to the Study, a statement of the problem, the objectives of the research, the research questions that guide the study, the significance of the study, the scope, and the organization of the study. Chapter two appraisals relevant literature that supports the study. The chapter also describes the relevant theory that supports the study. Chapter three labels the methodology used to conduct the research. The chapter

defines the research approach, the research design, data collection procedures, sampling, and data analysis. In chapter four, the findings of the study are presented and analyzed. The discussions of the finding as they relate to the theory and other literature are intricately demonstrated. The final chapter five discusses the summary, conclusions, and recommendations based on the findings of the Study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter offers a conceptual and a theoretical background to the study. It focuses on important concepts and theories of the research process and analysis. To gain a deeper insight into politeness as a pragmatic concept in the context of Ghanaian newspaper *Editorials*, the chapter reviews literature on what politeness is, role of politeness in human interaction, politeness in Ghanaian newspapers, the *Editorials* of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers and the socio-cultural and professional motivations for employing politeness in the writings of the newspaper *Editorials*. This chapter further makes an extensive review of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory and draws from the theory as the framework for analyzing the politeness strategies in the editorials of the selected newspapers in Ghana.

2.1 Concept of Politeness

The concept of politeness as a pragmatic entity is hinged on verbal and non-verbal human communications (Rabab'ah, Rabab'ah & Naimi, 2019). Leech (2014) defines politeness as a communicative altruism. He asserts that to be polite is to speak or behave in a way that gives value or respect to the other person(s) whom you are engaged with in a conversation. Yule (2017) elucidate that politeness is being tactful, modest, and nice to other people. This means that communicators are to employ tact and modesty during communication to be considered as being polite. Brown (2015) theorizes that politeness is about taking into consideration the feelings of others as to how to treat them in a conversation and also how to act appropriately to show that you care about their relationship and their social status. Brown and Levinson (1987) believe that

politeness has to do with an expression of the intention of the speaker to mitigate threats of the face carried out by face threatening acts (FTAs) towards another person during interaction. In every human dialog, interlocutors' endeavor to maintain appropriate decorum and politeness in order not to offend the other person's self-esteem (Agbara,2018). He further explicates that respect for the 'face- want' of participants in every discussion is a necessary strategy for achieving effective and efficient communication. What stands tall when it comes to the phenomenon of politeness is the idea of the face-want of the other person. Thus, taking care of the face needs of the other person by letting the other person feel respected, honored, liked and accepted is key to the idea of politeness phenomenon.

2 1.1 Communicative Functions

Politeness has developed into an indispensable constituent in every communication. Politeness plays an essential role in our daily conversation or interactions in that every society has a means of socialising its members into behaviour that adapts to the model of such a society. Bremner (2012) states that politeness is an essential pragmatic behavior that assures that communication between interlocutors is orderly to achieve the desired goal. Ambuyuo (2018) posits that politeness models are designed to safeguard communication from breaking down and to avoid emotional and physical harm to interlocutors. Brown (2015) expatiates that to maintain social relationships the use of politeness is crucial. This means that politeness in communication is core to social life and interactions, perhaps a general precondition for human cooperation. Politeness fosters good interpersonal relation among speakers thereby ensuring harmony in our everyday social interactions. Similarly, Omar et al. (2018) stated that politeness employs a set of conventional strategies to maintain social relationship and avoid interpersonal conflict. Politeness, though not a compulsory phenomenon, is a

valuable constituent that ought to be well sought after by persons who wish to be considered as good communicators. It is a must get skill for persons whose everyday jobs involves communicating. Politeness is often seen as fundamental in building good relationships and social interactions. According to Yasmeen et al. (2014), politeness works to reduce the force of friction, roughness of behavior, conflict and the rudeness between speaker and hearer in a personal communication.

2.1.2 Communicative functions of politeness strategies used in the *Editorials* of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers

The utilization of politeness strategies is essential for effective communication, serving to mitigate face-threatening acts, foster social harmony, and improve interpersonal relationships. Within the realm of print media, particularly in newspapers, these strategies play a pivotal role in shaping public discourse and influencing reader perceptions. This analysis delves into the communicative functions of politeness strategies as observed in the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* which are prominent newspapers in Ghana. The analysis of politeness strategies is rooted in Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, which classifies politeness into positive and negative strategies. Positive politeness aims to foster rapport and demonstrate friendliness, while negative politeness aims to convey respect and avoid imposition. Understanding these strategies is crucial for comprehending how media outlets such as the *Daily Graphic* manage the intricate balance of providing information.

Newspapers strategically employ politeness tactics to serve various communication objectives, including the dissemination of information, persuasion, and the sustenance of reader engagement. Politeness aids in shaping messages in a manner that is both acceptable and non-confrontational. Previous studies suggest that the *Daily Graphic*

and the Daily Guide employ distinct politeness strategies that mirror their respective editorial styles and target audiences. Studies suggest that the Daily Graphic relies on negative politeness to uphold formality and respect, whereas the Daily Guide utilizes positive politeness and bald-on-record strategies to actively engage and persuade readers. Recognizing these disparities offers insights into how the media mould public discourse and shapes reader perceptions through the deliberate employment of politeness strategies. The Daily Graphic, an official and more formal publication, frequently applies negative politeness strategies, characterized by the use of hedging, formal language, and indirect requests. These strategies demonstrate respect for the reader's autonomy and establish a formal tone. Additionally, positive politeness strategies, such as inclusive language and expressions of solidarity, are employed to a lesser extent. In contrast, the Daily Guide, known for its informal and sensational style, often utilizes positive politeness strategies, including colloquial language, direct appeals to the reader's emotions, and personal anecdotes. Bald-on-record strategies are more prominent in the Daily Guide compared to the Daily Graphic, reflecting a more direct and at times aggressive approach.

In both newspapers, news articles tend to use negative politeness strategies to maintain objectivity and formality. However, the Daily Guide occasionally employs positive politeness to engage readers more directly. Regarding editorials and opinions, the Daily Guide writers often address readers directly and use informal language to create a sense of camaraderie. In contrast, the Daily Graphic has been reported to maintain a more formal tone, with negative politeness and off-record strategies to present arguments subtly and respectfully (Amadu et al., 2022).

2.1.3 Empirical Studies on Politeness

There have been significant studies on politeness by scholars from both universal and local perspectives.

2.1.4 Politeness Studies from International Perspective

Universally, researches done on politeness strategies have been conducted in politics (Saleem et al., 2020; Isaini et al., 2015; Dalimunte et al., 2022; Maskuri et al., 2019). For example, Saleem et al. (2020) conducted a comparative study on how politicians in British and Iraqi parliaments use politeness in political blame and blame avoidance situations. The findings of their study show that both British and Iraqi parliamentarians appear to use impoliteness strategies at the blame stage. However, at the blame avoidance stage, the British MPs use politeness strategies while the Iraqi MPs tend to use impoliteness strategies. Their study also reveals that both the British and the Iraqi parliamentarians seem to violate the maxim quality at the blame stage as the MPs tend to fabricate their statements. At the blame avoidance stage, both British and Iraqi parliamentarians violate the maxim of relevance through the strategy of evasion.

Maskuri et al. (2019) study focused on investigating politeness strategies in directive speech acts in a local Indonesian parliament. They specifically studied how intended persuasive forces are conveyed during parliamentary discourses. Their findings show that politeness strategies are employed in the directive speech acts. Three such politeness strategies that were observed were, bald on-record, negative politeness, and positive politeness. They suggested that more work could be done to compare and contrast with utterances in less formal settings such as in the negotiation between a buyer and a seller and also in religious events like sermons in the church or in the mosque.

Isnaini et al. (2015) studied how Indonesian politicians use politeness strategies in their political language. The study was based on Brown and Levinson's 1987 politeness theory. The findings show that there were four types of politeness strategies used by politicians in different types of illocutionary acts; positive strategy, bald on-record strategy, negative strategy, and off-record strategy.

Yu's (2015) study examines how legislators' use politeness strategies for questioning government officials during parliamentary question Taiwan. The study also seeks to find out possible factors that influence legislators' choice of questioning strategies. Findings of Yu (2015) show that the bald on record strategy is widely used, constituting more than half of the total questions. The other strategies are used for either modification or intensification or both. Yu (2015) observes that the change of political roles as a government supporter or an opposition member influences how legislators use politeness strategies during questioning.

Murphy (2014) also explored the use of (im)politeness in the Prime Minister's Questions (PMQ) sessions in the UK Parliament using Culpeper's (2011) impoliteness model for the investigation of impolite behaviors and discovered that opposition MPs used impolite expressions when asking the Prime Minister (PM) questions, while government MPs employed politeness in asking questions.

Studies from abroad also reveal that politeness strategies have been conducted in movies (Permadi et al., 2022, Nurlayli and Widyastuti, 2022, Damara and Romala, 2022, Isabella et al., 2022, Supriyanta, 2017). For instance, Permadi et al (2022) researched into politeness strategies used by the main characters of Aladdin movie. The study used Brown and Levinson's 1987 model of politeness and the results of the research showed that the types of politeness strategies used by the four main characters

in the Aladdin film are the bald-on record strategy, positive politeness strategies, negative politeness strategies, and off-record politeness strategies. The research also revealed that bald on record was the most widely used. It was followed by both positive and off-record politeness which had the same number of utterances. The least uttered politeness was that of the negative politeness.

Nurlayli and Widyastuni (2022) also did a study to identify and describe the negative politeness strategies across cultures using the TV series *Emily in Paris* for the study. The study applied the theory of politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) and the supporting theory of sociolinguistics by Holmes and Wilson (2017) about social factors that can influence politeness. The data were collected from Emily Cooper's utterances in the form of words or phrases. According to Nurlayli and Widyastuti (2022), the results of the study bring to fore that there were five kinds of negative politeness strategies noticed in Emily's utterances: giving, deference, apologizing, questioning, and hedging. It was also found out that the social factors that influenced Emily's politeness are the participants, the setting, the topic, and the function. The study further revealed that apologizing was the most used strategy for Emily because she tried to be polite and avoid offending her interlocuters.

Damara and Romala (2022) worked on politeness strategies in the movie "Two Distant Strangers". Using Brown and Levinson's 1987 model of politeness strategies, the results of their findings revealed that all the characters in the movie applied four types of politeness strategies and that bald on-record is the most frequently used strategy. It was also discovered that the characters' utterances demonstrated a relationship between politeness strategies and related sociological factors.

Additionally, Supriyanta (2017) also analyzed Politeness strategies in Claire Peterson's "The Boy Next Door Movie. The researcher found that Claire Peterson used politeness strategies by Brown and Levinson (1987) to maintain a good relationship with others in her daily life. The detailed usage of politeness strategies in the movie included, the bald on record, the positive politeness, negative politeness and off record politeness. The researcher concluded by suggesting that students should apply the theory of politeness strategies in their daily conversation since it is important to maintain and build good relationship with others in their daily life.

The studies investigated by Permadi et al. (2020) and Damara and Romala (2022) concurrently emphasize that bald on record was the extensively used politeness strategies. From my perspective, the results of both studies point out that the characters that were used for both studies used a lot of face threatening acts (FTAs) possibly because they were the main characters and had the power to speak with authority.

Isabella et al. (2022), also conducted a study by using Brown and Levinson's politeness theory to analyze the types of politeness strategies, to determine the most dominant types of politeness strategies and to determine the factors that affect the selection of politeness strategies contained in the Tinkerbell Film. The findings of the study revealed that the main character in Tinkerbell Movie used the four politeness strategies, and these include bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness and off- record. Distinct from Permadi et al., (2022), Supriyanta (2017), and Damara and Romala (2022) whose studies revealed that bald on record politeness strategies were the most widely used strategy, the data collected by Isabella et al. (2022) showed that positive politeness was the most used strategies found in Tinkerbell Movie. Their research concluded that

in a conversation, the use of politeness strategies is really needed because by using politeness strategies one can communicate with others well.

Studies in abroad again show that politeness studies have been done in education. Works conducted by Adel et al. (2016), Algiovan (2022), Luthfi (2022), Yusuf and Anwar (2019) looked at politeness strategies in education setting or the classroom. Using Computer- Mediated Discourse Analysis, Adel et al. (2016) investigated the kinds of politeness strategies used by Iranian EFL learners in a class blog. The study found that students employed positive politeness the most in both Student- Instructor interaction and Student- Student interaction. Although, Algiovan (2022) sought to investigate into politeness strategies used by lectures and students in thesis guidance through virtual communications, Luthfi (2022) and Yusuf and Anwar (2019) respectively sought to research into types of politeness strategies that were applied by teacher and students in the classroom interaction. Both studies used Brown and Levinson's 1987 Politeness Theory.

The findings of the works by Algiovan (2022) and Luthfi (2022), revealed that positive politeness, negative politeness, bald on record and off record politeness were all used. In all, it was found that lecturers used the bald on record strategy more frequently than students in their interactions in thesis guidance through virtual communication (Algiovan,2022) and the research findings of Luthifi (2022), showed that there were four kinds of politeness strategy found in the classroom interaction and that positive politeness strategy was used. The study found out that positive politeness was used the most by teachers and students due to pay offs and circumstances. Even though Adel et al. (2016) and Luthfi (2022) did not use the same framework for their study, that is, Computer – Mediated Discourse Analysis and Brown and Levinson's Politeness

Theory respectively, both studies were conducted in a classroom and that their findings revealed that positive politeness was the most used politeness strategies by the teachers and students.

Again, studies also reveal that politeness strategies have been done abroad in religion (Jewad et al.,2020; Kareem, 2018). For instance, Jewad et al. (2020) have done a study on whether or not the theories of Leech (1983) and Brown and Levinson (1987) can be applied to find the positive and negative politeness strategies and the politeness maxims was least. Also, Kareem (2018) scrutinized the use of (im)politeness in Muslim sermons or Khutbahs. To identify these elements, a modified version of Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness was used as an analytical framework. Using naturally occurring data collected from Friday sermons, the study shows that the Imams use several politeness strategies identified in the Brown and Levinson's model.

Similarities between the studies conducted by Jewad et al. (2020) and Kareem (2018) is that both studies used Brown and Levinson's 1987 model of politeness theory. The difference between the two studies is that Jewad focused on politeness

Additionally, studies from abroad also reveal that politeness have been done into speeches. (Dridi, 2022, Sibarani and Marilina, 2018, Njuki and Ireri, 2021, Anuar and Ngadiran, 2021). For instance, Dridi (2020) used the politeness models of Brown and Levinson (1987) and Lakoff (2005) as framework to examine American- Israeli Public Affairs Committee's (AIPAC) political annual speeches between 2006 and 2012. The study found that political participants used both positive politeness and negative politeness to mark the inter- relation between politeness theory and political discourse. It was further revealed in the study that political speakers moved from expressing warmth, praise and acclamation to call for solidarity, engagement and action. concluded

that positive politeness is essential for gaining audience sympathy and reshaping public opinion.

Sibarani and Marilina, (2018) have equally conducted a study on politeness strategies used in the Republican debate by Donald Trump using the theory of politeness. The findings of the study indicated that Donald Trump used only three types of politeness strategies in Republican debate. It further exposes that most prominent politeness strategy used by Trump was positive politeness. In another study, Njuku and Ireri (2021) have conducted an in-depth study on positive and negative politeness strategies used by Kenya's members of National Assembly. They used politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1987) to analyze, interpret and discuss the data collected. The outcome of research suggest that Members of the National Assembly used positive and negative politeness strategies and that positive politeness strategy was the most used politeness strategy by the parliamentarians. Not only that but also, Anuar and Ngadrian (2021) employed Brown and Levinson's 1987 Politeness Theory to find the politeness strategies in the Malaysian Prime Minister's Maiden Speech. The study showed that positive politeness was much used (88%) compared to negative politeness strategies (12%).

Juxtaposing the studies conducted by Sibarani and Marilina (2018) and that of Njuku and Ireri (2021), it is obvious that both studies point out that positive politeness is used the most. Even though the study by Dridi (2020) focuses on politeness strategies by political actors of America and Israel, the outcome of the study suggests that both negative and positive politeness strategies were popular. Dalimunte et al (2022) also embarked on a study into how the politeness investigations in presidential debates enable voters to assess the candidates' behaviour to make-well informed decision

during the election by using Brown and Levinson's 1987 politeness theory as a theoretical framework.

Nevertheless, the study by Anuar and Ngadiran (2021) revealed that even though both positive and negative politeness were identified, positive politeness strategies were used the most, and this I deduce that the Prime Minister was trying to persuade the people of Malaysia on how competent he was, he needed to use a lot of positive politeness strategies in order to be appreciated and accepted by his audience.

