# QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS AND GENDER EFFECTS IN ROMANTIC COMEDIES

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# Declaration

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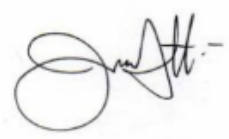

# Summary

This thesis investigates differences in signals of politeness between male and female characters in romantic comedies. While focusing on the gender of the speaker, the impact of the gender of the listener and of the screenwriting team on the estimated proportions of politeness markers was also explored. Measurable differences were visible for a number of indicators when considering the speaker role gender in isolation and in interaction with the gender of the addressee and, in some cases, the gender of the screenwriting team.

The corpus analysed in this study contained scripts from 56 romantic comedies from 1977 to 2018. Scripts were pre-processed to extract relevant information through pattern recognition (i.e.: regular expressions). Regular expressions in R Studio and the *politeness()* package (Yeomans et al., 2018) were used to identify and extract politeness markers in the dialogue. Differences between male and female characters with respect to politeness markers were explored using statistical analysis that considered the proportion of formal linguistic politeness tokens compared to the overall word count. Generalised linear mixed models were used to determine the effect of the gender of the characters, as speakers and listeners, and screenwriters in explaining potential differences in the use of indicators of politeness. These markers were analysed in context to determine their contribution to politeness in the dialogue. Overall, female characters had a tendency to use politeness markers more frequently than male characters, while the opposite is true for signals of impoliteness. In cases where the interaction between speaker and listener gender was statistically significant, characters displayed a higher estimated proportion of those markers when addressing the opposite gender.

A selection of scenes from three different films, written by different screenwriters, were analysed in detail in order to evaluate the extent to which the *politeness()* package captured politeness in text. A hypothesis of the features which most contributed to text being interpreted as polite within the NLP tool used was formulated. This process allowed for comparisons to be made regarding the classification of politeness and the identification of areas in which the computational tool worked efficiently and those in which it did not. The results showed that the tool used in this research was quite effective

at capturing politeness, particularly in the cases where the most informative element was linguistic content. With regards to the classification of impolite text, the tool yielded inconsistent results. Impoliteness can be often realised by using elements beyond the text or which are highly sensitive to context, therefore these nuances are often lost when attempting to quantify them.

Differences observed between male and female characters align with more traditional views of language and gender (see Section 2.3). This research highlights the aspects where more significant contrasts were identified and how that affects the interpretation of text within a politeness framework. Using romantic comedies presents opportunities to investigate how contemporary issues are depicted in popular culture, particularly in a genre which attempts to mirror reality. The representation of men and women in film and the way they express themselves can have an important role in the construction of gender and therefore the exploration of these contrasts in inherently valuable. Finally, the generated corpus, script pre-processing techniques, and overall work pipeline represent a useful resource for subsequent research on this and other topics.

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# Chapter 1

# Introduction

*"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose"* (*Oh, the Places You'll Go* – Dr. Seuss).

## 1.1 Background

Women the world over are vastly underrepresented in the media, and this disparity in film has been well documented (Smith et al., 2014; New York Film Academy [NYFA], 2018). This is reflected in the amount of screen time male and female actors receive. In 2015 male characters appeared on screen twice as much as their female counterparts, and their speaking time in top grossing films also doubled that of women (Narayanan and Heldman, 2016). In 2017 films, men had more than 37,000 lines of dialogue compared to 15,000 for women (NYFA, 2018). In the same year, men portrayed approximately 4,900 characters while women had around 2,000 in U.S. films.

The causes behind these disparities are complex and broad and some members of the industry are advocating for changes to be made. It was these differences that inspired this research to investigate film discourse in romantic comedies. A study of language and gender informed by linguistic theories of politeness and aided by computational tools can contribute to a better understanding of gender representation in the media.

## 1.2 Politeness Analysis in Film Discourse

Politeness is a salient aspect of communication in society, it helps us maintain and develop relationships in almost every interaction in our daily lives. Theories on its definition, its manifestation, and a multitude of other aspects have been put forward by many researchers. Its main source of data has been non-fictional text, and thus studies in this area have been extensive. More recently, some authors (Culpeper, 2001, 2005;

Dynel, 2011a, 2017) have used telecinematic discourse as their source of data as it provides rich and fertile ground for the study of politeness.

Within the study of politeness, questions regarding differences between genders have been a great source of interest for many studies. Stemming from observed differences in language and gender, many have proposed theories in relation to the different politeness strategies men and women use. Lakoff (1975) posited the theory that women are more polite than men in view of the strategies commonly observed in their speech, which she labelled 'ladylike language'. Authors such as Coates and Cameron (1989), Tannen (1991), and Holmes (1995) partially support Lakoff's view of women using more polite and less assertive language when compared to men. Some of their work has been criticised for making generalisations about women and thus describing their language choices in a stereotypical way (Mills, 2003, 2012; Sunderland, 2006). It is on the basis of the findings and conclusions of these and other studies' (see Section 2.3) that this research will investigate differences between men and women in relation to politeness. This will be achieved by investigating differences, if any, in the estimated frequency of markers of politeness derived from the *politeness()* package and determining whether they align with the findings of previous research. Consensus among researchers in this area is yet to be reached, with authors finding contrasting evidence depending on the context in which language and gender is explored. It is true it is not possible to claim that men or women are invariably more polite in every context. However, in this thesis the favoured stance is that, in most contexts, women are more likely to use markers of politeness more frequently than men in most contexts. Regardless of evidence provided by studies, it cannot be denied that stereotypes (i.e.: a widely held, generally oversimplified, view of a particular type of person or thing) in relation to language and gender exist which may not necessarily be founded on clear evidence, but they are perpetuated in society. In this research, differences in use of politeness markers in romantic comedies will be explored through the implementation of generalised linear mixed models (GLMMs), which will allow to highlight the areas in which male and female characters show significant differences. This will contribute to furthering knowledge of differences between male and female characters in fictional discourse, more specifically in romantic comedies.

Outside of language, gender has also been examined in the media and the way gender roles are portrayed in almost every media outlet. Findings suggest that males are generally overrepresented and that stereotypes in the way men are women are characterised are commonly observed (Neuendorf, 2017). Romantic comedies are a prime example of a mass media outlet in which gender stereotypes are traditionally

perpetuated. Although the genre has gone through a number of cycles and evolved, more conservative views of gender roles in society are still upheld in many ways. Although the genre has been characterised as superficial and lacking complexity, it is also important to acknowledge it can also be seen as key and popular cultural artifacts in which societal issues can be examined (Kaklamanidou, 2013). To date, almost no studies have been carried out to analyse politeness and gender in film discourse. Romantic comedies present an excellent opportunity to analyse contemporary film discourse to explore politeness and characterisation of gender through linguistic choices.

This thesis uses natural language processing (NLP) tools and statistical analysis to explore potential differences between male and female characters in romantic comedies with respect to markers of formal linguistic politeness. For this purpose, a corpus comprised of 56 romantic comedy film scripts was assembled. The scripts which comprise this corpus are aimed at Western audiences, and they were all written in English, therefore any observations made in this research are grounded in markers of politeness used in this language.

Using pre-designed features from the 'politeness' package (Yeomans et al., 2018), generalised linear mixed models (GLMMs) are used to detect potential contrasts in the proportion of politeness markers between male and female characters. Where significant differences are observed, some examples from the corpus will be analysed in context to investigate cases in which the presence of those tokens leads to text being open to interpretation as polite or impolite. Given the complexity of politeness phenomena, a computational approach is unlikely to be able to capture all its nuances. By applying NLP techniques combined with a qualitative analysis of politeness in context, this research is able to explore how a computational approach can be implemented to analyse politeness in larger datasets and identify differences, if any, between male and female characters. This is explored by inspecting a number of scenes and examining which elements can be processed correctly by the package. A hypothesis of the most informative pre-designed features is also constructed to be able to make comparisons between human classification and automated classification. It is important to note here that given the nature of the content of the scripts, this research will be analysing gender within a heteronormative framework and will only be focusing on the two ends of the gender spectrum, given that all the characters in these films are cisgender. It was the fact that, in this genre, gender roles tend to be stereotyped which partly motivated the use of romantic comedy scripts. With this in mind, the language

used by male and female characters also mirrors stereotypical language and gender views with respect to certain markers of politeness (see Section 4.2).

## 1.3. Research Objectives

This research has two central objectives. It seeks to determine if any differences can be observed with regards to the presence of markers of formal linguistic politeness between genders in romantic comedies and how this relates to the portrayal of gender in the genre. By determining statistically significant differences in the estimated frequency of politeness markers between male and female characters, parallels can be drawn with more traditional views of language (see Section 2.3). The results discussed in Section 4.2 strengthen the notion that male and female characters are represented in a more stereotypical way in the genre. Considering that a large majority of studies on romantic comedies explore gender by focusing on visual aspects or elements pertaining to the plot of the film, exploring differences from a language perspective will address that gap in knowledge. The second aim is to investigate how computational approaches can be used to explore and analyse differences in formal linguistic politeness in film discourse.

The research questions to be explored in this thesis are:

1. *What differences in formal linguistic politeness are there between male and female characters in romantic comedies?*

   (a) Is there a statistical difference in the use of politeness markers between male and female characters?

   (b) To what extent do interacting factors, such as screenwriter and addressee gender, affect the presence of these tokens of politeness?

   (c) To what extent can politeness detection be reliably automated by using the *politeness()* text classification package and statistical analysis?

## 1.4 Research Contribution

This research addresses the gap in the research on analysis of politeness and gender in romantic comedies. Exploring the differences between male and female characters through an analysis of politeness contributes to the evolving scholarship of gender portrayal in films. Studies have focused the representation of gender and age (Lauzen and Dozier, 2005), the portrayal of romantic relationships in romantic comedies (Johnson and Holmes, 2009), or the centrality of postfeminism in the same genre (Negra, 2009). Although film discourse has been used to study politeness, this genre has not yet been exploited to investigate gender and politeness, and this research addressed that. Concerning the first research question, based on the findings in Chapter 4 (Section 4.2), measurable differences in signals of politeness in romantic comedy scripts are visible between male and female characters. When one considers the gender of the speaker in interaction with the gender of the addressee, and in some cases the gender of the screenwriting team, effects on the estimated proportion of markers of politeness were observed. With regard to the question 1(c), Chapter 4 (Section 4.4) explores the contribution of features derived from the *politeness()* package, combined with a qualitative analysis of selected scenes, which are better able to capture instances of politeness in text. The tools were quite successful at capturing politeness instances in the text. However, mixed results were found when classifying cases of impoliteness.

With regards to methodology, the contribution of this research is the exploration of using NLP tools and statistical analysis in politeness studies using film discourse. Strengths and pitfalls of this approach were identified when implementing these methods to large datasets. This research contributes to the promotion of integrating computational approaches in linguistics and social sciences by raising awareness of the limitations to take into account. Finally, techniques developed in this thesis to pre-process similar data in a methodical way can help other researchers who wish to conduct research in film discourse.

## 1.5 Thesis Structure

This section provides an overview of the structure of this thesis. Chapter 2 presents a review of relevant literature which represents the theoretical pillars of this thesis. Theories of politeness are outlined to illustrate different stances on how politeness is constructed in language. Differences in views on politeness and gender are then reviewed. An overview of the inner structure of romantic comedies, expectations of the

genre, and gender representations in them is presented. Studies which used natural language processing techniques to analyse politeness or gender are considered.

In Chapter 3, the research methodology used in this research is described. A description of how the data was pre-processed and then used is described. Issues which emerged from adopting computational approaches to natural language analysis are also discussed.

The main analysis of the findings of this research are presented in Chapter 4. The analysis of differences between male and female characters in relation to markers of formal linguistic politeness is discussed. A qualitative analysis of key scenes in three selected films is provided followed by an evaluation of the effectiveness of the NLP tools used.

In Chapter 5, a summary of the findings of this research is presented and conclusions are drawn in relation to their contribution to answering the research questions. This chapter highlights where differences between male and female characters were observed with regards to politeness. It also reviews the benefits and challenges of using computational methods to analyse politeness in film discourse.

# Chapter 2

# Literature Review

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the theoretical foundations which inform the analysis of the results of this study. This thesis is grounded on a range of disciplines encompassing politeness, language and gender, corpus approaches to film discourse, and natural language processing. Theoretical works in linguistics discussing the complexity of the relationship between language, gender, and politeness which underpin this research are reviewed. Studies on female representation and portrayal in romantic comedies are discussed and the use of corpora to study language in film discourse is highlighted. Given that in this research NLP tools are used to investigate politeness in film discourse, a review of studies which use these techniques and approaches is also included in this chapter.

## 2.2 Politeness Theory

Research exploring politeness has been prolific for decades, and many authors have worked towards a definition. Lakoff (1975) posits that it is something developed by societies to avoid disputes in personal interactions. Leech's (1983) early notion of politeness was conceptualised as conflict avoidance; Brown and Levinson (1987) view politeness as a way of minimising or avoiding face-threat. Despite some disagreements or differences in approaches to the study of politeness, works in the field agree that politeness is an intrinsic element of most cultures in one way or another and it is embedded in everyday language.

### 2.2.1 Maxim-based Approaches

A number of fundamental politeness theories are developed on the basis of Grice's (1975) Conversational Maxims within his Cooperative Principle approach. The main

assumption is that in a conversation, the participants will cooperate with one another in order to have communicatively effective conversations by adhering to four maxims. Participants are seen as co-operators if the following maxims are not violated.

*Grice's Maxims* (1975, pp. 45-46)

***Quantity***
Make your contribution as informative as required.
Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

***Quality***
Do not say what you believe to be false.
Do not say that for which you lack evidence.

***Relation***
Be relevant.

***Manner***
Avoid obscurity of expression.
Avoid ambiguity.
Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
Be orderly

Even though not all maxims are addressed in depth in his work, Grice acknowledges that there are other maxims: "aesthetic, social, or moral in character, such as 'Be polite', that are also normally observed by participants in talk exchanges, and these may also generate nonconventional implicatures" (Grice, 1975 p.47). In many ways, Grice pioneered an approach to the analysis of discourse by theorising that the interpretation of utterances is closely linked to collaboration between participants. Models of politeness put forward by Leech and Lakoff formulate their approach to a maxim of politeness.

Lakoff (1973), is one of the early supporters of a pragmatic view of politeness and proposes a maxim-based approach. She bases her ideas on Grice's cooperative principle, while also adding her own strategies of conversation. She highlights the importance of creating a set of pragmatic and syntactic rules to evaluate the reason a speaker might 'flout' maxims in conversation; she puts forward two rules of "pragmatic competence" (1973, p.296). The first rule, 'be clear', draws from Grice's maxims, and involves the speaker conveying their message directly. The second rule, 'be polite' is divided into three sub-categories: 'don't impose', 'give options', and 'make A feel good – be friendly' (1973, p.298). In her later work, Lakoff (1975, p.65) renamed these rules to 'formality: keep aloof', 'deference: give options', and 'camaraderie: show sympathy'. Closely linked to her work on politeness, she explored differences in language use by men and women. She argued that women are more polite than men given women's position in society and that their lack of assertiveness is due to the contexts of

communication. Her views on language and gender will be expanded on in a later section of this chapter.

Another maxim-based model of politeness was proposed by Leech (1983), where he accounted for a relationship between semantic *sense* and pragmatic *force* and argues for a scalar view of politeness. He believes that politeness has to do with strategic conflict avoidance and showing regard for others. Motivated by Grice's cooperative principle, within his framework Leech theorises a politeness principle and, unlike Lakoff (1973), he does not believe them to be competing principles depending on the situation. Originally, Leech (1983) presented six maxims for politeness, based on the belief that politeness entails minimising the cost and maximising the benefit for the participants. In his more recent work, Leech (2014, p.91) presented an updated version of those maxims, given below.

1) Generosity: 'Give a high value to O[ther]'s wants.'
2) Tact: 'Give a low value to S[elf]'s wants.'
3) Approbation: 'Give a high value to O's qualities.'
4) Modesty: 'Give a low value to S's qualities.'
5) Obligation of S to O: 'Give a high value to S's obligation to O.'
6) Obligation of O to S: 'Give a low value to O's obligation to S.'
7) Agreement: 'Give a high value to O's opinion.'
8) Opinion reticence: 'Give a low value to S's opinion.'
9) Sympathy: 'Give a high value to O's feelings.'
10) Feeling reticence: 'Give a low value to S's feelings.'

As in his earlier work (Leech, 2007), he makes a distinction between *pos-politeness* maxims (odd-numbered) and *neg-politeness* maxims (even-numbered). Brown and Levinson (1987), who inspired Leech to make a distinction between positive and negative politeness, proposed a slightly different definition for those strategies. Most importantly, Leech includes pos-politeness to highlight face-enhancement strategies. This is combined with the notion of face-threat to break with the tradition of politeness being associated with avoidance of imposition. Another important aspect of Leech's politeness model is his distinction of what he originally called "absolute" and "relative" politeness (Leech, 1983), which he later labelled "pragmalinguistic" and "sociopragmatic" politeness (Leech, 2014). Pragmalinguistic politeness is evaluated based on the meaning of the utterance out of context, with the important caveat that only relative - but not absolute - degrees of politeness can be identified. For example, an utterance with a certain degree of politeness can be modified through semantic

intensification (e.g.: adding ‘very much’) or through semantic hedging (e.g.: adding ‘a little bit’). Sociopragmatic politeness, on the other hand, involves evaluating utterances in context, and therefore can be evaluated on a bipolar scale to identify varying degrees of politeness (Leech, 2014, pp.15-17).

Both Lakoff’s and Leech’s models have come under criticism on different grounds. Sifianou (1992, p.22-26) challenged Lakoff’s politeness approach on the basis that her model is not a universal one. The assumption that following Lakoff’s rules of politeness would be equivalent to polite behaviour does not take into consideration what is understood to be polite outside Western cultures. Watts (2003) argues that Lakoff’s approach “hardly constitutes a model of politeness” (Watts, 2003, p.61) given that her wider aims are more closely related to language and gender. Mills (2003) also noted that her analysis mainly focused on stereotypical, anecdotal language, from a very small group of women (middle-class, white, Anglo-American) without taking into consideration counter-examples in her analysis.

Regarding Leech’s model, his original distinction between ‘relative’ and ‘absolute’ politeness was subjected to considerable criticism from other authors in the field (Fraser, 1990; Holmes, 1995; Locher, 2006; Mills, 2003, 2012; Watts, 2003). The notion that certain speech acts can be labelled inherently polite or impolite, without considering context or situational variables, was strongly contested (Fraser, 1990). Watts (2003) also questions the usefulness of Leech’s distinction and states that “at least in English, linguistic structures do not in themselves denote politeness, but rather that they lend themselves to individual interpretation as ‘polite’ in instances of ongoing verbal interaction” (Watts, 2003, p.168). Mills (2003) is critical of this distinction as well, seeing as her model of politeness and how it is assessed is “developed by individuals engaging with others in communities of practice, in the process of mapping out identities and positions for themselves” (Mills, 2003, p.58).

In spite of these criticisms, some authors such as Culpeper (2005, 2011), Terkourafi (2001, 2002, 2005), and Bousfield (2008) have defended Leech’s stance. Culpeper (2005, 2011) agrees with the view that it is true that not any given linguistic forms will always be evaluated as impolite regardless of context. Nevertheless, there are a number of phrases or expressions that can be said to be conventionally polite or impolite given their repeated use for similar purposes in different types of discourse. His stance draws strength from Terkourafi’s (2001, 2002, 2005) approach to politeness study. She argues that “it is the regular co-occurrence of particular types of contexts and particular linguistic expressions as unchallenged realisations of particular acts that

creates the perception of politeness" (Terkourafi, 2005, p.248). Furthermore, Bousfield (2008) believes that what Leech attempted to communicate in his distinction is necessary since some "utterances are conventionalised by lay usage to an extent that they appear to be inherently polite or impolite" (Bousfield, 2008, pp. 55-54).

## 2.2.2 Face-based Approaches

### *Brown and Levinson's Politeness Model*

Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) theory of politeness can be described as one of the most influential in the field. Their theory is grounded on Goffman's (1967, 1972) notion of *face* and Gricean maxims and they link these concepts to the interlocutors' public image that might be attacked or preserved in conversation. They researched linguistic strategies used by speakers of highly different languages (Tzeltal, Tamil, and English) and noted that these groups would frequently flout conversational maxims. These parallelisms led them to theorise that the motive behind these linguistic choices was politeness and the speaker's need to save face.

Central to their theory is the understanding of the sociological need for politeness strategies, which they suggest is related to the speaker's intention to prevent any possible confrontation "and makes possible communication between potentially aggressive parties" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p.1). By recognising a potential offence to the hearer, the speaker can demonstrate that they are aware of their mutual face-wants and will attempt to maintain it when communicating. Goffman highlights the importance of *face* as a discursive construct in interaction which is negotiated as communication takes place. He notes that 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, p.5). Brown and Levinson drew on the concept of *face* developed by Goffman and from the English folk term *losing/saving face*. They understand *face* to be "something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p.61).

They posit that any given member of a society has, and acknowledges that others also have, *face*. Furthermore, they elaborate on the concept by making a distinction between *positive* and *negative face*. The former involves the need for any speaker to be accepted and appreciated by others; positive face is therefore related to positive politeness as the speaker will use certain strategies to tend to others' positive face

needs. Negative face, on the other hand, is seen as the participants' right to be free from imposition; thus, negative politeness is a matter of catering to negative face needs. In their framework, when a verbal or non-verbal communication act is performed the speaker and/or hearer's face may be threatened – these are what Brown and Levinson call *face threatening acts* (FTAs). Based on their understanding of face as a universal concept, they consider intrinsically FTAs those which by their very nature are in conflict with the hearer and/or speaker wants (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p.65). They also make further distinctions depending on the whether an act threatens the participants' negative or positive face. For instance, acts such as orders and requests, suggestions, reminders, threats, or warnings threaten the hearer's negative face as they are put in a position where their freedom of action might be impeded. On the other hand, some acts could potentially damage the speaker's positive face (e.g., apologies, confessions of guilt, accepting compliments) given that the speaker might be in a position in which they are indicating regret when doing the FTA.