Another area of interest where works on politeness have been done is on the field of health. (Rabab'ah et al, 2022; Lodhi,2019; Olorunsogo, 2020; Dhayef and Khudhair, 2022; Odebunmi, 2009). For instance, Lodhi (2019) did a study on the linguistic analysis of the politeness strategies used in the doctor-patient discourse by using Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness as a framework. Findings reveal that majority of the doctors unduly focus on exhibiting power and dominance over patients in their talks made with them. It was also found that doctors mostly used the strategy of "Bald on Record" with both male and female patients; and wide majority of patients showed dissatisfaction with doctor's conversation during diagnosing, treatment and follow-up visits. The findings of Lodhi (2019) which revealed that majority of the patients were displeased with their encounter with doctors this is because the doctors used more of bald on record because of how urgent situations at the hospitals look like and needs to be dealt with by health workers. Similarly, Dhayef and Khudhair (2022) employed Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of positive politeness to do a comparative study between the use of English and Arabic speeches that are related to Covid-19. Their study concluded that the strategy of exaggeration is the appropriate one in comparison with the other strategies when talking about Covid-19 matters. In

the same vein, Rabab'ah et al (2022) conducted a study to investigate the various strategies utilized by Arabic speaking patients and / or their relatives to express impoliteness towards the Emergency Room (ER) staff at Jordanian hospital. Using Culpeper's (1996) model of impoliteness, the study concluded that the various types and strategies of impoliteness used by the patients and / or their relatives were aiming at offending and threatening the face of the hospital staff and doctors, and this behavior, as observed in the various interactions that took place, could be attributed to their dissatisfaction of the health care services provided. Olorunsogo (2020) uses a pilot study to investigate how politeness strategies are deployed in doctor -patient interactions in private hospital. He relied on the theoretical orientation of Brown and L Levinson's Theory of Politeness. The study discovered that most doctors mostly make use of bald on record strategies with older patients and more positive politeness strategies with children. It was also discovered that patients employed positive politeness strategy and negative politeness as and when they deemed it necessary. Odebunmi (2009) carried out a study on politeness and face management in the conversational interaction between doctors and patients in Southwestern Nigeria (16). The study was inspired by the scantiness of work on medical discourse, and the need to identify the tact engaged in the interaction for a better understanding of medical communication. Information was collected through tape recordings, interviews and observation of interactions between doctors and patients in selected teaching, state-owned and private hospitals. The data collected were analyzed, using intuitions from the concepts of politeness. It was observed that the conversational interactions were characterized by the observance/employment of the tact maxim, the generosity maxim, the sympathy maxim, the pollyana principle, face-threatening acts without redress and face-threatening acts with redress (positive politeness). Odebunmi concluded that

politeness and effective face management exert positive influence on medical procedures and determine the extent to which orthodox medicine can be acceptable in southwestern Nigeria. The study has nine bearing with this present work because editors convey information to larger society through positive or negative language use.

The findings of Lodhi (2019) and Rabab`ah et al. (2022) seem to be in contrast. This is based on the fact that in Lodhi`s study, it was found that the doctors used bald on the most but the study of Rabab`ah revealed that the patients and their family members used various types and strategies of impoliteness which were all aimed at offending and threatening the face of the hospital staff and doctors as ways of registering their displeasure for the health care services rendered. On the contrary in Olorungsu`s study, he found out that doctors mostly make use of bald on record strategies with older patients and more positive politeness strategies with children. It was also discovered that patients employed positive politeness strategy and negative politeness as and when necessary. The study of Dhayef and Khudhair (2022) on the other hand, concluded that exaggeration as a positive politeness strategy was the suitable one in comparison with the other strategies when talking about Covid-19 matters.

With respect to the use of politeness strategies on media or social media, Agbedo (2008); Tridinanti and Farnia, (2022); Sudaryat et al. (2020); Ammaida (2020) have all worked on that. Agbedo (2008) did a study on a speech act analysis of political discourse in Nigerian print media. He analyzed discourse in the Nigerian print media using the speech of Bayo Onanuga and Yakubu Mohammed of The News and Newswatch magazines respectively. Considering the background of their professional antecedents as editors of these magazines, he analyzed their speech during the reception of the 2005 winner of Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting, Mr. Dele Olojede, to

determine the status as felicitous or infelicitous and its implication for journalism as a profession in Nigeria. Agbedo examined the illocutionary force of speech acts in the light of their peculiar type of journalism practice as evident in the News watch and The News magazines, where they hold power as Deputy Editor-in-Chief and Editor-in-Chief respectively. He concluded that their individual speech act failed to observe Austin's felicitous conditions and also did not meet with Grice's cooperative principles.

Tridinanti and Farnia (2022) also investigated to analyze the differences and similarities in the imperative politeness of the American and Indonesian in the news media. The result of their findings showed that American and Indonesian imperatives sentences have differences that are position of American politeness marker can be at the beginning or at the end of the sentence, while Indonesian politeness marker can only be placed at the beginning of the sentence. The study further revealed that American and Indonesian imperative sentences of politeness in news media have similarities that are use of the basic form of the verb at the beginning of a sentence; a statement about the desire for one's public self- image in the form of involvement and endorsement to get respect from others; and polite statement based on the face compensation amount.

Also, Sudaryat et al. (2020) did a study to reveal the form of politeness and immodesty of language through the comments of West Java citizens who are famous for their culture of manners on the covid -19 pandemic using Lakoff's 1977 principles of politeness. The result of the study reveal that three principles of politeness dominated and these included principles of formality, principles of hesitancy and principle of equality and these are presented from highest order of frequency to less order of occurrence. The study further revealed that even though the comments made by the citizens in responding to the information on cities in West Java are in the polite category,

some of the disrespectful comments from the citizens, both in official government accounts or in private city information accounts are due to dissatisfaction with government's performance in handling the pandemic.

Furthermore, Ammaida (2020) looks at the politeness strategies of the comments toward Trump's Instagram post on International Women's Day. The study used the politeness Theory by Brown and Levinson (1987) and findings show that there were five bald – on – record strategies, thirteen positive politeness strategies; seven negative politeness strategies, and thirteen off- record strategies. The study further found that positive politeness strategy was the highest used strategy. The study concluded that when the users use social media, they decide to use positive politeness strategy because they want to show solidarity, treat the other users as members of in – group, a friend, a person who is known and liked.

A critical look at the various studies on social media or media suggest that there are similarities and differences between the discussed works. Whereas Sagala (2022) and Ammaida (2020) used Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory, Sudaryat et al. (2020) used Lakoff's 1977 Principles of politeness. In Ammaida's study, it was found that positive politeness strategy was the highest used strategy. However, Sudaryat et al. (2020) revealed that politeness and immodesty language were used by the West Java citizens.

Studies in abroad also address the application of politeness in the courtroom. For example, Wang (2020), Santoso et al. (2020), Yibifu (2020), Ardi (2021); Liao (2019) have all worked on politeness in the courtroom. For example, Wang (2020) did a study to investigate into politeness markers and modality in dialogue interpreting and analyzing how the illocutionary forces were modified by interpreters in their

translations from English into Chinese and Spanish. The study concluded that even though interpreters achieved a highly appropriate equivalence for the source language but the illocutionary force of the source of the source speeches were changed due to little speech usages such as politeness markers and modality, and due to this, speeches face- protective and face- threatening potential are affected. Moreover, in different languages, although their words were the same, they were not semantically equivalent. In this context, different languages could not convey the same illocutionary force even if they accomplished equal level of speech contents. Wang's study reveals that interpreters who interpret from English to Chinese and Spanish and vice versa are able to some extent, convey the message from the source of language to the target language, but illocutionary force is altered because of the use of politeness markers and modality. This alteration affects the way the face of the hearer is protected.

Santoso et al. (2020) also did a study to investigate the forms of linguistic politeness strategies used in Otto Hasibuan in thirteen typical speech acts included: asking for permission, warning, questioning, and informing which are classified into five maxims such as tact maxim, approbation maxim, obligation maxim, agreement maxim and opinion- reticence maxim.

Additionally, Yibirifu (2020) worked on politeness and impoliteness strategies in the courtroom by analyzing a trial script from American reality TV show. His findings revealed politeness and impoliteness strategies appear to be used by the participants in the courtroom. However, according to the study, positive impoliteness and positive politeness were used more frequently than other strategies (Yibirifu, 2020). Even though Yibirifu (2020) did a study into courtroom trial, his study differs slightly from

Liao (2019) and Ardi et al. (2021) whose focus was to look for politeness strategies. However, Yibirifu focused on both politeness and impoliteness strategies.

More so, Ardi et al. (2021) studied the politeness strategies used in the cross-examination of court trials in criminal cases. The study found two main types of illocutionary functions; that is, competitive and conflictive. The study concluded that the politeness strategies in criminal trials is crucial in upholding fairness in Judicial decisions. Liao (2019) also conducted a study to analyze the politeness in the courtroom language in both criminal and civil trails in China. Liao (2019) concluded that politeness discourse as an exemplary institutional discourse is essentially distinct from that of everyday conversation, and the findings exposed that there were various strategies and forms of politeness employed by the participants in the courtroom trails. The study showed that, the judge used the politeness strategies in the whole process of the trial, especially, during the court sentencing to the defendant as well as to the opposing lawyer.

Comparatively, whereas Ardi et al. (2021) focused on politeness strategies used in the cross- examination of court trails in criminal cases, Liao (2019) also conducted a study to analyze the politeness in the courtroom language in both criminal and civil trials. The studies conducted by Liao (2019) and Ardi et al. (2021) point out that politeness strategies are being used frequently by courtroom participants, especially, the judge used politeness strategies in the Judicial process. Judging from the afore mentioned studies, it is remarkably clear that politeness is very instrumental in the courtroom activities.

2.1.5 Politeness studies from the local perspective

Locally, research works on politeness have also been conducted in Ghana by scholars in academia. The areas or topic that the various studies have covered include polite request and perception on politeness, administrative discourse, politeness in social media, (im)politeness strategies and tactics on concession speech and on parliamentary discourse. For instance, under administrative discourse, Hammond (2017) examined how (14) fourteen organizational structure and cultural expectations can influence the content of administrative discourses to show (im)politeness from two institutions: University of Education Winneba, and the Ghana Police Service Winneba. Her study was founded on Ting-Toomey's face negotiation theory and Fraser's view on political politeness strategies. Her focus was to bridge the gap between three pragmatic subfields: linguistics politeness research, organizational communication, and institutional communication pragmatics. Data was gathered through discourse completion tests, focus group discussions, observations, and a content analysis of selected written documents. Findings of the study was that differences exist in pragmatic variations: lexical, syntactic, and textual resources to mark (im)politeness in both institutions. In Hammond's study, there are two institutions where the research was focused, and these two institutions have distinct focus. That is, the former is an educational institution whilst the latter is a law enforcement agency. It is therefore in order that the findings revealed that there were differences that existed in pragmatic variations including lexical, syntactic, and textual resources to indicate (im)politeness in the two institutions.

A careful look at the literature in Ghana also suggest that studies have been conducted on polite request and the perception people have about politeness (Thompson and Anderson, 2019; Anderson, 2009; Akpanglo-Nartey, 2017; Totimeh and Bosiwah,

2015). Thompson and Anderson (2019) conducted a study into politeness and their study focused on what Ghanaians perceive as politeness in their daily interactions by gathering data from interviews granted by residents of Accra, Kumasi and Ho. Their study found that among Ghanaians, politeness is the use of any communicative behavior that expresses respect or deference. Anderson (2009) also investigated polite request in Ghanaian English. She used a politeness framework proposed by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) which is regarded as an extension of Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness. Using multiple data collection process of observation of natural speech, discourse completion tests and insights provided by a native speaker of Akan, she found out that speakers of English in Ghana do not frequently use modals such as "can", "could", "may", and "might"- statements and imperative forms that may be perceived as impolite forms in native varieties of English. These forms are, however, combined with lexical politeness markers such as "please" or "kindly". Her questionnaire data revealed the use of more modals than that of the oral data for this situation. The oral data seemed closer to typical Ghanaian English than the questionnaire data. The impression was that Ghanaian speakers transfer their first language pragmatic linguistic forms into the English Language. From the literature, Thompson and Anderson (2019) sought to conduct a study on the perceptions of Ghanaians on what politeness is about in their daily interactions but Anderson (2019) entered her study on the polite request in Ghanaian English. The two studies differ a little due to the fact that Thompson and Anderson (2019) sought to know the views of Ghanaians on what they perceived as politeness but Anderson (2009) was concerned with how Ghanaians actually make polite request while interacting.

In a similar study, Akpanglo- Nartey (2017) identified the use of the imperative in making requests in Ga and English by children to indicate quality. Totimeh and Bosiwah

(2015) on their part employed ethnographic research approach to investigate how the Akyems of Ghana make polite request. The result was that, indirectness is used in making polite request among the Akyems, and also age, gender and socio- economic status influence request making. Both studies conducted by Akpanglo-Nartey (2017) and Totimeh and Bosiwah (2015) focused on how polite requests are made in Ghana among some tribes and cultures. Even though both studies were conducted in Ghana, each study focused on certain group(s) of people. For example, Akpango- Nartey (2017) focused her work on Ga and English speakers whilst Totimeh and Bosiwah (2015) focused on the Akyems.

Studies on politeness done in Ghana again focused politics (Akuka et al., Agyekum, 2015, Hammond, 2021). For instance, Akuka et al. (2021) have also studied politeness in parliamentary discourse using Brown and Levinson's (1987) model. The parliamentary Hansard was their source of data collection. The study concluded that the political actors in the Parliament of Ghana, such Speaker and Members of Parliament used politeness strategies in various forms and frequencies as observed in the parliamentary Hansard. The study further brings to fore that the negative politeness strategy is the most frequently used politeness strategy with the Speaker being the highest user of the negative and bald on- record politeness strategies. Again, the study found off- record politeness strategy is the least used strategy. The Majority Members in parliament use the highest frequency of the positive strategies while the Minority Members of Parliament employ more negative politeness strategies. Also, Agyekum (2015) examines the semantics and pragmatics of political apology in the 4th Republic of Ghanaian contemporary politics from 2013 to 2015. His study concludes that the obligation on the part of the offender to apologize and for the offended to accept the apology and to forgive for socio – political harmony is driven by both the social pact

and the Ghanaian communalistic context. Furthermore, Hammond, (2021) also looked at the impoliteness strategies and tactics of self – presentation employed by John Dramani Mahama after the 2016 general election in Ghana using Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory. Her findings showcase that John Dramani Mahama employed the four types of politeness and these are positive politeness, negative politeness, bald on – record, and off – record politeness in his concession speech, and that positive strategy was the frequently used strategy.

Even though Hammond (2021) and Akuka et al. (2021) have different focus for their studies, the findings of each study seem to be the same. A critical look at the two studies reveal that John Dramani Mahama used all the four politeness strategies in Hammond’s study and similarly, the Member of Parliament and the Speaker of Parliament used all the forms of politeness strategies in the parliamentary Hansard. However, the findings of Hammond (2021) and Akuka et al (2021) differ because in Hammond’s study, positive politeness was the most frequently used politeness strategy used, but in that of Akuka et al. (2021), negative politeness occurred the most.

Additionally, studies in Ghana also reveal works on politeness in social media or media (Sarfo- Adu and Osei, 2021; Afful, 2017). Sarfo- Adu and Osei (2021) have conducted a study into politeness in media talk shows in Ghana. Using Brown and Levinson’s 1987 politeness Theory, the results indicate that 43.35% panelists marked politeness by addressing the positive face of their interlocutor(s) as against 38.93% occurrences of negative face, with Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) on record recording 15.70%. Their findings suggest that Ghanaian media panel discussions are characterized by positive politeness. Afful (2017) also examined the use of bald on-record politeness strategy by four host of adversarial panel discussions on radio. His work hinged on Grice’s (1975)

Cooperative Principle and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness Theory. Again, the community of Practice (CofP) framework by (Wenger, 1998; Holmes & Meyerhoff, 1990; Eckert & Wenger, 2005), where the participants themselves define what polite and impolite behavior, against the norms they have for their specific discourse community was adopted. His study sought to find how face threatening acts (FTAs) were performed by the hosts in their attempt to deal with departures from politeness and cooperative norms. Afful further investigated the outcomes of such face threatening interventions. The findings of his study proved that the apparently impolite and face-threatening behavior of the host is both common and effective in managing adversarial talk.