Although face-threat is ever-present in communication, its impact will vary depending on the gravity of the FTA. Brown and Levinson (1987) propose the formula **W*x* = D (S, H) + P (H, S) + R*x*** to compute the weightiness of the FTA and to determine the level of indirectness that is expected. The formula is meant to represent the factors that interlocutors orient to in selecting a strategy to minimise an FTA. In their formula D(S,H) is the value of the social distance between the speaker and the hearer, P(H,S) represents the power that the hearer has over the speaker, and Rx estimates the seriousness of an imposition in that particular culture. Depending on the outcome of the formula, the speaker will then choose from a range of strategies to mitigate any possible threat to the hearer's or their own face. Thus, the higher the value of Wx, the higher the rank of the politeness strategy that the participant will select to minimise any potential risks.

Brown and Levinson developed a schema of the available strategies that a speaker or hearer can use in order to avoid an FTA or minimise the risk of face-threat. The guiding principle of their schema is that the weightier the FTA, the higher the participants move up in the indirectness of the strategies in the hierarchy, therefore choosing from a more polite strategy.

1. *Do the FTA on record, without redress, baldly*.
2. *Do the FTA on record, with redressive action (positive politeness).*
3. *Do the FTA on record, with redressive action (negative politeness).*
4. *Do the FTA off record.*

5. *Don't do the FTA.*

Once the speaker has assessed the risks and chosen an appropriate strategy, S then has to choose a linguistic (or in some cases extra-linguistic) expression to achieve their communicative intent. Brown and Levinson propose a range of linguistic realisations for each strategy with different degrees of politeness. As previously mentioned they posited that positive and negative politeness strategies will include actions to redress the threat to the hearer's positive or negative face.

In their framework, Brown and Levinson describe positive politeness as strategies that acknowledge the hearer's need to be approved of, to recognise their positive face needs. By using positive politeness strategies, the speaker creates a feeling of intimacy between them and the addressee and expresses that their needs and wants are shared to some extent. These strategies are divided into three main mechanisms which in turn are subdivided into different groups of strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p.102).

***A) Claim common ground***

*i) Express that 'X is admirable, interesting'*

1. Notice qualities, possessions that H(earer) would want admired.
2. Exaggerate interest, sympathy, approval.
3. Intensify interest to H.

*ii*) *Claim in-group membership with H*

4. Address forms can be used to convey membership to a group.

*iii) Claim common point of view, opinion, attitudes, knowledge, empathy*

5. Seek agreement on 'safe topics'.
6. Avoid possible disagreement.
7. Presuppose, raise, or assert common ground.
8. Jokes.

***B) Convey that S and H are co-operators***

*i) Indicate that H's wants are known to S, and they are being taken into account*

*9.* S asserts knowledge of H's wants and indicates the addressee's concerns are considered.

*ii) Claim reflexivity*

10. Offer, promise.
11. Be optimistic that both hearer and speaker want the same thing.
12. Include both S and H in the activity.

13. Give or ask for reasons.

*iii) Claim reciprocity*

14. Assume or establish reciprocity.

**C) *Fulfil H's want for some X***

15. Give gifts to H.

Brown and Levinson define negative politeness as actions to meet the hearer's negative face wants, that is to have their right to be free from imposition and not to have their actions restricted. The main purpose of using negative politeness strategies is to minimise the imposition that an FTA will unavoidably have on the addressee (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p.131).

***A) Do the FTA on record***

*i) Be direct*

*1.* Be conventionally indirect.

***B) Do the FTA with redress to H's wants not to be imposed on***

*i) Do not presume or assume*

*2.* Question, hedge.

*ii) Do not coerce H*

*3.* Be pessimistic.

4. Curtail threat by minimising the imposition.

5. Minimise the threat by giving deference.

*iii) Communicate S's want not to impinge on H*

6. Apologise.

7. Impersonalise the speaker and hearer.

8. State the FTA as an instance of a general rule to soften the offence.

9. Nominalise to distance the actor and add formality.

*iv) Redress other wants of H's, derivative from negative face*

10. Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebting H.

Although Brown and Levinson's politeness model has been used as the starting point for a large number of studies in the field towards the end of the 20th century, their work faced criticism on numerous counts. Some of the main shortcomings in their work that

have been criticised are their understanding of face universality and face-threatening acts.

The notion of *face* being a universal concept that can be applied to any culture, is one of the aspects in which Brown and Levinson's theory was strongly challenged (Watts, Ide, and Ehlich, 1992). Gu (1990, p.241) contends that what Brown and Levinson would classify as an FTA, would not be considered as such in Chinese society. Chinese rituals and habits allow for a hearer to decline an invitation as a sign of modesty and therefore the speaker would have to strongly impose on the hearer to accept it. Mao (1994, p.460) shares a similar stance since the Chinese concept of face differs from that proposed by Brown and Levinson. The same is true for Japanese culture: Ide (1989) explains that linguistic choices for Japanese speakers are restricted by convention and thus Brown and Levinson's framework would not be suitable to analyse politeness strategies. Although the universality of face is strongly contested, O'Driscoll (1996) points out that face wants are universal, but the degree of those wants may vary from culture to culture.

Another aspect in which Brown and Levinson's model was challenged by some authors is that of FTAs. As previously mentioned, Brown and Levinson's strategies stem from the assumption that speakers will endeavour to maintain the hearer's positive face (to be approved of) or their negative face (freedom from imposition). In order to do so, the speaker will use strategies to mitigate the potential damage any FTA may cause. The choice of strategy will vary depending on the severity of the FTA committed. In their model, the weight of the FTA can be linearly measured by taking into account three factors: power (P), distance (D), and degree of imposition (R). However, critics find this assertion too simplistic to encompass all aspects of communication and or interactions (Baxter, 1984; Scollon and Scollon, 2001). Mills (2003) also finds fault with the system proposed to determine the weightiness of an FTA. She believes that social distance between participants is dynamic and open to change, and that this aspect is not accounted for in Brown and Levinson's model. Furthermore, she questions Brown and Levinson's model for their focus on single utterances instead of evaluating speaker's intentions in context; on this point Watts (2003) and Eelen (2001) also share a similar view. In spite of all the criticisms their research has faced, it cannot be denied that Brown and Levinson's politeness theory provided a strong foundation for future researchers in the field.

### *Culpeper's Impoliteness Framework*

Culpeper (1996, pp.356-357) proposed a framework to study impoliteness in conversation where he outlined five superstrategies, which work as 'mirror images' of Brown and Levinson's (1987) strategies.

i. *Bald on record impoliteness:* the FTA is performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous, concise way where face is not irrelevant of minimised.

ii. *Positive impoliteness:* using these strategies aims at damaging the addressee's positive face wants.

iii. *Negative impoliteness:* using these strategies aims at damaging the addressee's negative face wants.

iv. *Sarcasm or mock politeness:* the FTA is performed with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere and thus remain surface realisations.

vi. *Withhold politeness:* the absence of politeness work where it would be expected.

One of the drawbacks of this model is that it carries with it most of the flaws of the work of Brown and Levinson, by which it was inspired. One aspect on which this model was challenged is that it is speaker-oriented and that the hearer's reaction to an impolite utterance is not discussed. Culpeper himself acknowledges this weakness (Culpeper et al., 2003; Culpeper, 2011) as well as other authors in the field (Mills, 2003; Bousfield, 2007, 2008). However, Culpeper et al. (2003) address some of these criticisms by developing a model where the response to an impolite utterance is considered. More recently, Culpeper and Tantucci (2021), have explored the notion of reciprocity which is fundamental for the understanding of impolite interactions. In spite of some of the limitations of his model, his framework was one of the first theories which drew attention to impoliteness scholarship.

In his revised impoliteness framework, Culpeper (2008, 2011) also addresses his definition of impoliteness – one that Bousfield (2010, p.114) shares - and understands it as intentional face damage and offence, while 'rudeness' is unintentional damage to the hearer's face (Culpeper, 2008, p.31). He states that even though impoliteness is not inherent in particular linguistic expressions, it is also true that it would be difficult to find context in which certain impoliteness expressions are not perceived as such. Terkourafi's (2008, p.70) view is quite different on this matter, she believes that impoliteness is face-threatening behaviour, but the hearer does not think the speaker had a "face-threatening intention". On the other hand, situations in which the hearer

assigns “a face-threatening intention” to the speaker, are labelled as “rudeness proper” (Terkourafi, 2008, p.62). Bousfield and Locher (2008, p.3) also attempt to provide a definition and state that “impoliteness is behaviour that is face-aggravating in a particular context”. Nevertheless they also acknowledge that their definition is insufficient.

In later work, Culpeper (2011) articulates a revised definition of what he believed to be impoliteness:

> Impoliteness is a negative attitude towards specific behaviours occurring in specific contexts. It is sustained by expectations, desires and/or beliefs about social organisation, including, in particular, how one person’s or a group’s identities are mediated by others in interaction. Situated behaviours are viewed negatively – considered ‘impolite’ – when they conflict with how one expects them to be, how one wants them to be and/or how one thinks they ought to be. Such behaviours always have or are presumed to have emotional consequences for at least one participant, that is, they cause or are presumed to cause offence. Various factors exacerbate how offensive an impolite behaviour is taken to be, including for example whether one understands a behaviour to be strongly intentional or not. (Culpeper 2011a:23).

Kleinke and Bös (2015) argue that both the terms politeness and impoliteness have unclear boundaries and are terms which researchers will continually struggle to define. Their view follows similar lines to Watts (2003, p.9) who notes that “(im)politeness is a term that is struggled over at present, has been struggled over in the past and will, in all probability, continue to be struggled over in the future”.

Culpeper (2011a, pp.135-136) also proposes a set of conventionalised impoliteness formulae to study contexts in which participants consistently understand certain utterances to be impolite. He adopted a methodology which mirrors Terkourafi’s (2001) approach to identifying politeness formulae. It is important to note, however, that his list is not exhaustive and that the presence of these formulaic structures does not always equate to them being interpreted as impolite regardless of context.

**1)** *Insults*

i) Personalised negative vocatives.

ii) Personalised negative assertions.

iii) Personalised negative references.

iv) Personalised third-person negative references (in the hearing of the target).

**2)** *Pointed criticism/complaints*

**3)** *Unpalatable questions and/or presuppositions*

**4)** *Condescensions*

**5)** *Message enforcers*

**6)** *Dismissals*

**7)** *Silencers*

**8)** *Threats*

**9)** *Negative expressives (e.g. curses or ill-wishes)*

In this study Culpeper's (2001a) impoliteness formulae will be used as a framework to analyse the outcomes of the NLP tools and explore differences between genders. At the outset of the analysis no particular formulaic expression from the list was selected to analyse interactions. The approach taken here entailed examining interactions and determining which, if any, of the impoliteness formulae were used by the characters. However, once the analysis was carried out, in the dataset for this research insults, pointed criticisms, threats, and negative expressives were found (see Section 4.2.6). Culpeper's framework will be used to examine dialogue which contains indicators of impoliteness (e.g.: swearing, bare commands, linguistic negation) to better understand whether the presence of this markers yields impolite utterances. This framework provides formulaic expressions specifically for impoliteness, and therefore it is suitable to examine the context in which markers of impoliteness, derived from the *politeness()* package, are present. It should be noted, however, that it is not the aim of this research to explore in depth which conventionalised expressions are favoured by male and female characters in romantic comedies.