2.2 Studies on Editorials

Research has shown various interest areas in the study of *Editorials*. Notably, Johnson (2015) analyzed language features and rhetorical structures of 1,000 editorials across 20 years and 10 major publications to identify patterns. The study found that the structure of *Editorials* followed classic Aristotelian outlines with an issue introduced, perspective stated clearly upfront using authoritative language, counterarguments addressed, and a firm conclusion reiterated key points. Again, Smith & Wilson (2017) conducted an experimental study testing effectiveness of different *Editorial* formats on shaping reader opinions. *Editorials* following classic structures proved most persuasive while those lacking organization or clear position were less influential. Lee et al (2019) interviewed 50 experienced editorial writers to understand thought processes. The analyses revealed that most planned extensively, researched thoroughly to anticipate alternative views, and crafted persuasive yet sensitive appeals tailored to the publication/audience. This suggests that *Editorial* influence relies on both logic and emotive connection. In terms of language features and usage, Brown (2020) surveyed

changes in language complexity in medical journal *Editorials* from 1990-2019 finding a significant "dumbing down" trend correlated to declined letters to editors, undermining informed deliberation. Based on the findings, Brown (2020) argues for upholding rigorous yet accessible editorial traditions. In another vein, Williams (2021) conducted a content analysis of *Nature Editorials* from 1990-2020. The study showed increasing recommendation of multi-stakeholder collaborations on complex global issues reflecting growing recognition of interdependence. Zarza and Tan (2016) compared the use of strategic features in American and Malaysian editorials and discovered differences that exist between the newspapers in terms of their styles of writing. The differences were attributed to differences in the cultural contexts of the two newspaper editorials. Overall, findings highlight classic structures effectively persuade while sensitivity to context and reader inclusion cultivate influence. Editorials continue evolving to optimally facilitate research impacts and knowledge-sharing. communicative functions of politeness strategies used in the *Editorials* of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers.

2.3 Theoretical Review

In every research, there is usually a theory which would serve as a guide to the realization of its intended purposes and gives it an objective focus. A discussion on politeness is provided in relation to its emergence. This study anchors on Brown and Levinson (1987) as the main framework.

Brown and Levinson (1987) developed their politeness theory in an attempt to identify and publicize politeness as a universal phenomenon. The theory assumes the existence of a model person endowed with rationality and face. These two fundamental attributes of rationality and face are described as universal concepts accounting for the linguistic

behavior of interlocutors of a natural language. Rationality in this context refers to the application of a specific mode of reasoning which infers from ends to means that will satisfy those ends. On the other hand, face; 'public self- image', consists of a) the negative face, seen as the basic desire for freedom of imposition and b) positive face, the desire that one's wants be appreciated and approved. Based on the notion of face, Brown and Levinson introduce the concept of Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) as acts that inherently threaten the speaker's or the hearer' face. When faced with the challenge to do an FTAs, the speaker has five options of politeness strategies from which he can choose. Thus, the basic concepts that underline this theory that this study will explore are the concept of face, Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) and politeness strategies.

2.3.1 The Concept of Face

Pivotal to the politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) is the concept of face, which defined as the public self - image that every member wants to claim for himself.

Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that their "notion of face is derived from that of Goffman (1967) and from the English folk term, which ties face up with notions of being embarrassed or humiliated or losing face. Thus, face is something that is emotionally invested, and that it can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction". Brown and Levinson (1987) assume that "all competent adult members of a society have and know each other to have 'face', the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself". They categorized face into two related aspects: negative face and positive face. The negative face is the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction to freedom of action and freedom from imposition. This implies that negative face is the desire of people to

do things independently and not be imposed on. Thus, it is necessary that interlocutors should manage communications such that they don't appear to be claiming each other's territories and/or imposing their ideas and opinions on the other persons as this is likely to threaten the face want of the other persons. The positive, face on the other hand, is the positive consistent personality one desires and wishes that others appreciate and approve (Brown & Levinson, 1987). With this notion of positive face, the theorists argue that every rational person desire that his wishes, opinions and aspirations be valued, respected and approved by others. Consequently, positive face is threatened when participants seem not to respect and appreciate the views of the other person. Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory posit that for mutual benefit of the speaker and the hearer, it is important that each participant tries to maintain both the negative and positive face of each other. Both the negative and negative face are basic needs for a successful interaction thus, paying attention to face wants is construed as the rationality of the practical means-end reasoning of the model person

2.3.2 Face Threatening Acts (FTAs)

Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory also assumes that certain speech acts are intrinsically face threatening to interlocutors. The theorists explain that "acts that by their nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or of the speaker are referred to as FTAs." (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Brown and Levinson argue that the existence of FTAs is of crucial prominence because it is in relation to FTAs that politeness is necessitated. To say it in another way, politeness becomes a requirement as a redressive action to mitigate FTAs that might occur in some communicative acts.

FTAs are distinguished based on whether the speech acts threaten the positive or negative face want of interlocutors. Brown and Levinson make a distinction between

acts that threaten negative face and those that threaten positive face. Brown and Levinson (1987) said that: Those acts that primarily threaten the addressee's (H's) negative-face want, by indicating potentially that the speaker does not intend to avoid impeding H's freedom of action, include: orders, requests, suggestions, advice, reminding, threats, warnings, dares, offers, promises, compliments, expressions of envy or admiration and expression of negative strong emotions toward hearer. According to Brown and Levinson (1987),

Those acts that threaten the positive-face want, by indicating potentially that the speaker does not care about the addressee's feelings, wants, etc, include: expressions of disapproval, criticism, contempt or ridicule, complaints and reprimands, accusations, insults, contradictions or disagreements, challenges, expressions, expression of violent emotions, irreverence, mention of taboo topics, bringing of bad news about hearer, raising of dangerously emotional or divisive topics, blatant non-cooperation in an activity and use of address terms and other status-marked identifications in initial encounters.

Even though Brown and Levinson employ these two classifications, they state that there could be overlap between positive and negative face that is threatened. For instance, complaints, interruptions, threats, strong expressions of emotion, requests for personal information are threats to both negative and positive face. Hence, any classification of FTAs can only be approximated to take care of only the most noticeable direction of the threat involved.

Also, Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that because interaction usually involves speaker and hearer, there is the possibility to classify FTAs according to whose face is threatened. They distinguish between speech acts that predominantly threaten

addressee's face and those that threaten primarily the speaker's face. The speech acts that primarily offend the speaker's negative face are listed as; expressing thanks or apology, acceptance of H's thanks or H's apology, excuses, acceptance of offers, responses to H's faux pas, and unwilling promises and offers. Speech acts that directly threaten S's positive face include:

Apologies, acceptance of a compliment, breakdown of physical control over body, bodily leakage, stumbling or falling down, self-humiliation, shuffling or cowering, acting stupid, self-contradicting, confessions, admissions of guilt or responsibility, emotion leakage and non-control of laughter or tears.

2.3.3 Strategies for Doing FTAs

Another critical assumption of Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness is the notion of strategies for mitigating FTAs. According to the theorists, "in the context of the mutual vulnerability of face, any rational agent will seek to avoid these face-threatening acts or will employ certain strategies to minimize the threat" (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Thus, the authors suggest three wants the speaker must consider, relative to weightings, in employing specific strategy:

- a. The want to communicate the content of the FTA x,
- b. The want to be efficient or urgent, and
- c. The want to maintain H's [hearer's] face to any degree.

Based on these wants, Brown and Levinson classify the strategies to mitigate FTAs on a scale of risk to face as follows:

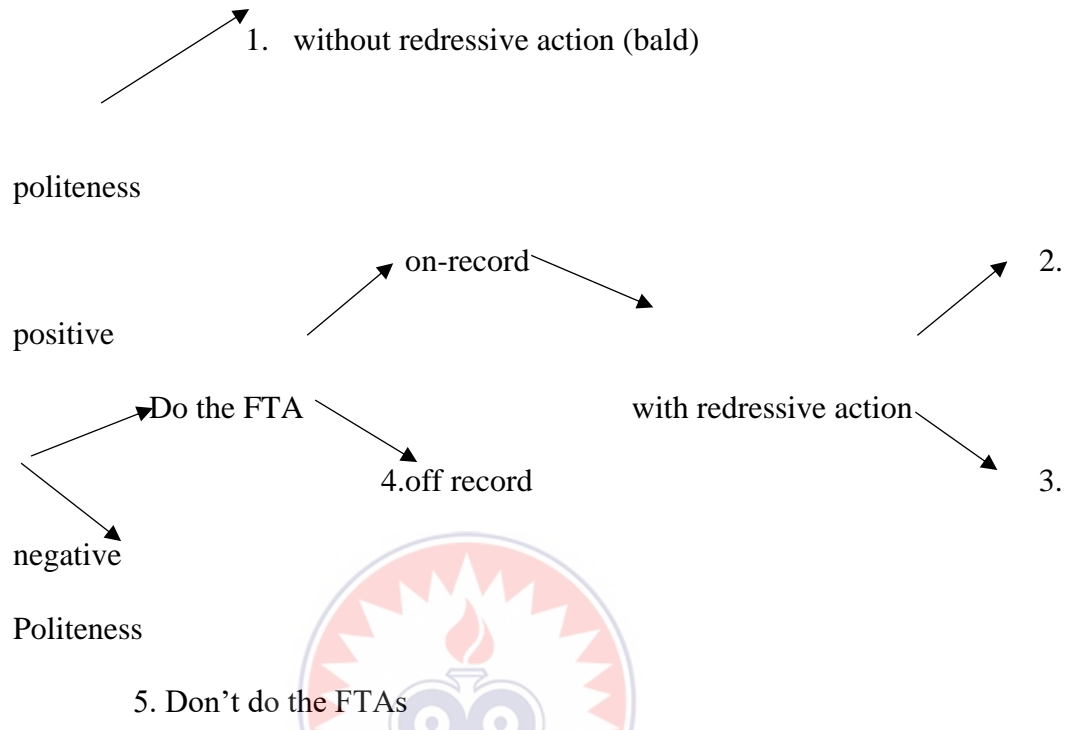


Figure 1: Strategies for doing FTAs

- From fig. one, there are five strategies that are proposed by Brown and Levinson in doing FTAs. To secure a minimum threat to face, a speaker chooses the highest-number; (5- don't do the FTA), which is the one with the least risk of face threat. However, to choose not to do the FTAs has the disadvantage of completely withdrawing from achieving one's communicative goals. Consequently, the option is to do the FTAs off record by choosing the second highest number (4- off record), which has the least threat to face or do the FTAs on record with redressive action (3- negative politeness and 4- positive politeness) or do FTAs without will usually try to lessen the threat to the listener's face unless the speaker gives it a priority to

threaten the hearer's face with maximum efficiency, in which case the FTA is done bald on record.

2. Brown and Levinson argue also that in choosing a particular strategy, the speaker must consider the advantages as well as the drawbacks associated with specific politeness strategy.

2.4 The Politeness Strategies

Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory (1987) proposes five politeness strategies in our daily discourse namely, bald on- record, positive politeness, negative politeness and off- record.

2.4.1 Bald on-record strategy

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), "doing an act baldly, without redress, involves doing it in the most direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way possible as in for example, making a request, saying 'Give me the book!' The authors argue that the bald on record strategy resonates with Grice's Maxims of Cooperation (Grice 1967, 1975). Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that there are certain circumstances that call for a speaker to go bald on record: a. in circumstances where S and H both tacitly agree that the relevance of face demands may be suspended in the interests of urgency or efficiency b. where the danger to H's face is very small, as in offers, requests, suggestions that are clearly in H's interest and do not require great sacrifices of S (e.g., 'Come in' or 'Do sit down'); and c. where S is vastly superior in power to H, or can enlist audience support to destroy H's face without losing his own. The major advantages of bald on record strategies range from clarity and efficiency communication (Ayuningrum et al., 2018; Daar et al., 2023). It however, pays little or no attention to face wants. Due to that, it is considered as the worst form of politeness

strategy. The bald on record strategies are usually employed by persons who have close relations with their listeners, such as close friends or family. Speech acts such direct imperatives for great urgency or desperation, sympathetic advice or warnings, welcoming, farewells, and offers are associated with the bald on record strategy.

2.4.2 Positive Politeness

Brown and Levinson (1987) are of the view that Positive politeness is focused on the positive face want of hearer i.e., the positive self-image that he claims for himself. Positive politeness strategies aim at general expression of solidarity, shared values and common goals. The speaker treats the hearer as member of an in-group, a friend, a person whose needs and character traits are recognized and approved (Mohammad et al., 2016). Brown and Levinson outline fourteen strategies under positive politeness.

These are:

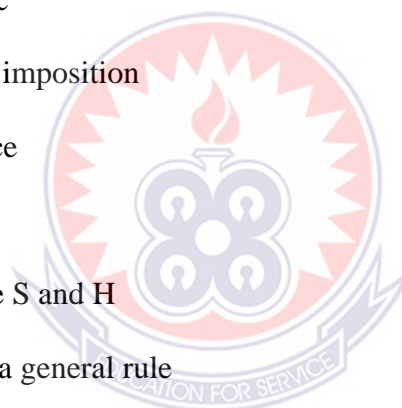
- 1) Notice/attend to hearer's wants (his interests, wants, needs, goods).
- 2) Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with the hearer).
- 3) Intensify interest to hearer Use in-group identity markers.
- 4) Seek agreement
- 5) Avoid disagreement
- 6) Presuppose/raise/assert common ground
- 7) Joke
- 8) Assert or presuppose people's knowledge and concern for H's wants.
- 9) Offer, promise.
- 10) Be optimistic
- 11) Include both S and H in the activity
- 12) Give (or ask for) reasons
- 13) Assume or assert reciprocity and

- 14) Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation)

2.4.3 Negative Politeness

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), “Negative politeness is redressive action addressed to the addressee’s negative face: his want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded”. It is the maximum show of respect to the hearer (Njuki et al., 2021; Suyono & Andriyanti, 2021). The authors outline ten strategies for doing negative politeness. These are:

- 1) Be conventionally indirect
- 2) Question, hedge
- 3) Be pessimistic
- 4) Minimize the imposition
- 5) Give deference
- 6) Apologize
- 7) Impersonalize S and H
- 8) State FTA as a general rule
- 9) Nominalize and
- 10) Go on record as incurring a debt off record as indebting.



2.4.4 Off - record Strategy

Brown and Levinson (1987) posit that, “A communicative act is done off record if it is done in such a way that it is not possible to attribute only one clear communicative intention to the act”. In this case, because the off-record strategy is subjected to different interpretations, a speaker can do an FTA, and deny responsibility for doing it (Hutahaeen et al., 2021). It is up to the hearer to decide how to interpret it. In off-record strategy, the speaker avoids direct face threatening acts but rather uses indirect

strategies of either inviting conversational implicatures or being deliberately ambiguous or vague (Rahayuningsih et al., 2020). Fifteen off-record strategies are proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). These are:

- 1) Give hints/clues
- 2) Give association clues
- 3) Presuppose
- 4) Understate
- 5) Overstate
- 6) Use tautologies
- 7) Use contradictions
- 8) Be Ironic
- 9) Use metaphors
- 10) Use rhetorical questions
- 11) Be ambiguous
- 12) Be vague
- 13) Over generalize
- 14) Displace H and
- 15) Be incomplete, use ellipsis.



Summary and Justification of the theory

Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework identify four key politeness strategies: bald on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. Bald on-record involves direct, clear communication without concern for the listener's face, often used in urgent situations or when the speaker has more power, making it efficient but the least polite strategy (Ayuningrum et al., 2018; Daar et al., 2023). Positive politeness focuses on addressing the listener's positive face by expressing solidarity and shared

values, with strategies like noticing the listener's needs, seeking agreement, joking, and giving gifts. Negative politeness is aimed at respecting the listener's negative face, their desire for autonomy, and includes strategies like being indirect, hedging, minimizing impositions, and apologizing (Njuki et al., 2021; Suyono & Andriyanti, 2021). Finally, the off-record strategy involves indirect communication, leaving room for multiple interpretations and reducing responsibility for face-threatening acts through techniques such as giving hints, using metaphors, and being vague or ambiguous (Hutahaean et al., 2021; Rahayuningsih et al., 2020)

Using Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory to analyze politeness strategies in the editorials of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers in Ghana is appropriate because their framework offers a comprehensive approach to understanding how communication navigates face-saving and face-threatening acts (FTAs). Editorials, which often critique, persuade, or influence public opinion, must balance delivering clear messages with maintaining the face of both the subject and the audience. Brown and Levinson's theory provides a nuanced way to categorize and analyze how editorial writers employ different politeness strategies—whether using direct, bald on-record statements to assert authority, positive politeness to build solidarity with readers, negative politeness to show deference, or off-record strategies to mitigate responsibility for sensitive claims. In the Ghanaian media context, where the press plays a crucial role in shaping public discourse, understanding the subtle ways politeness is used in editorials helps to reveal the underlying power dynamics, audience engagement, and rhetorical tactics that define the national conversation. By applying this framework, the study can assess how these newspapers manage face and persuasion in various socio-political contexts, making it an ideal tool for examining the editorials' communicative strategies

Criticisms on the theory

Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, while foundational in the study of politeness strategies, has faced several criticisms over the years. One of the primary critiques is that the theory is ethnocentric and based on Western assumptions of individualism, which may not universally apply to all cultures (Matsumoto, 1988; Gu, 1990). Researchers argue that the focus on face as a primarily individual concern does not account for collectivist cultures where group harmony and interdependence are more critical than individual autonomy. Additionally, the theory's binary division between positive and negative politeness strategies has been questioned, with some scholars suggesting that politeness is more fluid and context-dependent than this dichotomy implies (Eelen, 2001). Another criticism is that the theory tends to oversimplify power dynamics and relationships between speakers and listeners, often neglecting the complexities of social hierarchies and mutual influences in interaction (Watts, 2003).

In the context of the study on politeness strategies in the editorials of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers, these criticisms were addressed by adapting Brown and Levinson's framework to the Ghanaian cultural and social context. Instead of rigidly applying the Western-focused concept of face, the study considered local cultural values, such as respect for authority and community-based relationships, that influence how politeness is manifested in Ghanaian discourse. Furthermore, the study acknowledged the dynamic nature of politeness strategies by analyzing how editorial writers fluidly shift between strategies based on the topic, audience, and socio-political context. This adaptation allowed for a more nuanced understanding of how politeness operates within the specific media and cultural environment in Ghana, responding to

the critiques of ethnocentrism and context rigidity while still benefiting from the core insights of Brown and Levinson's model.

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed relevant literature on politeness strategies both universally and Ghana specifically to establish the gap in literature. From the literature reviewed, it is evident that although politeness strategies are explored globally in various fields, there is a missing focus on application of politeness strategies in Editorial discourse in Ghana. More so, the chapter explored theories and concepts that underpin the current study.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter of the study describes the steps that were followed to gather data for the study. Specifically, it covers the research approach, research design, sampling techniques and sample size, data collection procedure and method, data analysis planning and trustworthiness of data.

3.1 Research Approach

This study adopted the qualitative approach. Creswell (2014) explains that, in scientific research, there are three approaches a researcher can adopt to conduct a study, namely; quantitative approach, qualitative and mixed methods. Scholars articulate that these research approaches are relatively associated with the philosophical underpinnings of research, thus positivism, interpretivism and pragmatism (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2002; Park, Konge, & Artino, 2020). In the attempt to explore the *Editorials* of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers, this study employed the qualitative research approach. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research involves “exploring and understanding the meaning some individuals or groups of people think emerges from analyzing social or human problems. Hence, the qualitative approach was seen as the most appropriate for this study because the study seeks to obtain data from the *Editorials* in newspapers, in order to inductively construct themes from the specific to general and then create subjective interpretations from the data gathered with a view of gaining a better understanding of the politeness strategies in the *Editorials* of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers.

Lindolf and Taylor (2017) posit that, a qualitative research strategy concentrates on the social behaviors and meanings of individuals within a particular historical or cultural setting. Thus, a qualitative approach aims to recognize and deeply delve into phenomena to obtain the reasons, attitudes, and behaviors of that phenomenon. In effect, this study seeks to analyze politeness strategies in *Editorials* of *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers.

Similarly, the qualitative research approach is focused on dealing with meanings, descriptions and interpretations of various phenomena in the social world (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Thus, it is exploratory, descriptive, interpretive, subjective, inductive, and reflexive. In tandem with this, the qualitative research approach is adopted for this study to enable the researcher to explore forms of politeness strategies in the *Editorials* of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers. The study seeks to provide in-depth knowledge on issues of politeness in the *Editorials* in newspapers specifically in the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers.

3.2 Research Design

Based on the focus of the study a qualitative content analysis was adopted to generate an in- depth understanding of the study. Creswell (2014) describes a research design as an inquiry that provides specific guidance for procedures in a study. In other words, a research design provides the researcher with information on established guidelines and strategies involved in studying a phenomenon. This means that the selection of a research design is determined by the nature of the research, the research problem, the research questions as well as the target audience of the study. Some examples of qualitative research designs include ethnography, phenomenology, case study, and qualitative content analysis, among others (Lindlof & Taylor, 2017).

3.2.1 Qualitative Content Analysis

Content analysis is a valuable methodological approach widely utilized in various fields of research to systematically analyze and interpret textual, visual, or audio content. This method allows researchers to examine and uncover patterns, themes, and meanings within the data, providing valuable insights into communication, media, literature, and beyond. In recent years, content analysis has gained significant prominence due to its versatility and applicability across diverse disciplines.

Contemporary scholars have emphasized the importance of content analysis as a rigorous and systematic approach to understanding complex phenomena. According to Neuendorf (2017), content analysis offers researchers a structured framework for analyzing large volumes of data, enabling them to identify recurring patterns and extract meaningful insights. Additionally, Krippendorff (2018) highlights the role of content analysis in uncovering latent meanings and implicit messages embedded within textual or visual artifacts, thereby enhancing our understanding of human communication and behavior.

In the realm of media and communication studies, content analysis has emerged as a cornerstone method for examining the portrayal of various social issues, identities, and ideologies in mass media. Scholars such as Riffe, Lacy, and Fico (2019) emphasize the significance of content analysis in media research, particularly in assessing media representation, agenda-setting effects, and framing strategies employed by media organizations. Moreover, Holsti (2019) underscores the utility of content analysis in cross-national comparisons of media content, offering valuable insights into cultural differences and societal norms.

Furthermore, content analysis has found application in the field of education and pedagogy, where researchers use this method to analyze editorial writings, educational materials, and student discourse. By examining the content of newspaper editorials, researchers can gain insights into editorial writings and on presentation of ideas in media (Seidel & Cohen, 2019). Additionally, content analysis allows educators to assess the effectiveness of educational interventions and curricular materials in achieving desired learning objectives (Berg, 2020).

In the context of this study, content analysis serves as a fundamental methodological approach to examining politeness strategies in the *Editorials* of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide*. By systematically analyzing non-verbal communication patterns exhibited by editors in their presentations, this research aims to uncover the strategies employed to facilitate learning and knowledge construction in the editorial presentations. Through a comprehensive content analysis, this study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on editorial discourse and pedagogical practices, with implications for educational research and practice. This current study adopts content analysis because it is focused on analyzing politeness strategies in the *Editorials* of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers in Ghana.

3.3 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The study adopted Constructed Month Sampling technique which is an essential sampling technique used in the study in media research. Constructed Month Sampling in media research refers to a sampling method where researchers strategically select specific weeks or periods of time for data collection and analysis (Jones & Carter, 1959). This approach is commonly used in media studies to capture data related to media content, such as television programs, news broadcasts, or social media posts,

during specific weeks of interest. By adopting this technique, the researcher selected weekly *Editorial* newspapers which covered topical issues on education, economy, politics, chieftaincy, democracy and other social issues at large. In consistency with other research works that focused on traditional media, Constructed Month Sampling is considered to be more efficient (Hester & Dougall, 2007). This will allow the researcher to acquire a vast range of data to analyze how politeness strategies were used in them. The *Editorials* were selected over the range of six months – April, 2023 – September, 2023. These periods were selected because it marked the economic hardship and woes of the Ghanaian people. Riffe, Aust, and Lacy (1993) posit that Constructed Month Sampling allows researchers to narrow their focus and collect data during periods that are of particular significance or relevance to their study, rather than conducting continuous data collection over an extended period. This approach is therefore considered a useful approach in studying politeness strategies in Ghanaian Newspaper Editorials to efficiently gather data for analysis. Neuman (2014) also explained that in a qualitative study, how research cases are selected is based on their relevance to the study and not their representatives. Therefore, it is needed and necessary to select cases that have a direct relation with the study; hence *Editorials* on topical issues in the Ghanaian media space are selected using Constructed Month Sampling. In effect, 48 editorials were gathered within the stipulated period, however only 12 editorials were used across the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* for the analysis of the study. The selection of the 12 editorials is attributed to the fact that all the editorials cut across the themes of interest in the study, hence there was no need to analyze all the 48 when a few of them can bring out and ascertain the use of politeness by editors in the editorials.

3.4 Data Collection Method and Procedure

Document analysis was utilized as a method of data collection. Corbin and Strauss (2008) explain that document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents – both printed and electronic (computer-based and internet-transmitted) material. Corbin and Strauss (ibid.) further posited that in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge. That is to say, document analysis as an analytical method in qualitative research, allows the researcher to gain in-depth knowledge and information from documents that are being analyzed. Documents that may be utilized for systematic evaluation as part of a study take a variety of forms. They include advertisements; agendas, books and brochures, dairies and journals, maps and charts; newspapers among others (Glenn, 2009). Labuschagne (2008) explains that document analysis yields data- excerpts, quotations or entire passages- that are then organized into major themes, categories and case examples specifically through content analysis.

In relation to this study, the various *Editorials* from *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* were taken as documents for analysis which allowed the researcher to gain first- hand information on how *Editorials* use politeness strategies in their everyday communication and interactions with consumers. As a result, the researcher was able to explore the politeness strategies according to Brown and Levinson (1987) which were used by Editors in their *Editorials*.

Analyzing all issues in a newspaper in Ghana is not an easy task. In this current study, twelve *Editorials* were used, six from each of the two selected newspapers namely *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide*. The selected *Editorials* cover issues on democracy,

politics, health and issues of the society at large. The researcher settled on twelve *Editorials* mainly due to the bulkiness of the newspapers. Again, time was a limiting factor in the sense that, considering the bulky nature of the newspapers, the study could not select more *Editorials* to make a case. However, irrespective of that, the twelve *Editorials* had many cases which were used for the analysis. In collecting data for the study, I constantly and thoroughly read all *Editorials* that were published from the two newspapers within the selected time frame. Doing that, the study proceeded to identify the various politeness strategies as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). The data gathered was then used to further conduct a thematic analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis Plan

In order to make sense of the bulk of data gathered from this study, the thematic data analysis method was employed to analyze the data gathered. Data analysis is the act of labeling and breaking down raw data and reconstituting them in patterns, themes, concepts and propositions (Lindolf & Taylor, 2017). Creswell and Creswell (2018) further add that in qualitative studies, data analysis entails organizing and preparing the data (texts, such as transcripts, or image data, such as photographs), reducing the data into themes via a process of coding and condensing the codes, and then representing the data in the form of figures, tables, or a discussion. Therefore, for this study, the data analysis comprised a meticulous procedure of segmenting the gathered information and reassembling them to convey the expected meaning.

Braun and Clarke (2019) also describe thematic analysis as the process of labeling and breaking raw data and grouping them into concepts, themes and propositions. This is in line with the assertions of Alhojailan (2012) who also posits that, thematic analysis is best for any study that focuses on discovering ideas or concepts or describing human

behavior through interpretations. With these scholarly suggestions and the focus of the study, I adopted Braun and Clarke's (2019) six-step thematic analysis flow for data analysis, namely, (1) becoming familiar with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) generating themes, (4) reviewing potential themes, (5) defining themes, and (6) write-up or producing report.

First of all, to enable me to become familiar with the data, I needed to read several times for an in-depth understanding of the content. Due to this, I familiarized myself with the data by reading it several times. After the reading, I immersed myself in the data through iterative readings to identify similar patterns or occurrences that are related to the questions guiding the study.

Second, I generated initial codes from the data. The codes are the essential building blocks of what eventually developed into themes. Braun and Clarke (2019) state that coding is used to provide concise, brief descriptive or interpretive labels for informational items that can be relevant to the research issue. Therefore, the data coding helped to produce categories which allowed additional interpretations to be made and to develop a theoretical understanding of the topic under study. In effect, it was advisable that I proceeded methodically through the full dataset and give each data point equal attention by noting familiar characteristics which were intriguing useful in creating subthemes and themes.

At this stage, I coded the main ideas or issues I considered intriguing and useful in creating the themes. After that, I assigned the codes to the patterns using pseudonyms to ensure anonymity, confidentiality and trustworthiness of the data. I then labelled and organized the data in a meaningful and systematic way by reducing the data into brief and concise meanings relevant to the research questions. Since I was concerned with

addressing specific research questions, I coded each segment of the data which was relevant to the research questions.

Third, generation of themes occurs once all pertinent data items have been coded. Braun and Clarke (2019) emphasize that, at this stage, the coded data is examined and analyzed to figure out how various codes may be merged on the basis of some common meanings and to create themes or sub-themes. This process thus, frequently entails combining several codes with a common underlying notion or data aspects into single themes or sub themes.

At this stage, I assembled some codes into initial themes and organized the codes into broader themes to correspond with the research questions. The inductive and theoretical methods of thematic analysis were again employed since some data fitted into the pre-existing coding frames (deductive or theoretical) whilst with the others, using the open coding approach (inductive), had also emerged. For the open coding approach, I identified coding schemes from the data by critically examining their similarities and uniqueness to enhance their commonality and further categorization.

Fourth, reviewing of potential themes. At this stage, I performed recursive analysis of the potential themes in connection with the coded data points and the overall dataset as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2019). Thus, I tested the themes to determine if they are applicable to the coded extracts as well as the overall data set.

Further, in reviewing the potential themes, I modified and developed the preliminary themes as was done in step 3. I then ensured that there were enough data to support each theme after the testing as I collapsed all the overlapping themes which were identified.

Fifth, definition of themes. Braun and Clarke (2019) espouse that a researcher defines themes by giving a thorough examination of the data. The dataset and the research topic were discussed in accordance with each particular theme and sub-theme. At this stage, the researcher should be able to decide which data points to utilize as extracts when summarizing the findings. The excerpts thus selected were to provide a vivid convincing overview of the arguments put forth by each of the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

So, at the fifth stage, I identified the essence of each theme in defining the focus data of each research question. I then iteratively organized the data into a coherent and internally consistent themes from where I provided (Braun & Clarke, 2019) a detailed analysis and convincing overviews.

Sixth, producing a report. This is the stage where I presented the final analysis which involved providing a detailed account of the findings from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2019). This detailed account included a vivid description of the data to address each research question and using excerpts from the coded data to ground the analyzed themes (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Therefore, I produced a vivid report on the themes and how they addressed each research question on the basis of the understanding and responses of the participants. As already indicated, direct quotes from the data were used as excerpts to support the interpretations and to further ground the arguments in the descriptions and interpretations of the findings.

3.6 Trustworthiness of Data

Trustworthiness is the level of confidence in a study's data, interpretation, and procedures (Pilot & Beck, 2014). In other words, the idea of trustworthiness is to ensure that the interpretation and methods used in research are not influenced by the biases of the researcher. Therefore, to ensure the credibility or trustworthiness of this study, I employed Creswell's (2014) eight (8) verification procedures, namely; triangulation, member checking for accuracy, peer debriefing, spending prolonged time at the research field, rich, thick descriptions of data, clarifying research biases, presenting negative case analysis, and providing opportunities for external auditing. Creswell (2014) further adds that, qualitative researchers could use a minimum of two (2) strategies in a study to ensure the trustworthiness of the research. Therefore, in this study, I employed five (5) of the verification procedures comprising member checking; peer debriefing; spending prolonged time at the research field; triangulation; and rich, thick descriptions to ensure the credibility of this study.

First, I conducted series of member checking activities with my supervisor, some lecturers and some colleagues who also offered to edit my work for me. Specifically, during weekly seminar presentations in my department, the data were periodically verified and critiqued by lecturers, fellow graduate students, and some research assistants. In cases where errors were found, they were duly rectified so that I could actively include the representations of their comments. Third, I spent a prolonged period at the research field by immersing myself in the data on countless times. I did this by reading over and over again to help become familiar with the data and to also identify the recurring themes. Fourth, I employed triangulation to increase the credibility and validity of the research findings as asserted by Lincoln and Guba (2000). Lincoln and Guba (2000) propose four types of triangulations, which include data

triangulation, investigator triangulation, theoretical triangulation, and methodological triangulation. I however employed the investigator triangulation. Investigative triangulation involves the participation of multiple researchers in the study. This can entail employing multiple observers, interviewers, or data analysts to corroborate findings. Silverman, (1993) as noted in Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2005), defines investigator triangulation as the use of more than one observer or participant in research setting to enhance the validity of data collection. For investigator triangulation, I recruited two other researchers to assist in reading of the Editorials of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*, and to assign codes to the data. This enabled me to confirm the findings across different investigators and to enhance the credibility of the findings. This helped me to get multiple views from different participants. Finally, I subjected the analysis of the data to rich, thick description to convey the interpretations of the findings and use excerpts to make the arguments stronger. During the interpretations of the data, I was conscious to link the findings to the literature and the tenets of the theories underpinning the study with the view to making the discussions more engaging.