### 2.2.3 Discursive Approaches

A large majority of the criticisms Brown and Levinson faced were related to their linear and static approach to politeness, and the lack of attention paid to context in which utterances were analysed. Discursive approaches to politeness were developed in an attempt to address these criticisms and bring context of discourse to the forefront of politeness analysis. Watts (1989) was one of the earliest to propose a discursive view to politeness study. He developed his approach in later works (Watts, 2003, 2005), and other researchers also put forward similar approaches (Locher and Watts, 2005; Mills, 2003, 2012; Mills and Mullany, 2011). Unlike Brown and Levinson or Leech, their proposals did not argue for a definitive model, but commonalities can be found in these works.

Watts (1989, 2003) proposes the notion of *politic behaviour*, which he defines as "socioculturally determined behaviour directed towards the goal of establishing and/or maintaining in a state of equilibrium the personal relationships between the individuals of a social group" (Watts, 2003, p.20). He makes the distinction between polite and politic

behaviour to address the fact that, frequently, politeness goes unnoticed when interactants perceive appropriate behaviour in a particular social interaction. However, in interactions where the relational work is more than expected, it is perceived as polite, while when it is less than expected, it is seen as impolite. Watts (2003) refers to relational work as the behaviour of participants in any given interaction where there is an attempt to be considerate towards the interactants; in many ways it can be seen as a parallel term to *facework*. Locher (2006) states that "there are many shades of relational work, and indeed it is even suggested that there is relational work which is neither polite or impolite" (Locher, 2006, p.255)

Watts (2003) puts forward a definition of politeness which makes a distinction between first-order politeness - or politeness1 (Eelen, 2001) – and second-order politeness - or politeness2 (Eelen, 2001). Watts et al. (2005) propose a definition of first-order politeness as behaviour which "is perceived and talked about by members of sociocultural groups" as polite. On the other hand, second-order politeness "is a theoretical construct, a term within a theory of social behaviour and language usage" (Watts et al., 2005, p.3). Supporters of a discursive approach to politeness, have strong views that politeness2 should not help in explaining politeness1, and that analysts should mainly focus on evaluating instances of politeness1 without relying on scientific notions.

Discursive approaches strongly emphasise that politeness does not reside in linguistic forms, but rather in the interpretation of discourse by the participants (Watts, 2003; Mills, 2003, 2012). However, it is also true that interactants are not always in agreement about what constitutes polite or impolite behaviour. It is therefore difficult to deny that in politeness evaluation there is often "variability in the evaluation of behaviour, and perceptions of the norm and expectations underlying such evaluations" (Haugh, 2007, p.313). Even though discursive approaches provide an interesting approach to politeness, the weight assigned to interpretation of polite behaviour by participants makes it almost impossible to construct a predictive theory. Locher (2006) acknowledges this and concludes that given its fluid nature, politeness "can never be conclusively defined with respect to specific linguistic devices, nor can it be universally predicted in a theoretical way" (Locher, 2006, p.264). Discursive approaches make it difficult to make generalisations or to analyse larger data sets. Moreover, it relies to a large degree on the interpretation of the researcher. However, there are advantages to using this approach. In this research, a discursive approach was used to analyse in detail a number of selected scenes (see Section 4.3). This was advantageous as it allowed for a much closer reading of the interactions between characters and to evaluate the impact elements beyond linguistic politeness markers had on implementing strategies.

Considering how complex it can be to analyse politeness, a combination of the approaches described above was preferred in this thesis. This decision was made based on the belief that different approaches can better explain different aspects of politeness, and taking into consideration the nature of the data used here, a blend of approaches was suitable.

## 2.3 Politeness and Gender

Over the past several decades, a large number of studies have explored the notion that men and women use language differently. Jespersen's (1922) study focused on women's language; he argued that as a consequence of not thinking through what they were going to say, women tended to leave sentences unfinished, and that women's language can be thought of as 'lively chatter'. He believed that his findings are strongly related to men and women's roles in society, and that should gender roles develop over time, it would seem logical to assume that the "linguistic relations between the two sexes" (Jespersen, 1922, p.254) may undergo significant changes. His work faced strong criticisms given that the conclusions he reached were based on his own beliefs rather than rigorous and systematic study of women's language use (Cameron, 1990; Coates, 2004; Mills & Mullany, 2011). In the 60s, with the emergence of research in sociolinguistics, theories which credited biological causes as the reason for differences in language use were contested. A sociolinguistic view argued for a view of language that sees gender roles in society being reflected and also shaping norms of communication. Many studies have explored differences in language use between men and women, and many scholars have been particularly attracted to differences in politeness and gender.

Lakoff (1975), investigated the relationship between language, gender, and politeness from a feminist perspective. As described in the previous section, she theorised a model of politeness based on a number of maxims. Furthermore, she also put forward the idea of 'women's language', and she drew some parallels with what she called 'ladylike language'. Her work faced some criticism for generalising results to all women when, in reality, her focus was on American, white, middle-class women. Some negative reactions to Lakoff's work highlight that her representation of women's language is depicted as deficient when compared to that of men (Sunderland, 2006). In spite of some scholars disagreeing with her theories, her work on women's language opened the doors for other researchers to highlight the importance of language and

gender, and therefore her work is recognised as of paramount importance (McConnell-Ginet, 2004).

Lakoff (1975, p.53-58) characterised women's language as presenting the following features which she described as 'ladylike', and therefore differing from men in these aspects.

1. Larger stock of words related to their specific interests.
2. Empty adjectives (e.g.: charming, divine, cute).
3. Question tags – rising intonation in statement contexts.
4. Use of hedges.
5. Use of intensifiers.
6. Super-polite forms.
7. Lack of sense of humour.
8. Expressing uncertainty.
9. Apologies.
10. Less frequent speech.
11. Direct quotations.
12. Overuse of qualifiers.

Traditional views of language and gender align with Lakoff's description of women's language described above. This view supports the notion that women, when compared to men, apologise more often, use more hedging devices, question tags, intensifiers, or swear less, for example. Mills (2003, p.202) challenges this view of gender and politeness and she argues that it "seems to replicate stereotypical views of women's politeness, rather than describing women's or men's actual linguistic performance". Moreover, she also contested the characterisation of women's language as a reflection of more conservative views of women's behaviour. Women's politeness strategies have been described to be more positively and negatively polite than men's, on the basis of preconceived notions that women are subordinate members of society and that is reflected on their linguistic choices (Mills, 2003). She advocates for a view of politeness and gender which takes into consideration linguistic communities and the views that are adopted by each group.

### 2.3.1 Compliments

Complimenting is one aspect in which men and women appear to have differences, Holmes (1995, p.144) believes that "a compliment is a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer". Some have criticised Holmes's view of compliments as always being received positively by the hearer. Mills (2003) and Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2013) highlight that depending on the communities of practice, a compliment might be received as inappropriate or out of place. However, using compliments in the right context would appeal to the listeners positive face and can be interpreted as polite behaviour.

The use of intensifiers (e.g.: *really, very, so*, etc.) and other lexical boosters (e.g. *amazing* instead of *great*) help achieve the speaker's intention to compliment the listener and a number of researchers claim that it is perceived as a common trait in women's language (Christie, 2002; Tagliamonte and Roberts, 2005; Hancock, 2015). Holmes (1995) found that although there are similarities in the frequency of use of compliments between men and women, differences in the type of compliments were observed in her data. Herbert (1998) arrived at similar conclusions and found that men were more likely to give impersonalised compliments, while women paid more personalised compliments. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2013) suggest that women's greater tendency to pay compliments - and therefore a higher frequency of the lexical items used for this purpose - is connected with them being taught that "being seen as nice is very important to their success in life" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, p.131). They acknowledge that this is probably too simplistic an explanation, but they highlight the importance of exploring the way certain linguistic choices create certain gendered characteristics.

### 2.3.2 Hedges

The notion that women use hedging devices more frequently than men is linked to women's language being described as tentative (Coates, 2004). Hedges (e.g.: *I think, sort of, perhaps*, etc) are used to avoid making definite statements or assumptions, and it helps the speaker avoid committing to a particular opinion. A number of studies have suggested that women use hedges more frequently than men (Holmes, 1995; Mulac et al., 2000; Coates, 2004). Coates (2013) argues that the reason for women using hedges more often has to do with certain characteristics of women's talk, and using certain linguistic devices enables collaboration between participants. Holmes (1995, p. 96)

maintains that women use hedges as a positive politeness strategy and that “this pattern of female concern with affective meaning and male with referential meaning illustrates once again the different orientations of women and men in interaction”. Mills (2012), on the other hand, finds this analysis of women’s language to be stereotypical and that Holmes’s evaluation of the results is influenced by her belief that women’s speech is more polite.

### 2.3.3 Apologies

Apologies are often stereotypically associated with feminine behaviour, in particular the use of ‘sorry’ and self-deprecating conduct is frequently associated with women (Mills, 2012). Some studies have suggested that women apologise more frequently than men and attribute these differences to men seeing apologies as a sign of weakness (Tannen, 1991; Engel, 2002; Lazare, 2004). Holmes (1995, p.159) argues that differences between men and women may stem from “differential perceptions by women and men of verbal politeness devices […] women may regard explicit apologies for offences as more important in maintaining relationships than men do”. Tannen (1991) suggests that women apologise more frequently because they are more interested in showing courtesy in interactions than men are.

Critics of this view of women’s language contend that these conclusions are formed on the basis of anecdotal data rather than more rigorous research (Schumann and Ross, 2010). Mills (2003, 2012) suggests that it is not necessarily the case that women apologise more overall, and that this conclusion is purely based on stereotypes of women’s language. Schumann and Ross (2010) designed two studies to further explore any contrasts between men and women’s apologies. They found that although it is true that women apologise more frequently than men, women also reported more instances which they felt merited an apology. They believe that a possible explanation is that men and women differ in what they would qualify as offensive behaviour and that for men, fewer circumstances warrant an apology.

### 2.3.4 Questions

Women’s speech is frequently associated with large quantities of questions which are interpreted as a sign of uncertainty and insecurity (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013). This suggests being at odds with assertive language, which is more often associated with men’s language, but in line with Lakoff’s (1975) view of “ladylike” speech. Harris

(1984), however, views questions as a device that the participant with more power uses more frequently. She explains that asking questions forces the listener to provide a relevant answer and therefore the speaker has control of the direction the conversation is going. Although this might be true for the context in which she explored questions (magistrate's courts), she recognised that her interpretation might not hold true for everyday interactions.