In conclusion, by employing triangulation, this research aimed to ensure the robustness and credibility of the data collected, by such means enhancing the reliability and validity of the study's findings. Triangulation allowed for a varied and comprehensive examination of the research topic from various angles and perspectives. In this study, data triangulation was used to ensure trustworthiness of the research. That is, data was collected from difference sources to understand how newspapers employ politeness strategies in their editorials within different contexts.

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed in detail the methodological procedures of the study. The study is qualitative in nature, and the qualitative content analysis was adopted with the aim to comprehend the Editorials of Daily Graphic and Daily Guide. The chapter has also presented descriptions on data collection processes and methods, the plan for the data analysis. The chapter concludes on how the trustworthiness of the data gathered was ensured.



CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter of the study presents the results and discussion of the study. The purpose of the study was to explore the politeness strategies used in Editorials from *Daily Guide* newspaper and *Daily Graphic* newspaper. A process of data collection, the researcher read thoroughly through selected Editorials from the newspapers within the months of April 2023 and September 2023. The politeness strategies were identified according to Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness strategies. The data were analyzed based on the research questions that were generated for the study.

- i. What are the forms of politeness strategies used in the *Editorials* of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers?
- ii. What are the communicative functions of politeness strategies used in *Editorials* of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers?
- iii. What are the similarities and differences in the use of politeness strategies in the *Editorials* of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers?

4.2. RQ1: What are the forms of politeness strategies used in the *Editorials* of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers?

This research question sought to identify the politeness strategies of Brown and Levinson that were used in editorials of selected newspapers. In answering this research, the data gathered from the editorials within the stated time frame were sorted and classified under Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies to identify the forms of politeness strategies used by the editorials. The analysis is presented in the table below;

Table 1: Types of politeness strategies used in editorials

Type of Politeness	Daily Graphic Editorial N (%)	Daily Guide Editorial N (%)	
Positive Politeness	120 (36.03%)	78 (30%)	198
Negative Politeness	125 (37.5%)	55 (21.15%)	180
Bald on-record politeness	43 (12.91%)	77 (29.6%)	120
Off-record politeness	45 (13.51%)	50 (19.23%)	95
Total	333	260	593

Source: editorials from April – September 2023

Table one presents the kinds of politeness strategies that were identified in the *Editorials of Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* between the months of April to September. From the table, it can be deduced that all four politeness strategies of Brown and Levinson were identified in the two Editorials. That is, to say, the two newspapers employed politeness strategies in their daily editorials. From the table, on the side of Daily Graphic Editorial recorded the most politeness strategies (n= 333, 56.15%). On the side of Daily Graphic, negative politeness was recorded most occurring (n= 125, 37.5%) strategy in the editorial. This was followed by positive politeness which recorded 120 instances with a percentage of 36.03. Bald on-record and Off-record recorded 43, 12.91% and 45, 13.51% instances of politeness strategies, respectively. On the other hand, the number of politeness strategies recorded in Daily Guide amounted to 260 with a percentage of 43.85. On the side of Daily Guide, positive

politeness recorded the most instances of politeness strategies used (n=78, 30%), closely followed by bald on-record politeness (n=77, 29.6%). Negative politeness recorded 55 instances with a percentage of 21.15 whereas off-record politeness recorded (n=50, 19.23%). In total, the data from table 1 ranks the following politeness strategies in accordance with their occurrences in the two selected editorials; positive politeness (n=198, 33.38%), negative politeness (n=180, 30.35%), bald on-record politeness (n=120, 20.23%), and off-record politeness (n=95, 16.02%) These findings are consistent with a study conducted by Hutahaeen et al., (2021) which was focused on the politeness strategies found in the Pesbukers variety show. In their study that was aimed at analyzing the types of politeness strategies used in the variety show, a descriptive qualitative method with content analysis was used to collect and analyze data from the Episode 10 of the variety show within a specific time frame. Results from their study indicates that the most dominant politeness strategies found in the Pesbukers variety show was positive politeness (70%), followed by bald on-record (16%), negative politeness (11%) and off-record politeness strategies (Hutahaeen et al., 2021). Moreover, Rahayuningsih et al., (2020) reported in their study involving teacher-student interaction that the teachers dominantly used positive politeness to show solidarity. There was also the use of negative politeness in their study to minimize coercion to the students, off-record to provide hints, and bald on-record to communicate a clear and unambiguous instruction (Rahayuningsih et al., 2020).

4.2.1 Negative politeness strategies

Negative Politeness is oriented towards the hearer's negative face and emphasize avoidance of imposition on the hearer. Negative Politeness is intended to avoid giving offense by showing deference. The focus of methods is on avoiding imposing on the hearer and is directed toward the hearer's unfavorable face. The probability of a face

threat to the hearer is reduced by the speaker's attempt to avoid imposition. These techniques assume that the audience will feel pressured by the speaker (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Below are some instances from editorials

“Municipal and district directors of education and head teachers of some basic schools in the central region have made a passionate appeal to the Ghana Education Service to ensure the supply of the full complement of textbooks to basic schools” – Education, Daily Graphic – June,5.

4.2.2 Passionate Appeal

The extract above employs a negative politeness strategy. Negative politeness is deployed through the term “**passionate appeal**,” which evinces a feeling of deference, empathy, and civility. It is a gesture of respect and civility for the Ghana Education Service, the organization that received the request. The phrase “**passionate appeal**” implies that the request is not just being made; rather, it is being made with a genuine concern and feeling of urgency. That is, the educational directors of the municipality are concerned about the students of the municipality given that there are no instructional resources that will aid in teaching and learning to enable these students achieve their educational purpose. Again, the request is also indirect since the head teachers and directors of education are pleading rather than giving a clear directive. They are really asking textbooks; they are not demanding their supply. This deceptiveness is a tactful way to avoid coming off as too demanding or overbearing. It gives the Ghana Education Service flexibility to react favorably without feeling compelled. In other words, the head teachers and directors are not coercing the GES provide the instructional materials

for them. Using a “**passionate appeal**,” the politeness technique in the excerpt combines indirectness and negative politeness to suit many communication functions. It is courteous and respectful, recognizes the authority of the receiver, downplays any face-threatening situations, keeps a cooperative and upbeat tone, communicates significance and urgency, encourages collaboration, and fosters empathy.

4.2.3 Hedging downplaying obstacles

“He acknowledged the impact of Covid-19 and other factors such as climate change, disruptions in the supply chain of manufacturing goods, and the war between Russia and Ukraine, stating that these issues, as projected by the World Bank, are sinking some developed and developing countries into a recession. –Daily Guide- June 5

This is an excerpt of the Vice President, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia’s speech about the economy of Ghana in the face of challenges like covid 19, Russia-Ukraine war and others. Here, Dr. Bawumia uses a tactic of hedging and downplaying obstacles in order to keep a polite and upbeat tone while talking about the struggles that many nations, including Ghana, confront. This tactic, which acknowledges difficulties without assigning blame or portraying them as impassable, is a component of negative politeness.

Dr. Bawumia starts out by introducing the difficulties in a manner that implies they are not exclusive to Ghana or hedging them. That is to say, Dr. Bawumia hedges to communicate that, what the Ghanaian economy is facing is a global challenge which is not exclusive to the Ghanaian economy alone. He does this by noting, “**He acknowledged the impact of Covid-19 and other factors such as climate change,**

disruptions in the supply chain of manufacturing goods, and the war between Russia and Ukraine.” This lessens the effect of these difficulties by suggesting that they affect many nations globally rather than only Ghana.

This comes after Nufialaga Mawufemor Korbla Nonyigbey accused Agyinasare of showing no remorse in his second sermon, where he referred to Nogokpo as the headquarters of demons in the Volta Region. Agyinasare had previously apologized to the chiefs and people of Nogokpo after they raised concerns, emphasizing that he did not intend to denigrate any of the towns and their people. – Daily Guide – June,6.

The authors of the editorial employ negative politeness through the strategy of hedging. In the extract, the authors used the phrase “he referred to” to hedge the statement of Archbishop Agyinasare. That is, rather than delivering a straight and unambiguous allegation, he employs a more conservative and less aggressive manner, that suggests that his statements were not a direct indictment but just a reference to Nogokpo. The authors used of “referred” to the archbishop’s statement is a linguistic strategy enables him to create some doubt about his initial goal and to avoid directly declaring that he directly accused Nogokpo of being a place of demons. In essence, Agyinasare is employing this hedging approach to diminish the aggressive and accusing tone of his first comment and to hint that he may not have meant it as a direct charge but just as a reference to something he had heard or experienced.

4.2.4 Downplaying obstacles

Despite these challenges, Dr Bawumia disclosed that the government is relentlessly re-focusing on economic growth and working hard to regain the trajectory Ghana was on and get back to pre-Covid growth numbers” – Daily Guide – June,6.

Despite these obstacles, he observes, the administration is “relentlessly re-focusing on economic growth.” The phrase “relentlessly” minimizes the difficulties as barriers that may be surmounted with work, instead exuding a spirit of will and fortitude. This optimistic perspective helps to reduce any worry or anxiety that overseas investors may have about the difficulties. In other words, the vice president downplays these challenges by assuring foreign investors who may have lost trust in investing into the Ghanaian economy to reconsider their decisions as the government is working tirelessly to put the economy back on its feet in the face of adversities.

4.2.5 Minimization

Agyinasare had previously apologized to the chiefs and people of Nogokpo after they raised concerns, emphasizing that he did not intend to denigrate any of the towns and their people. He added that any misrepresentation or misinformation regarding the incident was regretted”- Daily Guide – June, 6.

The statement “**did not intend to denigrate**” is a minimization. That is, it was used to downplay any misinterpretation of his words. This lessens the apparent damage caused by his comments and suggests that any unintended unfavorable perception of his words

was inadvertent. In the midst of the controversy, this strategy helps him maintain his own reputation as the leading father of his church. Because if he is to submit to the demands of the traditional council of Nogokpo, it could cause a great deal of problem for his institution as he may stand the chance of losing a large quantity of his followers.

4.2.6 Being Apologetic

He deliberately failed to perform his part of the agreement despite several reminders sent to his agents. The company's lawyers wrote and informed him, his management and booking agents on May 23, 2023 about the breach of agreement and till date, they didn't reply. At this point, they had no option than to report his fraudulent actions to the police and proceed to court for redress and seek reliefs – Daily Graphic July, 21

The authors, through the company's press conference was expressing being apologetic for wanting to press charges against the artiste through the statement **“At this point, they had no option than to report his fraudulent actions to the police and proceed to court for redress and seek reliefs”**. Saying that **“they had no option”** specifically suggests that they are being compelled by conditions to pursue legal action even when they do not really want to. It presents the legal action as an unfortunate and unwelcome weight that the business is forced to bear. This is a subtle way of saying they are sorry for forcing them to perform anything unfavorable or embarrassing for the artiste. It suggests that even if they do not want to, they are powerless and have no other option. Even in their bid to press charges, they are considerate of the impact the legal issue may have on the impact of the artiste's professional career. This lessens the likelihood of declaring legal action. The statement **“We will now take legal action against you for**

fraud,” on the other hand, would come out as more forceful and imposing. The firm makes it clear that they want to penalize the artiste. The firm softens the imposition and suggests that they are reluctant to put the artiste’s face in danger in this manner by portraying it as an unwelcome last option that they are forced to execute. It expresses regret for having to use legal imposition in this regrettable situation.

4.2.7 Not coercing the addressee

“She appealed for support of a new braille embosser machine in order to provide access to adequate braille for studies” – Daily Graphic June, 5

This is an extract for a call out to parents who have children who are visually impaired. During a presentation of donations to the New Horizon School for the Blind, Bettina Hewlett-Bogart, a Presbyter from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Ghana, pleaded for more funding to provide quality education and a better life for disabled children. She said visually impaired children are not liabilities and should be treated better, urging parents to enroll their children and not to hide them away, noting the children can have bright futures with support; the school offers rehabilitation and skills training to help visually impaired students join mainstream education; student representative Mary Deh shared successes of visually impaired students and pleaded for support to acquire a new braille embosser machine to improve braille book access, as the Evangelical Presbyterian Educational.

In the extract, the authors employed a negative politeness strategy of not coercing the addressees – parents of visually impaired children – through the phrase “**she appealed for support**”. Saying “she appealed for support” presents the request for assistance as an appeal as opposed to a demand or form of compulsion. This recognizes, delicately, the burden that comes with asking for help. In this case, asking parents with children

who are visually impaired appeared to be a hard task considering how protective parents tends to be especially when their children are in a condition like that. An appeal is inferred from a courteous plea in which the requester acknowledges that by asking for assistance, they may be bothering the hearer. This was similar in her case, because it may appear bothering when parents think of the stigmatization their kids may face from other children. And so, to avoid putting extra pressure on the hearer's unfavorable face, the statement refrains from directly asking for or demanding assistance. An "appeal" subtly lessens this face-threatening situation by subtly recognizing the imposition of the request by presenting it as a modest request rather than an entitlement. For this case, the speaker appeals to parents that irrespective of their children visually impaired conditions, they have a right to education – quality education – and they should not be denied with that given the fact that there are materials that can aid children of such conditions to realize their educational goals and objectives. In conclusion, the primary technique of negative politeness is to express regret for imposing yourself by phrasing your request as an appeal rather than a demand, thereby conceding that asking for help from the other person might be uncomfortable.

4.2.8 Indirectness

This comes after Nufialaga Mawufemor Korbla Nonyigbey accused Agyinasare of showing no remorse in his second sermon, where he referred to Nogokpo as the headquarters of demons in the Volta Region. Agyinasare had previously apologized to the chiefs and people of Nogokpo after they raised concerns, emphasizing that he did not intend to denigrate any of the towns and their people. He added that any

*misrepresentation or misinformation regarding the incident
was regretted” – Daily Guide, June 6.*

In the archbishop’s statement, the authors use an indirect strategy by avoiding explicitly addressing the particular instance in which Nogokpo was referred to as the **“headquarters of demons.”** They apologize for “any misrepresentation or misinformation regarding the incident,” taking a more sophisticated stance than just taking responsibility for the incident. This phrasing allows for an expression of sorrow without addressing the contentious issue directly. By softening their admission of guilt in this way, the authors want to save the archbishop’s reputation. They understand that an outright admission of guilt might have a negative impact on his reputation in the community and his connection with the Nogokpo royal family. Additionally, the authors provide some opportunity for interpretation by presenting the situation as a more general problem that may be misconstrued or deceived. Given that it raises the possibility that disinformation or misconceptions rather than intentional malice may have caused the dispute, this uncertainty helps to lessen any possible harm to ties with Nogokpo and its ruling family.

The findings from these results are an indication that negative politeness strategies, at many times, are used in moments of giving deference, apologizing, hedging, questioning and being indirect. These findings are in line with various findings from the literature (Hammond, 2017, 2021; Nurlayli & Widyastuti, 2022; Thompson & Anderson, 2019). Nurlayli and Widyastuti (2022) in their study about negative politeness strategies used by American girl in TV series Emily in Paris reported that apologizing, hedging, giving deference were some negative politeness strategies used in the show to portray the character as a polite person and avoid any offense from her to her interlocutors. That is to say, negative politeness strategies are used to protect

one's self from offending another person. Thompson and Anderson (2019) reported a similar finding that Ghanaians use negative politeness strategies as a way of expressing respect or deference to their interlocutors. The two studies by Hammond also reiterates the relevance speakers give to negative politeness strategies by way of being indirect, being apologetic and not coercing their addressees in their speeches and submissions. Likening this to the findings, it can be deduced that, negative politeness as portrayed in the analysis is a way for speakers to show reverence, deference or respect, to be apologetic, avoid coercion and be indirect to their interlocutors as a way of being polite.

4.3 Bald on-record politeness

Threats to the hearer's face are not minimized in Bald on Record. Speakers who are highly familiar with their addressees, such relatives or close friends, often utilize it. When a speaker wishes to convey a vague or indirect message, they use this strategy. To clearly communicate the speaker's requirements to the other person or the hearer, the famed "bald-on-record" methods are used. It is an honest method of communication that does not ignore imposition. When a speaker uses a bald on-record method, they are not trying to minimize the dangers to the hearer's face.