Fishman (1980) posited that women used questions more frequently to ensure interactions with men who engage far less in conversations in her view. While Mulac and Lundell (1986) also claimed that women use questions more frequently than men do, Newman et al. (2008) were unable to find any significant differences between the two genders. Lakoff (1975) drew attention to a particular type of question which she claims characterise women's language, and those are *tag questions*. Holmes (1995) argued that tags have a range of functions and created four categories: *epistemic modal, facilitative, softening,* or *challenging*. *Epistemic modal* tags show uncertainty on the part of the speaker and seeks confirmation from the listener; *facilitative* tags indicate and invitation from the speaker to the listener to engage in conversation. *Softening* tags mitigate the potential negative effect of an assertion made by the listener, and *challenging* tags frequently elicit no response from the listener or an admission of wrongdoing. In their studies, Holmes (1995) and Cameron (1989) found that in women's speech facilitative or mitigating tags were more frequent than in men, while in men's speech the main use for tags was for confirmation (what Holmes later referred to as epistemic modal).

### 2.3.5 Swearing and Taboo Language

Swearing, insults, or taboo language can be easily interpreted as a conventionalised form of impoliteness and seen as an attack on the hearer's positive face. Although their use might not be aimed directly at the listener, their presence in certain speech acts has the potential to cause offence. Scholarly work on swearing is limited, and therefore not many definitions have been put forward. Jay (1992) defines it as a range of speech acts including "cursing, profanity, blasphemy, slang, obscenity, insults, and slurs" (Jay, 1992, p.15). He also notes that the reception of these speech acts will be determined by the context in which they are used. There is also a popular folklinguistic view that swearing is more common in men than in women. It has been posited that this is due to "women being more conscious of propriety, they try harder to avoid using such terms" (Murphy, 2010, p.165). Earlier studies on swearing and gender contributed to the belief that

swearing was far more common among men (Jespersen, 1922; Jay, 1992), Lakoff (1975) claimed that women use expressions such as ‘oh dear’ or ‘goodness’ while men used words like ‘shit’ or ‘damn’. Kramer (1974) explored the use of swear words in cartoons from the New Yorker and found that the authors used swearing far more frequently for their male characters. Murphy (2009) analyses a small corpus of informal conversations in Ireland and found that younger males used the word ‘fuck’ and other derivatives of it more frequently than the women in the study. When women were asked about their views on the use of swearing, they revealed that they felt this type of language use in a woman would make her appear uneducated or belonging to a lower social class.

Other studies, however, have found that the more stereotypical view of gender and swearing is not reflective of reality (Hughes, 1992; Jay, 1992; Baruch and Jenkins, 2007; Thelwall, 2008). Coates (2004) found that in everyday interactions when men tell stories to other men, they swear more than when women interact with other women. However, she also found that in contexts where both men and women are present, both groups adjust their linguistic choices to follow the norms of the other gender. Thelwall (2008) found that in computer-mediated contexts a difference can be observed between men and women overall, but he also observed that for younger women the use of swear words has increased over time. Even though the differences between genders in swearing may not be as marked as previous studies have suggested, it would appear that swearing and taboo language is perceived as an indication of masculinity.

### 2.3.6 Commands

In this study commands are defined as speech acts which convey that the speaker wants something done by the listener. These are other politeness markers in which men and women have been said to differ. There are many ways in which a command can be performed, and thus for them to be considered polite or not, factors such as context, relationship between participants, and tone of voice, among others should be considered. Goodwin (1990) analysed interactions of boys and girls while they were playing and observed differences in the way directives were used. She noted that boys used direct commands to help establish status in their group. Girls, on the other hand, used mitigating devices to include the listener and the speaker in the directive. The use of ‘let’s’, ‘gonna’, or modality were some of the more frequent devices used by girls when imparting commands. Drawing on Goodwin’s findings, West (1998) investigated differences in issuing directives by male and female doctors. She found that women doctors used directives in a way that proposed a joint action with the patient, while male

doctors used bare commands more frequently. Coates (2013) attributed these differences between genders to women's cooperative style of interaction which is accompanied by lexical devices frequently associated with polite language. Moreover, she rejects the notion that greater frequency of certain linguistic features in women's language then this is a sign of weakness in women.

Differences in language use and gender have been established in a large number of studies (Newman et al., 2008; Argamon et al., 2003, 2009; Otterbacher, 2010; Mulac et al. 2013; Baker, 2014). Politeness and gender studies, however, do not seem to be in complete agreement regarding differences between men and women. Studies which claim that women are more polite than men have been criticised for viewing women's language and behaviour in a stereotypical manner. On the other hand, studies that assert that it is not necessarily the case that there are significant differences between men and women can be faulted for basing conclusions on close readings of a small dataset. This research's assumptions align with those studies which propose that, generally speaking, women are more polite than men. Although it would be impossible to state that women are unequivocally more polite in all interactions, the working hypothesis here is that women tend to use polite language more frequently. This can be seen the recurrent use of apologies, hedging, intensifiers, and less swearing for example (see Sections 2.3.1 to 2.3.6). There may be a variety of factors which could explain the reasons these differences between the genders exists, but this is not the objective of the present study (cf. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013). This thesis builds upon the theories of politeness and gender previously described, to establish whether significant differences can be observed between male and female characters in romantic comedies.

## 2.4 Romantic Comedies and Gender

Romantic comedies have historically been a popular film genre with audiences. The genre is the seventh highest grossing in the North American market, amassing over $10 billion in the domestic box office from 1995 to 2021 (Nash Information Services). In spite of being dismissed by some critics as formulaic (Grindon, 2011) due to its predictability and unrealistic nature (see Section 2.5), its worldwide popularity cannot be denied. Moreover, previous studies have demonstrated that the evaluation and analysis of romantic comedies can provide insights with regard to how contemporary issues such as gender, race, or class are framed (Alberti, 2013; Kaklamanidou, 2013). In regard to

the films included in the corpus used in this thesis, the underlying presupposition is that female characters will be more likely to use markers of linguistic politeness. In other words, the assumption in this work is that language used by male and female characters will follow more traditional views of language and politeness (see Section 2.3). With this in mind, exploring language and gender differences in a genre which attempts to replicate contemporary discourse, can lead to interesting findings with regard to gender characterisation in these films.

A romantic comedy has been defined as "a film which has as its central narrative motor a quest for love, which portrays this quest in a light-hearted way and almost always to a successful conclusion" (Jeffers McDonald, 2007, p.9). It has been argued, however, that the central theme of romantic comedies is romance, and audiences' main interest is whether the main characters will end up together (Mernit, 2000). Moreover, experts in film studies have pointed out that genres go beyond classifications or labels, but they also consist of "a specific system of expectation and hypothesis which spectators bring with them to the cinema" (Neale, 1990, p.46). Production companies and film studios fulfil these expectations through casting choices, cinematography, soundtrack, and the way in which films are marketed.

In film studies, genres are considered to have a master plot, that is, distinctive elements in a certain order typically associated with a genre (Grindon, 2011), films which fall under a certain categorisation will normally include a combination of these elements. In his work on the internal structure of the folktale, Vladimir Propp (1968) identifies a series of "moves" often found in tales, and a series of distributions of these moves that can help in deconstructing the internal structure of any tale. Similarly, certain elements can be consistently found in romantic comedies. Grindon (2011, pp.9-10) proposes a 10-move model to examine romantic comedy plots; this model will be adopted to identify key scenes to be analysed qualitatively in this research.

*Move 1: Unfulfilled Desire*. One or both main characters are missing something in their lives, usually presented as discontent in their romantic lives or at times in their professional lives. *In My Best Friend's Wedding* (1997) Julianne finds out her best friend, whom she is in love with, is getting married soon. At the beginning of these films, the character usually feels frustrated or sceptical about finding love.

*Move 2: the Meeting.* Also known as the "meet cute", the two protagonists meet for the first time. In some cases, the couples are instantly attracted to each other, like in *The Holiday* (2006) for example, when Amanda first meets Graham. In other cases, the

characters' personalities clash, as in *Silver Linings Playbook* (2012) when the leads first meet each other.

*Move 3: Fun Together.* The two characters start spending more time together and going on dates in the park or the beach. Montages and soundtracks are technical elements that are often observed in this move, such as *in Crazy Rich Asians* (2018) when Rachel and Nick first arrive in Singapore.

*Move 4: Obstacles Arise.* The future of the couple becomes uncertain by problems arising from the characters' lives before the relationship which drive the plot. For example, in *10 Things I Hate About You* (1999), Kat becomes suspicious of Patrick's motives.

*Move 5: the Journey.* In some cases, the couple retreat to a special place, to change their normal routines and try to find a way to resolve or avoid the obstacle the two characters are facing. In *As Good As It Gets* (1997), Melvin invites Carol to go to Baltimore which helps build the foundation for their future relationship.

*Move 6: New Conflicts.* The couple faces new hardships in their relationship which put their future as a couple at risk. In *Something's Gotta Give* (2003), Erica is disillusioned by Harry's problems in commiting to her.

*Move 7: the Choice.* The characters are faced with a decision on whether or not to take action to save the relationship. In *The Proposal* (2009), Margaret decides to leave Andrew to avoid issues with his family.

*Move 8: Crisis.* Once that choice is made, the couple might face its negative consequences, putting their future in jeopardy. In *Never Been Kissed* (1999), once Josie confesses her true identity, Sam re-evaluates his feelings towards her.

*Move 9: Epiphany.* During the evolution of the courtship, the couple experience an epiphany towards the end of their relationship, which leads to personal sacrifice to save the relationship. For example, in *Jerry Maguire* (1996), Jerry goes back to Dorothy to tell her he wants to be with her.

*Move 10: Resolution.* In many cases, romantic comedies end with a happy resolution where the couple end happily together, while at the same time fulfilling their desires from the beginning of the film. In *Sleepless in Seattle* (1993), Annie and Sam eventually meet at the top of the Empire State Building. Even though happy endings are well-established in romantic comedies, some films have opted for a variety of resolutions which depart from the predictability of the genre, like in *Annie Hall* (1977).

Hollywood romantic comedies have been the subject of studies to explore genre, gender roles, power dynamics, among other areas. Authors have focused on different eras of romantic comedies ranging from the 1930s (Kendall, 2002) to mid-1960s (Glitre, 2006), and to more recent works addressing the 1990 to early 2000's era (Jeffers McDonald 2007; Alberti, 2013; Kaklamanidou, 2013). Women's portrayal in Hollywood rom coms has certainly evolved since before the 1930s, Kendall considers this era as a turning point of the depiction of women in the genre. She highlights that actresses at the time were given roles that provided them "assurance, along with eccentricity, stubbornness and wit" (Kendall, 2002, p.5). Even though these characters were more complex, confident, or ambitious, the expectation was for them to follow certain femininity norms (Kendall, 2002, p.8). She notes that in spite of these changes to female characters, central to the plot of these films was the expectation that by the end of the film, the couple is expected to get married and have their happy ending. This phenomenon was referred to as the problem of the "unwed woman" by Harvey (1987), which he found to be a central theme in most romantic comedies from the 30s to the 50s, a cycle in romantic comedies referred to as *screwball cycle*. This period was highly influenced by the Motion Picture Production Code, also known as simply 'The Code' or 'The Hays Code', which meant that motion pictures had to adhere to a strict set of rules. For romantic comedies this meant that certain subjects such as "first-night scenes", "a man and woman in bed together", "excessive or lustful kissing" or any sex in any form could not be depicted and the "the sanctity of marriage and the home had to be upheld". Hence the portrayal of male and female characters followed more traditional views of gender roles in films produced during this time (Glitre, 2006; Grindon, 2011). In this research, films for this period will not be analysed since open access to scripts from that era was not available. Nevertheless, it is important to make reference to this period as its censorship had a serious impact on the genre, particularly in the construction of female characters and the way traditional gender roles were upheld and idealised in years to come (Doherty, 1999; Haskell, 2016).