4.3.1 Appealing or Requesting

Ghana-Nurse Midwife Trainees' Association (GNMTA) has appealed to the government to direct the ministry of health to as a matter of urgency to pay allowance due to them. the association said the ministry has not made any payment in over a year, despite all attempts to resolve the issue. The national president, Pascal Adumbisa said the prolonged delay has an immense effect in the trainee nurses and midwives. Mr. Adumbisa called on the

government to demonstrate its commitment to nurses and midwives by disbursing their allowances – Health related Issues,

Daily Guide – July, 23

The extract above is a report on the grievances of nurses and midwives' trainees across the country about their unpaid allowances from the government. As such, they are calling on the government to honor its promises to students considering the economic hardships they may facing along with their studies. The authors employed a number bald on-record politeness strategies to convey students' plea to the government. The authors use the strategies of appealing or requesting, asserting obligation, and urging actions to convey the pleas of students. The sentence "has appealed to the government to direct the ministry of health to as a matter of urgency to pay allowance due to them" is a direct appeal and request without any hedging to save face. That is, the definition of "appeal" is to make a polite, respectful request or plea. In this instance, the association president is pleading with the government to act quickly on an important issue. That is, the government is asked to order the Ministry of Health to pay an allowance that belongs to a certain person or group of individuals. By making the plea, the president is stating that this is an urgent issue that has to be addressed right now. The statement is straightforward and creates a feeling of urgency overall. Without hesitancy or softer wording, the speaker is making a request that is obvious and straightforward.

4.3.2 Asserting obligation

The national president, Pascal Adumbisa said the prolonged delay has an immense effect on the trainee nurses and midwives. Mr. Adumbisa called on the government to demonstrate its

commitment to nurses and midwives by disbursing their allowances – Health related Issues, Daily Guide – July, 23.

The association's national president made a clear statement on the Ministry's refusal to pay students' allowances, which is an example of how to take responsibility. Here, the president is clearly informing the government that the Ministry has failed to fulfill its obligation to pay the students' outstanding balances. The president emphasizes the need for the government to uphold its obligations to the nursing and midwifery trainees by phrasing the matter in terms of obligation. This simple statement forces the government to take remedial action by holding it responsible for its failure to fulfill its duties. Additionally, the phrase "Mr. Adumbisa called on the government to demonstrate its commitment to nurses and midwives by disbursing their allowances" uses a direct-advocacy approach. Here, the president is putting direct pressure on the government to resolve the students' complaints by directing the Ministry to pay their allowances on time. The statement appeals to the government's sense of responsibility and integrity by highlighting its commitment to the welfare of nurses and midwives. It suggests that the government may show its sincere commitment to advancing the nursing and midwifery profession by keeping its policies and pledges. By invoking its moral and ethical duty to uphold its duties to its people, this direct urging technique seeks to provoke the government into action.

4.3.3 Invitation

Perhaps, the less difficult tasks that can help reduce illegal mining activities include raising public awareness of the life-threatening impact of destroying water bodies, sustaining community engagement in monitoring illegal activities and exploring innovative political-

willed state-led operations to end the canker. The country's fight against illegal mining at this stage is that of hopelessness, but looking on while politicians engage in accusation and counter-accusation as the destruction goes on is to place the fate of generations unborn in danger. Let us all get involved because the destroyers may be few but the impact of their activities will affect all of us today and the unborn.

– Small Scale Mining, Daily Graphic – May, 23.

The extract is an editorial on small-scale mining titled “**Where is our conscience in the ‘galamsey’ fight?**”, a rhetorical question that questions every Ghanaian about their stance on the disheartening issues of illegal mining in the country. The extract talks about the widespread problem of illegal mining, especially “**galamsey**,” and how it affects people and the environment negatively. It highlights the importance of the media in drawing attention to the issue and critiques government initiatives as being reactionary. Foreign-driven mining automation exacerbates environmental harm. Deforestation, deteriorating soil, and contaminated water are some of the effects. The editorial calls for strong state-led initiatives, public awareness campaigns, and cooperative action to stop illicit mining and its detrimental effects.

The authors employed a bald-on-record strategy of ‘invitation’ in their submission on the issue under discussion. The statement, “Let us all get involved because the destroyers may be few, but the impact of their activities will affect all of us today and the unborn,” is an invitation for an appeal for group accountability and a call to action. It exhorts individuals to take an active role in solving the problem of illegal mining. When it speaks of “**destroyers**,” it most likely refers to those who engage in illegal mining. The statement that “the impact of their activities will affect all of us today and

the unborn” highlights the pervasive and long-term effects that illegal mining will have on the present and the next generation. It highlights how linked the problem is and implies that all individuals will end up affected by the natural and societal fallout, regardless of how directly involved they are. Essentially, its goal is to organize a concerted effort to address and lessen the detrimental impacts of illicit mining on the welfare of both current and future populations. “Let us all get involved because the destroyers may be few, but the impact of their activities will affect all of us today and the unborn,” in particular, exemplifies the politeness strategy mentioned in the extract. This approach serves the communicative function of promoting and inspiring group effort in a more open and less adversarial way. Attempting to mobilize the audience and foster a feeling of solidarity, the speaker uses inclusive language such as “**us all**” and highlights the common effect on everyone. In this instance, the politeness method serves as a persuasive instrument, urging readers to cooperate in resolving the illegal mining situation. Its goal is to elicit a call to action and a feeling of shared responsibility without coming off as too aggressive or accusing.

4.4 Command

There was a furore among a section of society following President Akufo-Addo’s displeasure at the refusal of a chief of Mempeasem near Legon to stand up when the National Anthem was being played at the Green Ghana Day function at the University of Ghana. In the video that went viral, the President was seen directing the Greater Accra Regional Minister, Mr. Henry Quartey to find out from the chief why he refused to stand up when the anthem was being played. The chief issued a statement later to apologize to the President, and explained the circumstances that made it impossible for him to accord the anthem the required respect

– General Issues, Daily Guide – June, 27.

The author employed a bald on-record strategy of commanding/directing in the statement, ‘In the video that went viral, the President was seen directing the Greater Accra Regional Minister, Mr. Henry Quartey to find out from the chief why he refused to stand up when the anthem was being played’. The President’s clear and straightforward instruction to Mr. Henry Quartey, the Greater Accra Regional Minister, in this excerpt demonstrates the bald-on-record strategy. The President tells Mr. Quartey to look into the chief’s unwillingness to stand for the playing of the National Anthem, without holding back or using polite language. This comes as a result that, as the commander-in-chief of the nation, it is his utmost responsibility to ensure and enforce the values and traditions on which the nation was built. As such, the president’s command was one way or the other instilling patriotism into members of the society irrespective of their social or political status. The message was clear – the national anthem must be respected at all cost. There is no opportunity for misunderstanding or ambiguity because of the clarity of the language used. This direct method is consistent with the bald-on-record technique, in which the communicator states expectations or directives in an open and clear manner without modifying language or depending on subliminal clues. The decree issued by the President demonstrates a clear and decisive communication style.

4.4.1 Pressing

“Good Shepherd Lashibi has adopted the centre so we will go all out to support. Parents should bring their children out. Come to the right place and seek help and get it. If you hide them, no one will see and help them. But with the goodwill of people, the children will have a bright future”, she added. – Daily Graphic - June, 5.

The extract highlights the significance of better care for those with visual impairments and talks about Mrs. Hewlett-Bogart's efforts for enrolling visually impaired children in the New Horizon Educational Centre for the Blind. The Good Shepherd Lashibi church, which supports the center's objective of improving the living and educational circumstances for visually impaired children, sent numerous gifts to the center as it celebrated its 25th anniversary. Mobility training, braille reading instruction, computer skills training, daily living training, and social skills rehabilitation.

4.4.2 Warning

“Good Shepherd Lashibi has adopted the centre so we will go all out to support. Parents should bring their children out. Come to the right place and seek help and get it. If you hide them, no one will see and help them. But with the goodwill of people, the children will have a bright future”, she added. – Daily Graphic - June, 5.

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funds to purchase a new braille embosser to improve braille publications' accessibility. Overall, the text emphasizes how important it is to provide visually impaired people all-encompassing help and resources to foster their education, independence, and social integration.

The author employs a warning bald on-record politeness strategy. "If you hide them, no one will see and help them," is the speaker's direct warning about the possible repercussions of hiding visually challenged children. This message is a clear warning that concealing the kids might result in a loss of help and support. In contrast to the warning, the second section, "But with the goodwill of people, the children will have a bright future," emphasizes the possible advantages of asking for assistance and clarifies the circumstances. By combining a warning and positive reinforcement approach, it helps parents understand the benefits of disclosing vision challenged children and emphasizes the significance of acting on their behalf for their well-being. Concurrently, the "warning" strategy is used to alert parents to possible adverse effects, highlighting the need of acting to prevent such repercussions.

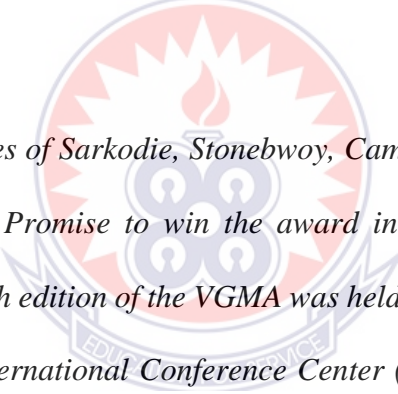
It can be deduced from the analysis that, the authors of the Daily Guide and Daily Graphic editorials use bald on-record politeness strategies as a way pressing, warning, asserting obligations, urging actions, inviting, commanding/directing, and requesting. The findings are in line with Damara and Romala (2022) who reiterated the use of Bald on-record politeness strategy gives the speaker the opportunity to use command as and when it is demanded. It is pertinent to note that, the use of command as a strategy of bald on-record comes with social status. That is, for one to exert command on the other, the individual commanding should have a higher social status than the other. This is evident in the work of Damara and Romala (2022) and the analysis made as well. The

findings of Klau (2012) also adds on that bald on-record politeness strategies are used to urge the actions of others, advice and press on issues.

4.5 Positive politeness strategies

The goal of positive politeness is to reduce the danger to the hearer's face. This strategy aims to prevent confrontation; examples of positive politeness include expressions of friendliness, support, and gratitude. These methods are meant to make the listener feel good about themselves, their hobbies, or their possessions, and they are most often used in situations when the audience members are somewhat acquainted with one another. In addition to hedging and conflict avoidance attempts, positive politeness strategies include professions of friendship, solidarity, and praise (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

4.5.1 Optimism



He beat the likes of Sarkodie, Stonebwoy, Camidoh, Esther Piesie, KiDi and King Promise to win the award in the early hours of Sunday. The 24th edition of the VGMA was held at the Grand Arena of the Accra International Conference Center (AICC) on Saturday night. – Daily Guide, May, 7.

The use of the phrase “**He beat the likes of...**” is an example of positive politeness in action. The rivalry is framed positively, which is the source of optimism. It places more emphasis on Black Sherif's accomplishment and victory than it does on the competition's difficulty or challenge. It is encouraging to see that Black Sherif “**beat the likes of Sarkodie, Stonebwoy..., and King Promise to win the award,**” since it emphasizes his success. It conveys confidence in his skills and implies that he not only faced challenging opponents in competition but also came out on top. This upbeat frame

helps to establish an atmosphere of triumph and accomplishment, giving the account of the event a pleasant and upbeat tone.

4.5.2 Giving compliments

Kweku the Traveler” hit maker, Black Sherif was adjudged the overall Artiste of the Year at the 2023 edition of Vodafone Ghana Music Awards (VGMA). – Daily Guide – May, 7.

On the item of giving compliments, the 2023 Vodafone Ghana Music Awards (VGMA) bestowed upon Black Sherif the esteemed title of **“overall Artiste of the Year,”** a distinction that not only recognized his noteworthy accomplishments but also elevated him above his fellow musicians. The adjectives **“overall”** and **“Artiste of the Year”** are examples of the positive politeness strategy that is employed in bestowing praise, highlighting Black Sherif’s excellence and exceptional impact on the music industry. The statement’s overall tone is celebratory, highlighting Black Sherif’s success and reaffirming his notable cult following in Ghana. It is worth noting that the compliments here do not only go for Black Sherif’s performance, but the compliments also in one way or the other acknowledges the work of other artiste that in spite of the Sherif’s outstanding performances, they got some recognition.

4.5.3 Asserting hearer’s wants

The 24th edition of the VGMA was held at the Grand Arena of the Accra International Conference Center (AICC) on Saturday night. It was also attended by several showbiz personalities in the industry – Daily Guide – May, 7.

By asserting knowledge of hearer’s wants, the statement **“It was also attended by several showbiz personalities”** uses the positive politeness technique. The readership

or audience in this case is probably interested in showbiz and the entertainment sector. The authors show that they are aware of the interests and preferences of the audience by mentioning the presence of celebrities. This is in line with the positive politeness technique, which emphasizes being mindful of the interests and values of the audience. By adding a layer of relevance, it enhances the information that is being communicated and makes it more interesting to the target audience's particular interests. This helps to build a connection between the authors and the reader.

To stop the disease from causing further havoc across the world, March 24 every year is commemorated as World TB Day to raise public awareness of the devastating health, social and economic consequences of the disease and to step up efforts to end the global TB epidemic. The day highlights the suffering that TB continues to cause people, despite the fact that effective control measures are available worldwide, and mobilizes political and social commitment for further progress. TB is spread from person to person through the air. When people with lung TB cough, sneeze or spit, they propel the TB germs into the air. A person needs to inhale only a few of these germs to become infected.

– Health, Daily Graphic – April, 1

The summary of the extract highlights that every year, on March 24, the world observes World TB Day to increase public awareness of the disease's effects on health, society, and the economy and to call for more action to stop the spread of the disease worldwide.

The disease continues to spread via the air when infected people cough or sneeze, despite the availability of control measures. Fatigue, fever, weight loss, and a persistent cough are signs of active tuberculosis, and early identification is essential. Over nine million people are affected by the illness each year, and a third do not have access to treatment, making it a worldwide issue. An estimated 45,000 persons contracted tuberculosis in Ghana alone in 2021, leading to 15,700 fatalities. The goal of the day is to increase societal and political commitment to combating tuberculosis.

The author uses the positive politeness strategy of asserting knowledge of hearer's wants in creating awareness about the world TB Day. The statement, "to stop the disease from causing further havoc across the world, March 24 every year is commemorated as World TB Day to raise public awareness of the devastating health, social and economic consequences of the disease and to step up efforts to end the global TB epidemic" emphasizes raising public awareness and intensifying efforts to eradicate tuberculosis. The emphasis on raising public awareness and inspiring readers to take action shows that the author is aware of the hearer's interests and desires in learning about and fighting tuberculosis. The statement recognizes that readers probably want to know about the effects of tuberculosis (TB), how it spreads, and how to prevent it. Giving the hearer this kind of applicable information that is in line with their requirements and desire for public education is an example of the positive politeness technique, which is to suggest that one knows what the hearer wants. Admitting that one is aware of the other person's desires is a positive politeness strategy that shows they care about their interests and that you understand and empathize with them. Speakers demonstrate their attempt to validate the hearer's perspective by adjusting information and behaviors to suit their requirements. In order to create a feeling of recognition and understanding, this tactic seeks to demonstrate that the speaker is

interested in resolving the hearer's issues and fits their objectives with their desires. When one communicates empathy and validates the hearer's stance, they are able to establish rapport and increase connection with the other person.

4.5.4 Claiming common grounds

This year's event saw performances from the likes of Piesie Esther, KiDi, DSL, Epixode, Lasmid, King Promise, Gyakie, Sarkodie, Pheelz and others. Esther Piesie also won Best Gospel Artiste of the year and Gospel Song of the year respectively – Daily Guide – May, 7

By asserting common ground, the statement “**Esther Piesie also won Best Gospel Artiste of the Year and Gospel Song of the Year respectively**” uses the constructive politeness technique. Within the framework of the conversation, the author emphasizes a mutual admiration for artist Esther Piesie by bringing up her award-winning career. Assuming that the audience shares the speaker's interest in or enthusiasm for Esther Piesie's accomplishments, the goal of this strategy is to establish a feeling of agreement and connection. By highlighting a well-known individual in the gospel music industry, matching the author's remarks to the audience's expected tastes or desires, and encouraging a feeling of familiarity and mutual respect among the participants, it helps to build a good rapport.

4.5.5 Giving reasons

Food inflation saw a sharp rise to 51.8% in May, up from 48.7% in April. On the other hand, non-food prices experienced a slight deceleration with a growth rate of 34.6% in May, down from 35.4% in April. These updates were given by Government Statistician,

Samuel Kobina Annim in Kumasi on Wednesday, June 14. According to Prof Annim, prices rose by 4.8% during the month. The region with the highest inflation rate was Western North, while the region with the lowest inflation rate was Ashanti. The increase in inflation and food prices could have significant implications for the economy and the average Ghanaian consumer. – Daily Graphic – June, 14

The extract above highlights Ghana's inflation analysis in the months of May. Ghana's inflation rate increased to 42.2% in May, mostly due to a spike in food costs. Moreover, annual price increases reached 42.2%, with a 51.8% spike in food inflation. In contrast, there was a little slowing in non-food prices. Samuel Kobina Annim, a government statistician, gave the updates, pointing out a 4.8% monthly price rise. Ashanti had the lowest inflation rate, while the Western North area had the highest. Food prices and inflation are on the rise, which presents problems for companies due to increased input costs and a decline in consumer buying power. For sustained economic development, the government must keep a careful eye on the situation and take appropriate action, such as regulating food prices and maintaining macroeconomic stability.