Following the *screwball cycle*, in the late 50s to mid-60s the 'sex comedy cycle' began, with movies such as *Pillow Talk* (Gordon, 1959) being a prime example of the era. In these films, sex and sexuality were more openly discussed, and men were depicted as playboys and women used their sexuality to get the male lead to commit to marriage (Grindon, 2011). It is a clear departure from earlier romantic comedies with "the traditional happy ending, in which marriage is still perceived as the best solution" (Evans and Deleyto, 1998, p.6). In the 70s, the radical romantic comedy cycle started, with Woody Allen writing and directing films like *Annie Hall* (1977) and *Manhattan* (1979).

These films represented an era which put forward and “endorsed non-monogamous and non-heterosexual choices and lifestyles” (McCabe, 2009, p.161). Furthermore, radical rom coms intended to portray a more realistic view of romance, where divorce and lack of happy endings were accepted in their narratives (Jeffers McDonald, 2007).

The neo-traditional cycle followed in the 80s, and while some similarities can be found with the previous cycle, the main difference is the return to more conservative narrative and traditional endings. Films like *When Harry Met Sally…* (Ephron,1989) or *Pretty Woman* (Lawton, 1990) are clear examples of this era. Neo-traditional romantic comedies bring a marked departure from the previous cycle by “greatly de-emphasising sexuality” (Jeffers McDonald, 2007, p.97). In many of these films, the female lead’s career and a position of power is usually at the expense of giving up traditional female roles in her family or romantic life. Negra (2004, p.6) points out that films in this cycle put “an emphasis on schooling women in the need to scale back their professionalism lest they lose their femininity”. Even though depicting women in positions of power in professional settings can be interpreted as a more current depiction of women, Grindon (2011, p.60) argues that “the reaffirmation of romance brings many traditional conventions back to the romantic comedy” along with more traditional views of gender roles.

Mortimer (2010, p.8), argues that even though the genre has evolved over time, its foundations or “blueprint” has not, and audiences expect to see a certain narrative in these films. Similarly, Ostrowska (2017) believes that romantic comedies respond to changes in society’s norms and values and changes in gender roles. Nonetheless, the genre is perceived as a conservative one and is likely to continue to represent views that “reinforce tradition and conformity” (Mortimer, 2010, p.76). Although male and female roles have evolved in romantic comedies, it cannot be denied that Hollywood romantic comedies still portray femininity and masculinity in a more traditional and conservative manner. In other words, female characters are well-mannered, polite, more emotional, and their main goal is finding a romantic partner. Male characters, on the other hand, are less emotionally available, more assertive, and have issues committing to stable relationships. With this in mind, it stands to reason that the language used by male and female characters will also follow similar patterns, particularly regarding politeness markers that are traditionally associated with men or women.

Much of the current literature on romantic comedies focuses particularly on the evolution of the genre, or gender representation through a close inspection of a small set of films, among other themes, and their findings have been of great value to the field.

However, in this thesis, the objective is to analyse potential differences in linguistic features between male and female characters in romantic comedies, specifically those that indicate contrasts between genders in the use of politeness markers. This thesis is grounded on the assumption that female characters in this genre are more likely to use indicators of politeness in their discourse. With this in mind, a statistical analysis of these linguistic markers will help corroborate or rebut this assumption. Even though constructions of masculinity and femininity in romantic comedies has evolved since the 1930s, it has been argued that many of the stereotypes for both genders are still found in rom coms nowadays (Kendall, 2002; Mortimer, 2010; Alberti, 2013; Ostrowska, 2017; Hefner, 2019).

## 2.5 Film Discourse

For many years, film and television have been widely popular forms of entertainment globally. With the development of on-demand or streaming services, films now reach an even larger audience. In some cases they may reflect social realities and, to an extent, can influence the audience's views on matters such as gender, race, or social status (Kord and Krimmer, 2005; Bednarek, 2015). With this in mind, films are an appealing medium to explore ways in which male and female characters are portrayed and how cultural gender identities are constructed.

There are a number of labels used to identify interactions between characters in films, TV series, and other forms of scripted entertainment. Some authors favour the term "film dialogue" (Kozloff, 2000; Rossi, 2011; Toolan, 2011), others prefer "the language of fictional television" (Bednarek, 2010), "telecinematic discourse" (Piazza, Bednarek and Rossi, 2011), or "television dialogue" (Quaglio, 2009). In the present study the term "film discourse" (Dynel, 2011b, 2017) will be used to describe "fictional characters' communication in feature films" (Dynel, 2011b, p.41). The term encompasses communicative expressions in film, from monologues, dialogues and any interactions between three or more characters. It is important to note here the difference between *film discourse* and *cinematic discourse*, given that the latter includes elements pertaining to cinematography which are not studied from a linguistic point of view. Film discourse, nonetheless, has elements that go beyond interactions between characters and it is influenced by the "collective sender" (Dynel, 2011a, p.42) i.e. scriptwriters, directors, sound editors and other members of a film's production crew. Although the focal point of most research in film studies has been what is visually communicated in

films, in recent years there has been some development in research on film discourse (Kozloff, 2000; Culpeper, 2001; Bubel, 2008; Dynel 2011b, 2017).

Film discourse has been characterised as being not-authentic, constructed, or prefabricated dialogue between fictional characters (Bednarek, 2010; Chovanec, 2011) and there are a number of contrasts that can be made with respect to real-life or everyday discourse. Elements such as spontaneity vs. careful preparation, a speaker's intention to convey a message vs. a character reproducing words from a script, or the permanent vs. transient nature highlight the differences between the discourses (Dynel, 2011a). It is due to these dichotomies that the use of film discourse for linguistic research has been contested or questioned seeing that it "has been scripted, written and rewritten, censored, polished, rehearsed, and performed" (Kozloff, 2000, p.18). Nevertheless, research which has used film discourse to gain insight into different linguistic phenomena supports the notion that in actuality it is a reflection of real-life language use and it can be studied to better understand linguistic problems (Richardson, 2010; Bednarek, 2015). The stance taken in this research aligns with the views of Richardson (2010), Dynel (2011a), and Bednarek (2015) considering that screenwriters are guided by linguistic principles used in day-to-day interactions. For certain genres (e.g.: romantic comedies), a good film script should "mirror language users' everyday communicative patterns, evoking an illusion of real-life conversations, and subscribe to the so-called reality code" (Dynel, 2011a, p.43). Similarities between film discourse and everyday talk are subject to time and context and there are a myriad of socio-pragmatic factors which influence script choices such as "a character's status, age, gender, idiolect, relationship between characters, or the norms holding for a given community of practice" (Dynel, 2017, p.464). Taking this into consideration, as well as the characteristics of romantic-comedy scripts (see Section 2.4), linguistic investigation in relation to politeness and gender in this type of discourse deserves to be explored.

Film dialogues are used, among other aims, to construct characters and their identities as well as develop relationships on screen; the language used to achieve these goals has been studied in previous research. In this research a "humanising approach" (Culpeper, 2001) to the construction of a character's identity will be favoured; this view assumes that film audiences "recognise, understand, and appreciate fictional characters insofar as their appearances, actions, and speech reflect or refer to those of persons in real life" (Mead, 1990, p.442). In genres with a realistic contemporary setting, it is true that that fictional characters are the product of someone's imagination. However, many are portrayed as being typical members of a given society (Culpeper, 2001). In order to create day-to-day social interactions that audiences are able to recognise and believe

in, contemporary films scripts should respond to changes in society and capture that when creating a character (Dow, 1996). Interpretation and perceptions of fictional characters are processed and influenced by audience members' own experiences and background while also accounting for the context in which the character is placed. Factors such as gender or social status will influence pre-conceived notions or stereotypes that the audience might expect from a character in relation to verbal and non-verbal expressions. These conventionalised views are often reflected in films to create a more realistic viewing for the spectators; consequently, language used in popular culture texts (e.g. romantic comedies) can help strengthen stereotypical views and attitudes (Berger, 1992). Contrarily, in some cases television or film discourse can influence and shape audiences' attitudes and to a certain degree their everyday language as well (Dynel, 2011b). Although it can be contested that in some genres there are characters that are developed and scripted to be out of the ordinary or "prototypicality distortions" (Culpeper, 2011), well-created and portrayed fictional characters are perceived by most audiences as believable and plausible.

One of the main characteristics of film narrative is its multimodality; it includes factors such as body language, facial expressions, inflections and intonation, and of course, language (Baumgarten, 2008; Bednarek, 2015). When building a film dialogue corpus, most elements that are beyond scripted language are generally not incorporated into the discourse analysis. This approach has been criticised for overlooking the importance of semiotic codes that influence the message being conveyed on screen. A multimodal approach to analysing film or television discourse has been proposed by researchers in order to address this issue (Baños et al., 2013; Bednarek, 2015). While it is true that films provide a source of non-verbal components to analyse, this study's main focus is the language used by characters. When exploring gender differences and representation in film, many studies have been conducted on non-verbal factors such female under-representation (Smith et al., 2010), traditional gender roles (Neuendorf et al, 2010), power (Sutherland and Feltey, 2017), social background (Mendible, 2008), sexualisation (Farrimond, 2013) to name a few. These studies explored gender in films by focusing on aspects that go beyond language, but there is not an abundance of research on the language that is scripted and performed by men and women and what similarities and differences can be found; this research will aim to fill this gap in knowledge.

A significant number of important politeness studies have focused on real-life interactions, while others have addressed it in literary discourse (Brown and Gilman, 1989; Bouchara, 2009; Rossen-Knill, 2011). On the other hand, the language of

television – particularly exploitative genres such as reality TV (Culpeper and Holmes, 2013) – has received a great deal of attention in impoliteness studies in recent years (Culpeper, 2005; Bousfield, 2008; Lorenzo-Dus, 2009; Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, Lorenzo-Dus & Bou-Franch, 2013).

## 2.6 Natural Language Processing in Language and Gender Studies

An aim of this research is to investigate the extent to which NLP tools and techniques can be used to examine differences between male and female characters regarding the use of politeness markers. This section reviews literature on current approaches to analysing politeness through a more quantitative approach, and therefore explains the motivation for adapting these approaches to politeness studies in film discourse. Studies which have used NLP techniques are reviewed, followed by an overview of how these methods can be applied in the context of this thesis.