In this instance, disseminating the details of the updates that Government Statistician Samuel Kobina Annim would be making in Kumasi on Wednesday, June 14, is an act of politeness strategies by "giving reasons." The material is made more credible and transparent by adding these features. Including the precise information about who gave the updates, where they were given, and when they did so give the statement more legitimacy and establishes a clear source for the data. Since it fosters audience confidence, this openness is a constructive courtesy tactic. It increases the message's overall credibility by demonstrating that the information is not hypothetical or arbitrary but rather is based on a real-world occurrence and a trustworthy source.

4.5.6 Expressing empathy

The increase in inflation and food prices could have significant implications for the economy and the average Ghanaian consumer. High inflation erodes the purchasing power of consumers, leading to a decrease in their standard of living. It also affects businesses as they have to cope with rising input costs. – Daily Graphic – June, 14

The statement, “the increase in inflation and food prices could have significant implications for the economy and the average Ghanaian consumer” uses “expressing sympathy” as a constructive politeness strategy by saying that the rise in food and inflation rates might have a big impact on the Ghanaian consumer and the country’s economy. In this situation, showing compassion entails acknowledging and being aware of the difficulties and struggles that customers could encounter. The usage of phrases such as “could have significant implications” indicates that the possible negative effects on people and the economy are recognized. This act of compassion is intended to demonstrate empathy for those who could be impacted by the upcoming economic shifts. By addressing the various challenges that the typical Ghanaian customer may have, it demonstrates understanding of and care for their well-being and aligns with positive politeness.

4.5.7 Exaggerating interest

We keep warning about the NDC hypocrisy, especially during the run-up to the 2024 elections. We must watch the NDC and its followers because they hardly speak the truth; the day they do so must be regarded as the slip of the tongue. – Daily Guide – September, 14

By implying a shared concern with the listener, the author employs the positive politeness strategy of “exaggerating interest in hearer”. There is a feeling of solidarity between the author and the reader in the sentence, “We keep warning about the NDC hypocrisy, especially during the run-up to the 2024 elections”. The author hopes to establish a shared viewpoint with the readers by using the pronoun “we” and highlighting the continual nature of their warnings. This suggests that both the audience and the author are actively involved in keeping an eye out for the National Democratic Congress’s (NDC) apparent hypocrisy. By fostering a feeling of understanding and agreement between the author and the readers, this positive politeness tactic aims to unify the readers against the perceived inadequacies of the NDC. The author aims to establish a stronger connection with the audience by highlighting their interest in and dedication to criticizing the NDC’s activities. This is done by presenting the audience as allies in the common objective of closely examining the political scene, particularly in the run-up to the 2024 elections.

4.5.8 Joking

*In other words, if the NDC asks you to look up and you don’t do otherwise by looking on the ground, a log will fall on your eye. –
Daily Guide – September, 14*

The comment “**In other words, if the NDC asks you to look up and you don’t do otherwise by looking on the ground, a log will fall on your eye**” lightheartedly criticizes the National Democratic Congress (NDC). The author used humor to imply that heeding to the NDC’s recommendations might have humorous results, such a log falling on someone’s eye. By using an indirect communication strategy, the criticism is tempered and may strike a chord with the audience. By making readers laugh even

while debating political differences and establishing a feeling of kinship among those who have similar opinions, humor seeks to engage readers in a less aggressive manner.

The findings from this section indicate that *Editorials* from the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* uses positive politeness strategies to give compliments, assert knowledge of hearer's wants, being optimistic, joking, claim common grounds, give reasons, and express sympathy. These results are in line with findings from various researchers who reported about similar positive politeness strategies in their works (Holtgraves, 1997; Jansen & Janssen, 2010; Kamlasi, 2017; Nurmawati, Atmowardoyo, & Weda, 2019). Nurmawati et al. (2019) work on positive politeness strategies to improve classroom interactions revealed that the strategies of joking, acknowledging hearer's interests, being optimistic, and finding common grounds were the most used strategies by teachers and students which aided in a smooth classroom interaction among themselves. Kamlasi (2017) reports similar findings of students of English employing positive politeness strategies like giving compliments, praising, finding common grounds in their daily conversations. Jansen and Janssen (2010) and Holtgraves (1997) in their exploration of positive politeness strategies reiterated joking, giving compliments, acknowledging hearer's interest, and being optimistic being used to foster smooth interactions.

4.6 Off-record politeness strategies

The last politeness strategy put out by Brown and Levinson (1987) is the off-record method. Using indirect language, this strategy makes it impossible for the speaker to impose their will. When using the off-record strategy, a speaker can say something like, "Oh, it's getting cold in here," subtly asking the audience to get up and adjust air

conditioner or fan without making a request. This method uses semantic meaning to preserve face while relying mostly on pragmatics to deliver the intended message.

4.6.1 Metaphors

So, he will always bend over with other leaders of the NDC and their allies calling themselves media experts, commentators and political analysts have adopted the Goebbelsian lies to make their propaganda and misinformation represent the true state of affairs in the country. – Daily Guide - September, 12

The author uses a striking metaphor to describe the NDC's and its supporters' communication strategies, comparing them to "Goebbelsian lies." This metaphor makes a comparison between the NDC's methods and the well-known propaganda techniques of Joseph Goebbels, the head propagandist for the Nazi government in World War II. By using Goebbels, the author alludes to a gloomy and menacing period of history and implies that the NDC's propaganda strategies are akin to the cunning and manipulative tactics used by the Nazi dictatorship. The comparison offers a nuanced but effective critique of the NDC's communication strategies by raising the possibility that they participate in deceit and manipulation similar to the notorious Nazi propaganda machine. The metaphor communicates a feeling of doubt and caution over the veracity of the NDC's rhetoric without overtly making allegations or condemnations. It implies that there could have been some deception or manipulation involved and that the NDC's communication may not have been totally honest or straightforward. Additionally, by explicitly mentioning Joseph Goebbels and his function as the mastermind behind Nazi propaganda, the name "Goebbelsian" lends additional dimension to the metaphor. This emphasizes the gravity of the parallel by

emphasizing the associations of the Nazi dictatorship with dishonesty, manipulation, and totalitarian control. By placing the NDC's communication strategies in this perspective, the metaphor highlights the possible risks associated with disinformation and propaganda in today's political debate.

4.6.2 Irony

That is why the pot is always calling the kettle black. We and majority of discerning Ghanaians know that the country cannot be in safe hands when it comes to dealing with corruption under the NDC. – Daily Guide – September, 12

The extract uses irony by making reference to a well-known folktale in which real criminals absolve themselves of blame by blaming others. The phrase “the pot calling the kettle black” sums up the irony by implying that those leveling accusations can be guilty of the same transgressions they are accusing others of. This allusion subtly raises the prospect that the NDC, in criticizing others, may engage in the same conduct they denounce. Through this use of sarcasm, the author subtly expresses doubt on the veracity of the NDC's claims. Here, the author casts doubt on the veracity of the NDC's statements while maintaining a degree of decorum via the use of indirect communication. Rather of accusing the NDC of being hypocritical outright, the author uses linguistic tactics to imply suspicion. The author invites readers to form their own judgments and deduce the underlying meaning by providing space for interpretation. This deceptive strategy helps to maintain civility while gently casting doubt on the veracity of the NDC's allegations.

4.6.3 Hyperbole

We and majority of discerning Ghanaians know that the country cannot be in safe hands when it comes to dealing with corruption under the NDC. The list of corrupt acts under former President Mahama is inexhaustible. We may lose count when an attempt is made, but we can limit it to just a few. Let our former President be reminded that we have not forgotten how his government misapplied resources in the husbandry of guinea fowls and trees in the northern parts of the country during the dry season. – Daily Guide – September, 12

The author uses hyperbole when they refer to the litany of wrongdoings committed by the former president Mahama as “inexhaustible.” This hyperbolic wording emphasizes the supposed corruption’s scope and gives a compelling sense that misconduct is pervasive. Without naming names, the author gently expresses disapproval and criticism of Mahama’s term in office via the use of hyperbole. By delivering the criticism in a more spectacular way and allowing the audience to determine the seriousness of the writer’s worries without directly saying them, this indirect strategy retains a certain amount of decency.

The problem is how to curb the growing culture of indiscipline in our schools whether day or boarding. These days, hardly a day passes without reported incident of indiscipline in our educational institutions, thus making calls for the scrapping of boarding schools grow louder as a solution to curbing deviance in schools. – Daily Graphic – August, 1

By inflating the number of documented instances of indiscipline in educational institutions, hyperbole was used. Noting “hardly a day passes without” heightens the

sense that the situation is widespread and may even make it seem more severe. By subtly criticizing the existing condition of school discipline without outright blaming any particular people or groups, this hyperbolic language acts as an off-record politeness technique. It maintains a certain rhetorical distance while allowing for a heightened feeling of urgency in resolving the issue, encouraging a more conciliatory style in the conversation toward an array of proposed remedies like doing away with boarding schools.

4.6.4 Vague language

In fact, the challenges in our schools today is not whether to scrap boarding schools or reinforce the concept to community day schools. The problem is how to curb the growing culture of indiscipline in our schools whether day or boarding. – Daily Graphic – August, 1

By using vague language, the sentence “the problem is how to curb the growing culture of indiscipline in our schools whether day or boarding” tactfully tackles the topic of indiscipline in schools. The expression “the growing culture of indiscipline” leaves room for interpretation, refusing to place direct responsibility on any one group or institution. This vague wording is an off-record strategy meant to be courteous; it permits a more sophisticated exploration of the issue without taking direct aim at any people, organizations, or processes. It exhibits a circumspect attitude by omitting specific criticism while offering opportunity for judgment.

4.6.5 Understatement

However, a professor in educational leadership and a former Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Coast, Prof. George

Oduro, thinks otherwise, and believes that “the boarding system is not the problem; rather the problem is our failure to ensure that the SHS system operates and promotes discipline as it should. In fact, the challenges in our schools today is not whether to scrap boarding schools or reinforce the concept to community day schools. The problem is how to curb the growing culture of indiscipline in our schools whether day or boarding. These days, hardly a day passes without reported incident of indiscipline in our educational institutions, thus making calls for the scrapping of boarding schools grow louder as a solution to curbing deviance in schools. –

Education, Daily Graphic – August, 1

Educationists’ opinions are at the center of a discussion over the future of boarding schools in Ghana. Professor George Oduro claims that the failure to inculcate discipline within the educational system is the root of the problem, while some, including former officials like Professor Kwasi Opoku-Amankwa and Professor Stephen Adei, argue that the boarding system’s historical justification has become irrelevant and suggest eliminating it to address indiscipline. Concerns with applying discipline in accordance with human and child rights are raised by the prevalence of indiscipline problems in both day and boarding schools, which are linked to a loosening of restrictions. Regardless of whether a school is day or boarding, the main issue being explored is how to successfully address the developing culture of indiscipline in schools.

The professor tactfully handles the idea that there is a problem with the boarding system by using understatement. Rather, he gently implies that the bigger problem of maintaining discipline in the wider high school setting is the true problem, not the

structure per se. The professor uses a polite strategy to voice a different position without openly attacking the other side by phrasing it in this way. The professor's decision to be modest enables him to manage the situation tactfully and diplomatically. He downplays the relevance of the concept of problems with the boarding system by arguing that the priority should be on resolving disciplinary issues within the high school as a whole, as opposed to flatly rejecting it. By framing his opposing opinion as a nuanced perspective rather than a stark contradiction, this strategy lessens the effect of his disagreement. Also, the professor gently pulls the attention away from the boarding system by highlighting the larger backdrop of disciplinary issues inside the high school. He can voice his opinion without offending anybody or starting a conflict thanks to this calculated maneuver. The lecturer deftly steers the discussion away from an outright debate and into an analysis of the fundamental problems influencing school discipline.

The findings reveal that the strategies of rhetorical questions, metaphors, irony, hyperbole, understatement, and vague language are peculiar to interactions with the off-record politeness strategies. The findings from this study conform to earlier reports of scholars who reiterated that the strategies identified in the extracts above are commonly used in interactions where the speaker indirectly communicates to their audience to perform a task (Aeni, Strid, & Apriani, 2022; Catrambone, 2016; Daar, Beratha, Suastra, & Sukarini, 2023; Vica, Pratama, & Rustipa, 2023). Daar et al. (2023) in their study on off-record strategies and cultural practices reported that metaphorical phrases are used in speech events to refine speech. Similarly, Aeni et al. (2022) reported that metaphors and rhetorical questions are often used in classroom interactions among teachers and students. Vica et al. (2023) also reiterated the use of metaphors and rhetorical questions in *Woman at Point Zero* novel. They authors continued that off-

record strategies are however popular among female interactions. Catrambone (2016) also reported on off-record strategies in Sophocles reiterating that the strategies of off-recorded politeness are frequent in female speeches than males. In essence, the findings from this study are in conformity to previous findings project that off-record strategies are prevalent in interactions and they are utilized to avoid confrontation or imposition with the audience. As such, the strategies allow the audience to infer and make meaning from what the speaker wants to convey – semantics and pragmatics.

4.7 RQ2: What are the communicative functions of politeness strategies used in the *Editorials of the Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers?

This research question was aimed at exploring the communicative functions of politeness strategies used in editorials of the selected newspapers. In answering this research question, the researcher took notice the politeness strategies identified in research question one. This research question was analyzed in accordance with Brown and Levison's politeness strategies – Bald on-record, Positive, Negative, and Off-record politeness and the context within which the politeness strategy was identified

Within the framework of positive politeness strategies, the research highlights multiple strategies used by authors in order to cultivate an amiable and congenial rapport with their readers. One such approach is to provide praises in order to raise spirits and validate the worth of people or their accomplishments. The authors of the Editorial on Black Sherif being named the artist of the year use optimism by stressing the artist's self-assurance and faith in his work—especially considering the fierce competition he faced. By highlighting Black Sherif's tenacity and will, the authors not only highlight his abilities but also arouse hope and admiration in their readers, strengthening the connection between the audience and the topic of discussion. Another strategy for

positive politeness that works to engage the audience and show that you are aware of their preferences is to assert that you know what the hearer is interested in. The authors of the editorial note that “it was also attended by several showbiz personalities,” addressing readers’ interest about the other celebrities who were there. By addressing this prospective interest, the authors actively engage the readers in the discourse and demonstrate regard for their expectations, which strengthens the bond and rapport. Additionally, asserting common ground is a constructive politeness strategy meant to build audience unity and understanding. In highlighting artist Esther Piesie’s accomplishments in the same editorial, the writers want to evoke a feeling of mutual admiration and excitement among their readership. This strategy is predicated on the idea that readers have a shared interest in Esther Piesie’s success and aims to build rapport by expressing enthusiasm for the artist’s achievements. Through the exposition of Esther Piesie’s accomplishments, the writers cultivate a consensus and rapport with the readers, therefore fortifying the constructive rapport between the conveyers and their audience. Given the circumstances, these constructive politeness techniques work to make the discourse seem cozy and welcoming, encouraging a spirit of friendship and goodwill between the writers and their readers. By praising the topic, taking note of the audience’s interests, and identifying points of agreement, the writers successfully captivate their readers and create a good rapport based on respect and common ground.

The communicative functions of hedging, minimizing, and apologizing in the context of negative politeness tactics help to preserve social peace and respect for the listener while mitigating possible offense or discomfort in communication. As the editorial about the vice president’s address points out, hedging reduces the effect of potentially upsetting material or viewpoints. The vice president’s address aims to elicit empathy and understanding from the audience by attributing economic woes to global causes

like Covid-19, supply chain interruptions, and the Russia-Ukraine crisis. In order to minimize any feeling of blame or isolation, this hedging technique seeks to reassure Ghanaians that their government recognizes the problems they confront while simultaneously implying that these issues are not exclusive to Ghana. Another strategy used in negative politeness to minimize the importance or effect of certain remarks or behaviors is minimization. On the archbishop's contentious statements on Nogokpo, the term "did not intend to denigrate" is used to downplay the possible damage that may have resulted from his comments. The writers want to minimize any harm caused to the Christian and traditional groups impacted by the archbishop's remarks by presenting the issue in this manner. Despite the divergent viewpoints, this tactic seeks to promote unity and respect among the many religious and cultural groups concerned. As the usage of minimizing suggests, offering an apology is a way to convey sorrow or remorse for any inadvertent harm or miscommunication. The recognition that the archbishop did not mean to disparage the beliefs of the Nogokpo people is an act of apology, even if the remark may have generated tension or discomfort among the locals. In an effort to mend any possible rift in the archbishop's relationship with the impacted communities, this apology demonstrates a readiness to acknowledge and make amends for any wrongs committed. Overall, by reducing the likelihood of offending, lessening the effect of contentious remarks, and, when required, showing sorrow or remorse, these negative politeness techniques serve the communication purpose of maintaining societal peace and respect for the listener. By using these techniques, communicators aim to negotiate delicate subjects and exchanges with grace and diplomacy, maintaining goodwill and promoting mutual understanding amongst all concerned.