Most studies on gender and politeness, as well as gender representation in romantic comedies have used qualitative approaches to analysing content of media texts. It is true that given the nature of the subject matter, qualitative approaches are generally favoured to allow the researcher to account for context and a closer reading of smaller text samples. One of the main criticisms to qualitative approaches, however, is their reliance on the researcher's interpretation of the contents. "This intensive and time-consuming focus is one of the reasons that much qualitative content analysis has involved small samples of media content and been criticised by some researchers as unscientific and unreliable" (Macnamara, 2005, p.5). On the other hand, studies that use quantitative approaches in text analysis for politeness studies might be challenged for not being able to capture nuances in speech, social relations, and other pragmatic elements involved in dialogue. To an extent, developments in computational methods for language analysis can address some of these criticisms.

It is not news that in the last two decades the amount of online media content has grown exponentially, and it is far more easily accessed by researchers nowadays. These changes have allowed computational approaches in text analysis to find language patterns in larger quantities of texts and thus make inferences more accurately. Moreover, advances in technology and the use of new techniques as part of research methodologies have made it possible to study complex subjects in a more sophisticated

and accurate fashion. Nevertheless, the role of the researcher remains one of paramount importance and their interpretation of the outcome of these techniques and results is invaluable. These new approaches are not intended as a replacement for the researcher but rather as a tool that can help to identify and highlight patterns in larger quantities of data.

In recent years, the use of big data has become more popular in methodologies in the social sciences. Rich sources of texts are now available in digital archives allowing for more research in the field assisted by the use of computational text analysis tools. Tasks such as gender identification, content analysis, document classification, part of speech tagging, machine translation, or sentiment analysis, among others, can be automated through the use of supervised or unsupervised methodologies (Müller-Hansen et al., 2020). One of the advantages of using computational tools, such as machine learning for example, is that the algorithms involved are able to discover meaningful relationships between variables in larger datasets and can then be analysed in more depth by the researcher (Amaturo and Aragona, 2019).

Social data science, as referred to by Schroeder (2020) is an emerging area in which big data is used to address questions in social sciences. As such it is helping reshape knowledge in this field, which has been described as having “low degree of task certainty and low mutual dependence” (Schroeder, 2020, p.1595). More recent formats in which new data is presented have allowed for new lines of enquiry in the. Whitley (2000) also argues that social science does not always build on previous work and that this is a direct consequence of the nature of the type of data being used in the field. One of the changes introduced in social data science is “mutual dependence”, since datasets are easily accessed to replicate results or re-use by other researchers who in turn build upon previous findings and can attempt to improve accuracy and reliability of earlier works (Schroeder, 2020). One weakness of social data science is the lack of context of the data being used and information regarding external factors (Müller-Hansen et al., 2020, Schroeder, 2020). However, approaches in this field do not exclude a qualitative reading of findings to help advance knowledge in the field, which can mitigate the shortcomings of using quantitative techniques.

### 2.6.1 Text Classification in Politeness Research

In this section text classification in politeness studies is reviewed. In recent years, more studies have used text classification techniques to identify politeness strategies in different types of discourse. The present study builds upon findings and methodologies implemented in some of these studies. Lexical features often found in theorised politeness strategies, which helped achieve higher accuracy levels in text classification tasks in these studies, are discussed in this section. In text classification analysis, the features extracted are normally grounded on previous theoretical frameworks that motivate the research questions being asked.

Most of the studies reviewed focus on the accuracy of the text classification tasks for different pieces of text and contexts. The features chosen to identify certain politeness strategies, as well as the type of machine learning algorithm, will play an important role in the accuracy of the classifier. There is no doubt that these findings have great relevance in the field. However, it is not the aim of this research to develop new classification techniques, but to analyse the features, grounded on politeness theory, which have helped in the creation of these tools and led to interesting findings in politeness studies. In order to achieve this, the politeness() package will be examined in detail and instances where indicators of politeness are identified will be analysed in context to determine whether they contribute to utterances being interpreted as polite (see Section 4.2).

Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al. (2013) proposed a computational framework designed to identify linguistic aspects of politeness. They report that their domain-independent politeness classifier achieves accuracy levels close to human performance. A new corpus of requests annotated for politeness was used to guide their research. Their focus on requests is motivated by the fact that the nature of these interactions frequently involve one of the participants imposing on the other. Using Brown and Levinson (1987) as one of their main theoretical foundations, they see requests as ideal candidates for politeness strategy use since the speaker will most likely attempt to mitigate any imposition on the listener. Their corpus is comprised of interactions between members of Wikipedia and Stack Exchange, where requests are usually involved in both communities, either for editing purposes or for help on a range of topics. Amazon Mechanical Turk (AMT) workers were used to annotate the interactions, and each exchange had five independent annotations. The use of AMT workers has not escaped some criticism (Hoffman et al., 2017), seeing that judging politeness can be a difficult task and there is no information on whether the AMT workers were trained in linguistic

politeness recognition. Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al. (2013) acknowledge this as a potential weakness and use strict annotator vetting procedures (by using paraphrasing tasks and eliciting linguistic attentiveness (Munro et al., 2010)) and also use a z-score for each worker to normalise the overall scores.

As previously stated, their classifier used linguistic features associated with certain strategies, grounded in politeness theories. Requests which contained linguistic politeness markers were extracted by using the Stanford Dependency Parser (de Marneffe et al., 2006). Table 2.1 illustrates the features that are associated with positive or negative politeness strategies. It also shows the associated politeness score based on human annotation and the percentage of requests containing the respective lexical items which are found in the top quartile of politeness scores. As evidenced by Table 2.1, some features are more frequently associated with polite requests, while others tend to be found more frequently in impolite requests. In the evaluation of their classifiers, they report 74-79% accuracy for in-domain settings and 64-72% for cross-domain settings using a bag of words classifier. With a linguistically informed classifier, accuracy levels improve with 78-83% for in-domain settings and 67-75% cross-domain settings. Details on how classification tasks were developed is beyond the scope of this research.

| Strategy | Politeness | In top quartile | Example |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Gratitude | $0.87^{***}$ | $78\%^{***}$ | **I** really **appreciate** that you've done them. |
| 2. Deference | $0.78^{***}$ | $70\%^{***}$ | **Nice work** so far on your rewrite. |
| 3. Greeting | $0.43^{***}$ | $45\%^{***}$ | **Hey**, I just tried to . . . |
| 4. Positive lexicon | $0.12^{***}$ | $32\%^{***}$ | **Wow**! / This is a **great** way to deal. . . |
| 5. Negative lexicon | $-0.13^{***}$ | $22\%^{**}$ | If you're going to **accuse** me . . . |
| 6. Apologizing | $0.36^{***}$ | $53\%^{***}$ | **Sorry** to bother you . . . |
| 7. Please | $0.49^{***}$ | $57\%^{***}$ | Could you **please** say more. . . |
| 8. Please start | $-0.30^{*}$ | 22% | **Please** do not remove warnings . . . |
| 9. Indirect (btw) | $0.63^{***}$ | $58\%^{**}$ | **By the way**, where did you find . . . |
| 10. Direct question | $-0.27^{***}$ | $15\%^{***}$ | **What** is your native language? |
| 11. Direct start | $-0.43^{***}$ | $9\%^{***}$ | **So** can you retrieve it or not? |
| 12. Counterfactual modal | $0.47^{***}$ | $52\%^{***}$ | **Could/Would** you . . . |
| 13. Indicative modal | 0.09 | 27% | **Can/Will** you . . . |
| 14. 1st person start | $0.12^{***}$ | $29\%^{**}$ | **I** have just put the article . . . |
| 15. 1st person pl. | $0.08^{*}$ | 27% | Could **we** find a less complex name . . . |
| 16. 1st person | $0.08^{***}$ | $28\%^{***}$ | It is **my** view that ... |
| 17. 2nd person | $0.05^{***}$ | $30\%^{***}$ | But what's the good source **you** have in mind? |
| 18. 2nd person start | $-0.30^{***}$ | $17\%^{**}$ | **You**'ve reverted yourself . . . |
| 19. Hedges | $0.14^{***}$ | 28% | I **suggest** we start with . . . |
| 20. Factuality | $-0.38^{***}$ | $13\%^{***}$ | **In fact** you did link, . . . |

**Table 2.1: Politeness markers identified by classifier** (Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al.2013, p.5)

Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al. (2013) used their computational approach to study power dynamics in the two online communities their data was gathered from. They found a negative correlation between politeness and power in both communities; members who had higher status achieved lower politeness scores than those who were at the bottom of the social ladder. Although their work has some weaknesses, their findings and contribution to the field have paved the way for other studies to develop newer methodologies and address criticisms.

Drawing on findings from Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil (2013), Voigt et al. (2017) explore linguistic features in the language used by police officers when addressing black and white members of the community in routine traffic stops, with the main focus being on levels of respectfulness. Their theoretical framework is based on politeness theories put forward by Brown and Levinson (1987), Goffman (1967), and Lakoff (1973), as they find some correlations between certain politeness strategies and respectful language. Their dataset contains transcribed interactions from police officers' camera footage when stopping vehicles. Computational linguistic methods are used to extract features from each utterance made by officers. Apart from those features found in Danescu-Niculescu-

Mizil et al. (2013), they also include features from studies by Tausczik and Pennebaker (2010) and Prabhakaran et al. (2012) to account for aspects of politeness that are relevant in the context of their study.

Although the main aim of their research was not to build a classifier to detect politeness, they used features which indicated the use of politeness strategies to determine whether there was a significant difference in the interactions between black and white members of the community and police officers. They concluded that there were clear contrasts between these two groups and based on these findings they developed a classifier to determine race of the community member being spoken to. Their classifier achieved nearly 70% accuracy, confirming observable differences in linguistic markers of politeness in the language of police officers based on the race of the listener.

Based on the two studies reviewed above and Brown and Levinson's politeness theories, Yeomans et al. (2018), developed the first politeness package in R which identifies politeness markers in English. Their package, along with *tidyverse()* and *tidytext()* packages, are the NLP tools used in this research. A detailed description of its functions and use in this study will be provided in Chapter 3.

Other studies have used the findings from Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al. (2013) to create more sophisticated and accurate classifiers. Aljanaideh et al. (2020) found that using the features from Table 2.1 in a model which clusters contextualised embeddings achieved higher accuracy levels. Niu and Bansal (2018) also made use of those features and developed weakly-supervised models that can generate polite responses in short dialogues. Instead of using support vector machines, they favoured the use of convolutional neural networks which yielded higher accuracy levels of 85% for in-domain settings. Similarly, Aubakirova and Bansal (2016) and Madaan et al. (2020) have used more complex machine learning algorithms to improve politeness detection and generation. Even though their findings have made important contributions to the development of politeness classification, details on their methods is beyond the scope of this research. While these methods might be seen as more sophisticated, they did not allow for the inspection of linguistic markers of politeness individually, but instead focused on politeness scores and classification based on findings from Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al.'s (2013) research. Yeomans et al.'s (2018) *politeness()* package, on the other hand, allows users to explore frequency of use of markers of politeness derived from Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al.'s research as well as findings from Voigt et al. (2017). The combination of the findings from both studies meant that a much wider

range of politeness markers could be explored (e.g.: swearing, intensifiers, reassurance, bare commands, acknowledgement, give and ask agency, formal and informal title) and, when analysing them in context, the type of politeness strategies in which these markers were observed in. It is for these reasons that the *politeness()* package was selected as the most suitable tool to address the questions in this research.