The communication purposes of warning and pushing, in the context of naked on-record politeness techniques, are to emphasize possible repercussions, communicate urgency,

and force the listener to take action. The warning strategy, exemplified by the phrase “If you hide them, no one will see and help them,” warns parents of the possible consequences of hiding their visually challenged children. The authors want to increase awareness of the significance of visibility and accessibility for those with vision impairments by issuing this warning. The caution highlights the risks of not getting enough help or support, among other possible negative effects of sheltering these kids. This approach encourages parents to seek support and resources for their children’s education and well-being and aims to persuade them to rethink any desire to conceal their visually impaired children. Furthermore, the pressing strategy is used to put pressure on the audience and urge them to behave. Here, the authors use pressure to persuade parents to send their blind or visually impaired children to a good school. The authors want to inspire parents to prioritize their children’s education and get over any obstacles or stigmas related to visual impairment by highlighting the value of education in helping these kids reach their goals, both personally and academically. This compelling technique encourages the audience to take proactive measures to safeguard the growth and well-being of visually impaired people in their neighborhood. Ultimately, this extract’s cautionary and compelling strategies serve to highlight how urgent it is to meet the needs of visually impaired children and to push the listener to take action. The authors want to dispel stigma, increase inclusion and support for visually impaired people, and raise awareness by drawing attention to possible repercussions and underlining the value of education. These tactics seek to create a more welcoming and encouraging atmosphere for people with visual impairments and to inspire the audience to make good changes.

The communicative functions of vague language and understatement assist to communicate delicate signals, avoid direct confrontation, and retain a feeling of

diplomacy and tact in communication when used in the context of off-record politeness methods. Suggested by the phrase “the problem is how to curb the growing culture of indiscipline in our schools whether day or boarding,” the precise assignment of blame or responsibility is obscured by the use of broad language. The authors manage to avoid openly accusing any person or organization of being responsible for the issue of indiscipline in schools by phrasing the topic in ambiguous words. This approach enables a more complex and nuanced exchange in which the emphasis is on dealing with the larger problem of indiscipline as opposed to placing blame. The authors skillfully steer the discussion away from possible conflict or offense while addressing the core problem by using ambiguous wording. In a similar vein, the professor minimizes the importance of her claim by rejecting the idea that boarding schools are the only cause of students’ lack of discipline. The professor deflects attention away from boarding schools and onto the larger educational system by quietly rejecting the notion that they are the primary source of disciplinary problems. This understatement enables a more nuanced and fair analysis of the situation, implying that indiscipline is a complex issue affected by a number of elements in the school setting. By being diplomatic and refraining from making too hostile or forceful remarks, the lecturer uses understatement to promote a productive discussion on the subject. Overall, the extract uses understatement and ambiguous language to foster diplomacy, transmit subtle ideas, and encourage a thoughtful conversation on the problem of indiscipline in schools. The writers skillfully steer the discussion away from accusatory language and direct confrontation to foster a more cooperative and positive approach to resolving the underlying problems.

To sum up, politeness strategies have important communicative roles that influence how people connect with one other and promote efficient communication. Positive

politeness techniques help to establish rapport, fortify connections, and foster a feeling of warmth and friendliness between communicators and their audience. Examples of these techniques include offering compliments, expressing optimism, and demonstrating awareness of the hearer's interests. By encouraging collaboration, respect, and admiration for one another, these tactics hope to improve communication as a whole. Conversely, negative politeness techniques, such as reducing, apologizing, and displaying reverence, help to avoid confrontation, preserve social peace, and respect the autonomy and sentiments of the audience. By avoiding offense, handling difficult subjects with finesse, and navigating conversations with diplomacy and tact, communicators may maintain strong connections and promote mutual understanding. Off-record politeness strategies like rhetorical inquiries, irony, exaggeration, and ambiguous language help you avoid direct conflict, communicate subtly, and behave with tact and diplomacy. By using these techniques, communicators may delicately handle delicate subjects, provide other viewpoints, and subtly convey meaning, all of which contribute to positive communication and the development of mutual understanding. Finally, bald on-record politeness techniques, such as asking, inviting, ordering, warning, pushing, and encouraging actions, work to emphasize possible outcomes, communicate urgency, and drive the listener to take action. These tactics seek to bring people together for constructive change, promote responsibility, foster teamwork, and deal with problems head-on. As a result, they enhance communication efficacy, responsiveness, and accountability.

4.8 RQ3. What are the similarities and differences in the use of politeness strategies in the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers?

Similarities and differences in politeness strategies used in the *Daily Guide* and the *Daily Graphic*.

POSITIVE POLITENESS	
DAILY GUIDE	DAILY GRAPHIC
Optimism	Asserting hearers' wants
Giving compliments	Giving reasons
Claiming common grounds	Expressing empathy
Joking	
	OFF-RECORD POLITENESS
Metaphors	Hyperbole
Irony	Vague language
Hyperbole	Euphemism
NEGATIVE POLITENESS	
Hedging	Passionate appeal
Downplaying obstacles	Being apologetic
Indirectness	Not coercing the addressee
BALD-ON-RECORD POLITENESS	
Appealing/requesting	Invitation
Asserting obligation	
Command	
Warning	

Newspapers aim to inform and engage readers on current issues through the presentation of news and opinions. The language used plays a key role in how readers perceive and respond to messages. Politeness strategies can help papers navigate relationships with audiences through respect, rapport and consideration of individual

preferences. With respect to research question 3, this paper analyzes the data provided on politeness strategies used by the *Daily Guide* and *Daily Graphic* newspapers in Ghana to identify similarities and differences in their linguistic approaches.

Similarities

4.9 Positive Politeness Strategies

Both newspapers make use of positive politeness which signals solidarity, inclusive language and builds rapport with readers (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The *Daily Guide* cites "giving compliments" which acknowledges readers' positive attributes or work, promoting a friendly, appreciative tone. The *Daily Graphic's* focus on "asserting hearers' wants" prioritizes understanding readers' needs and addressing issues that directly benefit them. This shows care for readers and encourages identification with the paper's goals.

Claiming "common ground" as in the *Daily Guide* establishes shared interests, values or experiences that bring readers and writers together (Arundale, 2010). Both papers find overlap with readers on national or community matters. Expressing "empathy" helps the *Daily Guide* forge an emotional connection by demonstrating consideration for readers' perspectives on discussed topics. These positively- framed strategies foster goodwill and encourage cooperation essential to a paper's influence.

4.10 Off-record Politeness Strategies

Indirectness through ambiguity of meaning or plausible deniability is seen in both titles' use of off-record or non-literal language (Goddard, 2014). *The Daily Graphic's* inclusion of "metaphors", "irony", and "vague language" could reference situations

without direct accusation or demands that risk confrontation (Holmes, 2013). Readers are free to interpret issues and messages for themselves.

Similarly, the *Daily Guide's* "hyperbole" allows for flexible interpretation while insinuating stances. Off-record methods give papers deniability for potential implications and create opportunities for shared understanding without confrontational language that could alienate some perspectives (Eisterhold et al., 2006). Readers still intuit intended arguments through these indirect politeness techniques.

4.11 Negative Politeness Strategies

Both titles draw on negative politeness strategies that recognize readers' independence and avoid direct imposition (Gu, 1990). The *Daily Guide* and *Daily Graphic* strategically employ techniques like "hedging" through modal verbs or uncertainty adjectives to soften assertiveness and provide space for alternative views to be raised (Lakoff, 1973; Holmes, 2013).

Downplaying "obstacles" by minimizing difficulties and "indirectness" through questioning phrasing rather than demands respects readers' autonomy to freely accept or reject stances (Holmes, 2013). The *Daily Graphic* takes a slightly more direct approach by not including "passionate appeal" as negative politeness like the *Daily Guide*. However, both consider readers' preference for freedom from pressure in message framing.

4.12 Bald-on-Record Politeness Strategies

Where the *Daily Guide* and *Daily Graphic* diverge most clearly is in their use of more direct bald-on-record politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The *Daily Graphic* alone includes "command", "warning" and "invitation", reflecting a bolder

willingness to instruct, alert or directly engage readers on issues. Commands and warnings indicate less hesitancy to make strong claims without ambiguity.

Invitations more actively draw readers into proposed actions versus passive coverage (Poyatos, 1997). This aligns with asserting hearers' wants but shows relatively less concern for readers' preference to not be openly told what to think or do. On the other hand, the *Daily Guide* does not incorporate these strategies, coming across as more cautious and considering non-imposition of readers.

4.12.1 Differences

Though the findings of this present study reveal the use of the politeness strategies propounded by Brown and Levinson in both the *Daily Guide* and *Daily Graphic*, there were some forms of differences in the presentations of the various Editorials. From Table 1 above, *Daily Graphic* used more politeness strategies in their *Editorials* compared to *Daily Guide*. Moreover, *Daily Graphic* used more positive politeness in their Editorials followed by negative politeness whereas *Daily Guide* mostly used both bald on-record and positive politeness.

4.13 Discussion and Conclusion

In summary, the *Daily Guide* and *Daily Graphic* share many similarities in employing positive, off-record and some negative politeness strategies that build reader connections through affinity, care, and respect for independence. This promotes cooperation and understanding on addressed issues. However, the *Daily Graphic* stands out for its bolder use of more direct bald-on-record language like commands and warnings that engage readers in a less ambiguous, participatory manner.

This could reflect targeting of distinct reader demographics with varying receptivity to direct leadership versus those preferring more autonomy over viewpoints. It may also

stem from differences in individual editorial culture, resource capacities or perception of societal pressures on news presentation. Overall, while the intentions aim for reader engagement on news, the *Daily Guide* demonstrates more cautious politeness while the *Daily Graphic* takes a bolder, participatory approach through language choices. Further research could quantitatively examine a larger sample of articles to strengthen these findings. Linguistic politeness remains an important consideration in effective journalism.

This research question attempts to discuss the similar and different politeness strategies that were used in the *Editorials* by *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide*. In answering this research question, the study paid close attention to the analysis in research question one to identify whether there are similarities or differences in *Editorials* used by *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide*.

4.14 Chapter Summary

This chapter of the study sought to analyze the research objectives/questions that were set for the study. The study was guided by three research objectives. The first objective was to identify the kinds of politeness strategies that were used in the *Editorials* of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers. Dwelling on Brown and Levinson's framework, the findings of the study indicated that all four strategies of Brown and Levinson were employed in the editorials of the selected newspapers. The findings further indicated that positive politeness was the most used strategy which was followed by negative politeness, bald on-record and off-record respectively.

The second research objective aimed at identifying the communicative functions of the politeness strategies. This objective was analyzed with extracts from the selected editorials under the four strategies identified. The analysis indicated that claiming

common grounds, request, command, warning, giving reasons, urging actions, acknowledging hearer's wants among other were the strategies these editorials employed in their editorials. With respect to its communicative functions, the findings revealed that these strategies create a conducive environment where the authors are polite to the emotions of their audience, intensify interest in their wants, and communicate effectively without apportioning blames to any character.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview of the study

The current study sought to investigate the politeness strategies that were employed in the editorials of Daily Graphic and Daily Guide newspapers. To achieve this, the descriptive qualitative research design under the qualitative approach was used. Two sampling framework was used to engage data. The contrusted week sampling technique was used to gather weekly editorials from the newspapers withing the month of April – September 2023. The purposive sampling on the other hand was used to select editorials that fell under the categories of themes the researcher was interested in. The study was guided by the following research questions;

1. What are the forms of politeness strategies used in the *Editorials* of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers?
2. What are the communicative functions of politeness strategies used in *Editorials* of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers?
3. What are the similarities and differences in the use of politeness strategies in the *Editorials* of *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers?

Content analysis was used to answer the questions that were set for the study. The summative content analysis was used to quantifies the occurrences of the politeness that were identified whereas the direct content analysis tackled on the specific politeness strategies techniques that were used in the analysis.

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

Based on the first research question, the study found out that all four of Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies were identified in the *Editorials* of the *Daily Graphic*

and the *Daily Guide* newspapers. The findings indicated that positive politeness strategies appeared most in the *Editorials* of both papers while negative, bald on-record and off-record politeness strategies followed in that ascension. With regards to the respective papers, it was found that negative politeness appears more in *Daily Graphic* than *Daily Guide* whereas positive politeness had more occurrences in *Daily Guide* than *Daily Graphic*. Bald on-record politeness strategies had more occurrences in *Daily Guide* to its occurrences in *Daily Graphic* based on the findings. The study revealed through the extracts analyzed that claiming common grounds, request, command, warning, giving reasons, urging actions, acknowledging hearer's wants among, being optimistic, giving compliments, joking, expressing sympathy are some techniques that were used by the newspapers in their editorials.

On the second research question, the study found that, each of the politeness strategies that were identified had their unique techniques which were employed in editorials by the newspapers. The study indicated that the strategies identified had their communicative functions. Whereas positive politeness aims to enhance closeness and camaraderie through friendliness, joke, adhering to hearer's interest, negative politeness sought to mitigate potential threats through showing deference and respect. Bald on-record and off-record on the other hand communicated through urging actions, warning and using vague languages which create an environment for the hearer to infer to the speaker's submissions.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concludes that politeness strategies are also found in newspapers. That is to say, any material that allows individuals to communicate non-verbally has the strategy of politeness in them which creates a polite environment for the reader. In the case of

the study, the study concludes, based on the theoretical framework for the study that, *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* as state and private owned editorials employ positive, negative, bald on-record and off-record politeness strategies in their editorials, however positive politeness is more prevalent than the others. Some of the strategies employed by the editorials include claiming common grounds, request, command, warning, giving reasons, urging actions, acknowledging hearer's wants among, being optimistic, giving compliments, joking, expressing sympathy.

With reference to the second research question, the study concludes on the communicative functions of the politeness strategies that positive politeness stresses on proximity and shared identity to promote friendliness and solidarity, negative politeness, on the other hand, tries to limit face-threatening behaviors and prevent imposition by exhibiting deference or respect in an effort to lessen possible dangers to the hearer's autonomy. Bald on-record politeness is clear conversation without the need for elaborate politeness techniques; it is appropriate in circumstances when a direct approach is seen socially acceptable. By using off-record politeness techniques vague language and indirect communication, people may communicate ideas subtly and lower their chance of acting in a way that might be seen as intimidating. When combined, these techniques provide people a complete toolset for navigating communication, allowing them to maintain healthy social interactions while balancing their right to self-expression in a variety of situations.

5.3 Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations

1. It is recommended that since Editorials serve an extremely broad audience, using courteous language in their daily correspondence will not only help

readers develop polite manners in their interactions with members of the community, but will also encourage them to use fewer impolite and/or offensive words and phrases in interactions.

2. Additionally, the study recommends that, as part of their hiring process, Ghanaian newspapers have to liaise with The School of Communication and Media Studies, University of Education, Winneba and other institutions to introduce and teach potential workers to politeness-related courses through seminars and workshops to understand how politeness appeal to the general emotions of readers. To create a fair and equal grounds for the society, curriculum designers ought to make an effort to include instruction of politeness, pragmatism and other linguistic skills in colleges and universities.

Implications of the study

1. For journalists and editors, understanding how different politeness strategies affect reader perception can guide the crafting of more effective editorials. The study shows that the strategic use of politeness can help manage readers' expectations, influence public opinion, and navigate sensitive topics.
2. The study's findings contribute to ongoing discussions about the universality and adaptability of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. The presence of all four politeness strategies in the editorials supports the theory's relevance, but the varying frequencies and applications suggest that the model can be contextually adapted.
3. The findings indicate that cultural and contextual factors play a significant role in how politeness strategies are employed. The differences between the two newspapers suggest that the approach to politeness is not uniform across the

media landscape, but rather, it is tailored to the paper's editorial stance, audience, and the nature of the issues being discussed.

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

For further studies, a similar study of this sort can be conducted using a different theoretical framework to understand how politeness strategies unravels in Editorials. Again, further researchers can shift the attention on politeness strategies in newspapers to how politeness strategies unravel in interactions among market women and customers. A study can also be conducted on the use of politeness strategies in classroom interaction among students and lecturers in the universities. Lastly, politeness strategies can be explored in interactions with the focus on gender.



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