## 2.7 Conclusions

This chapter reviewed literature from previous research in the disciplines that underpin this research. The theoretical foundation which motivated this research was reviewed and key studies in linguistic and film studies – specifically romantic comedies – which explored gender differences were summarised. Moreover, theories of politeness which will be adopted in this study to analyse differences in gender in both a quantitative and qualitative approach were described.

Research on politeness and gender which analysed differences in use of politeness strategies between men and women was reviewed. Moreover, studies on the portrayal of male and female characters in Hollywood romantic comedies were presented. The focus on these works in this chapter served to highlight perceptions of politeness and gender and media representation of gender roles. Finally, computational approaches in politeness research were reviewed to identify linguistic markers that would help establish differences between men and women in this research.

# Chapter 3

# Methodology

## 3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to describe the data collection process in this study as well as the methodology used to analyse it. Developments in the field of computational text analysis have allowed to address issues in more traditional methodologies in the field (Gilbert, 2010; Alvarez, 2016). This chapter will elaborate on the rationale which motivated the choice of data, its processing, and analysis; the text analysis methods will also be described.

A number of decisions need to be made when designing a research plan. At the highest level, methods and design will be influenced by ontological and epistemological decisions (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, factors such as the aim of the research and who it might benefit, along with the experience of the researcher will certainly shape any methodological choices (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013).

## 3.2 Research Approach

This research is shaped by the understanding that language and its use are closely linked to society's construction of gender. It assumes a strong correlation between discourse and power relations which are perpetuated by gender stereotypes in contemporary popular culture films in western culture among other mass media mediums. Films have the power to influence popular opinion and impact and maintain views on gender roles, race, among other issues (Kord and Krimmer, 2005). This study analyses film discourse and aims to identify whether there is a statistical difference in the way in which characters express themselves and how that might contribute to societal gender constructions.

In recent years, changes in methodological research approaches have taken place in the social sciences; areas of study which were traditionally associated with qualitative methodologies have become more accepting of the use of new technologies. Many factors have helped the development of computational approaches – from easily accessible data in digital formats, faster and more powerful software, to a growing open-source culture (Alvarez, 2016).

With the advent of new computational methods and their use in fields traditionally associated with qualitative research methodologies, the contrast between qualitative and quantitative research has become less polarised in recent years. Fields such as linguistics or sociolinguistics have adopted more quantitative approaches to answer questions which were previously addressed by using qualitative research methodologies. Qualitative methods have been traditionally associated with an interpretative analysis of a smaller data sample (field notes, journals, interviews, focus groups), and the results are, in general, the researcher's interpretation of findings (Dörnyei, 2007). On the other hand, a large part of computational analysis of natural language aims to process as much data as possible in real time to identify patterns and numerical results (Maier et al., 2018). These methodologies have also been used to better understand and potentially solve problems in the social sciences thus blurring the line between quantitative and qualitative approaches in text analysis. The use of computational tools to help address the research questions enabled this research to combine qualitative and quantitative approaches. The difference in qualitative and quantitative analysis in this research does not lie in the way in which data was gathered, but in the different ways in which it was analysed. One of the benefits of this approach is highlighted by Denzin (2017) when he states that the combination of different approaches will result in better explaining different social phenomena.

A corpus of romantic comedy scripts comprises the primary data in this research, which in turn were transformed into quantitative representations of said text. The quantitative representation of certain markers of linguistic politeness involved measuring the frequency of tokens derived from the NLP tool used. The stance adopted in this research is in line with the one taken by Gauntlett (2008) or Hansen (2009) where the two methods are viewed as complementary and not as opposing. Hansen (2009) does not believe the use of this methods is incompatible, but rather the use of quantitative methods enrich the theoretical framework which qualitative approaches offer. An aspect which is important to highlight, however, is that when using the type of approaches which are implemented in this thesis, it is crucial to "take care of how raw data counted tokens is translated into meaningful patterns" (Harrington et al., 2008). In this research, this

issue is addressed by analysing sub-sections of the corpus qualitatively and comparing and inspecting them manually to the quantitative outputs.

# 3.3 Research Methods

## 3.3.1 Content Analysis in Gender and Politeness Research

Neuendorf (2017), in her review of language and gender studies, observed a lack of scientific rigour in studies which used content analysis in their methods. Her aim was to create a framework which includes methodological standards in content analysis research. Much of what she discussed informed the methodological decisions in this research. In her approach, she emphasises the relationship between an independent variable, in this case the gender of the character, and other dependent variables, which in this research are the linguistic politeness markers.

Neuendorf (2017) also distinguishes between the availability-based population and exposure-based population of data. The availability approach is linked to the production of the data source being used and it is "usually specified with regard to a given medium at a given time" (Neuendorf, 2017, p.117). Exposure-based approaches, on the other hand, select the data based on the effect it has on consumers. This research uses on an availability-based approach, investigating any differences, if any, in linguistic politeness between male and female characters while also investigating other variables such as gender of the screenwriter and addressee. Film popularity or audience's reaction to them were not taken into consideration when selecting the scripts included in the corpus. Furthermore, she also discusses the importance of defining the population and samples to be analysed in any given content analysis study. Population and sampling issues and decision are addressed in the following section.

# 3.4 Population and Sampling

The population in this research is English-language, romantic comedy film scripts; no sampling frame was available from previous studies. Both purposive and convenience sampling were used as strategies when selecting the scripts. The list of romantic comedies was purposively designed to include films which were labelled under the genre

and would therefore help best address the objectives of this research. Scripts which were available to access free of charge were then selected.

### 3.4.1 Selection of Films

A list of romantic comedies was compiled which included films under the 'romantic comedy' category on the websites Internet Movie Database (IMDb.com), Rotten Tomatoes (rottentomatoes.com), and the filmography section in Jeffers McDonald's (2007) study. While other studies (Johnson and Holmes, 2009) have used top-grossing romantic comedies as a guide to select films to be analysed, the film's success was not an aspect in which the research questions hinged on, and therefore convenience sampling was a more fitting approach. In the cases where the films were unknown to the researcher, the plot and summary of the film were inspected to ensure the films did, in fact, belong to the genre. Furthermore, the selection of films was grounded of the definition of romantic comedy provided in Section 2.4. This resulted in a sample of 56 scripts in total (see Appendix A). The films span between 1977 and 2018; the collection of scripts began in 2019, and therefore films after that point are not included. Furthermore, given the resurgence of romantic comedies from the late-80s and throughout the 90s and 00s (Rubinfeld, 2001; Negra, 2009), access to scripts from these decades was more readily available and therefore account for a large portion of the corpus.

The vast majority of the films included in the corpus are American productions, while others were produced or written in the UK, but they are all written in English. Furthermore, in the contemporary climate of discussions on gender and gender identity, it is important to highlight that more recent romantic comedies have attempted to portray characters outside of a heteronormative framework. However, an overwhelming majority of the characters are depicted as cisgender, and while some secondary roles are not heterosexual, issues with gender identity are not addressed in any of the films included in this study. Regarding the screenwriters, none of them have publicly addressed their gender identity, and therefore, for the purposes of this research it is assumed that they identify within the binary classification of gender. It is for these reasons that different gender distinctions are not addressed in the analysis of the data, and the focus is on the two ends of the gender spectrum: male and female characters.

## 3.5 Corpus Building

Film scripts were gathered from various online websites using the sampling list (see Appendix B). Each script was manually found using Google Internet search and downloaded or copied into a text file. In cases where the script was found in a .PDF file, and when the file was not a scanned version of the original script, they were converted into a text file and then checked manually to ensure no information had been lost. The sampling list contained 194 romantic comedies, and while scripts were found for the majority of these films, the data was not always found in a suitable format to include in the corpus. For example, in many cases, the lines of dialogue were found, but there was no reference to the characters' names, some scripts only contained partial character information, and in other cases the scripts had to be bought from the website in question. Ultimately, this produced a corpus comprised of 56 scripts, which contains 59,468 lines of dialogue or 628,521 words in length. 9 of those films were written by a mix-gender team of screenwriters, 17 were written by women, and 30 were written by male screenwriters.

### 3.5.1 Data Pre-Processing

Once the scripts were downloaded into text files, an R (R Core Team, 2020) file was created for each individual script. Each script was inspected manually to create a suitable regular expression for its format to extract relevant information and thus address the research question. The objective was to extract the name of the character and their corresponding lines of dialogue. Some of the scripts contained technical information, such as scene heading (description of time of day and location), scene number, information about camera angles or scene movement, clarification of where a character is on the scene when the camara cannot see them, or a description of the action taking place in the scene. For these scripts, pattern recognition techniques had to be created to exclude this information from the corpus; tidyverse (Wickham et al., 2019) and tidytext (Silge and Robinson, 2016) packages were used to write regular expressions to extract desired information from each script.

Once the script was uploaded to R, a detailed inspection of the structure of the scripts was done manually for each case. The following figure of an extract from one of the scripts exemplifies what is meant by that.

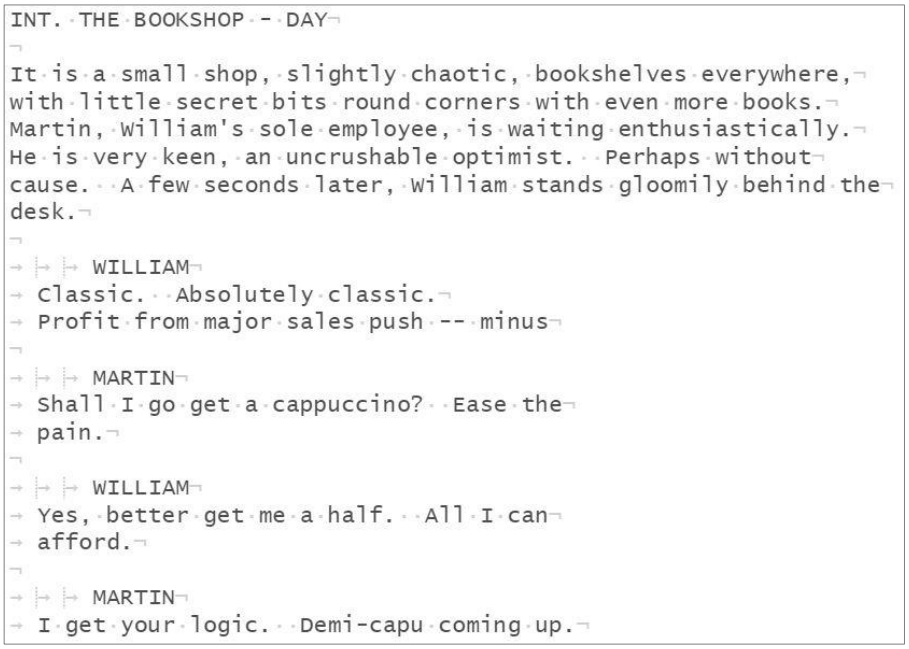


**Figure 3.1:** Screengrab of *Notting Hill* (1999) script extract.

In scripts with patterns similar to the one in Figure 3.1, where the arrows indicate number of tabs in the file, using regular expressions from the packages previously mentioned, the data cleaning tools were instructed that any text found after three tabs and written in all capital letters should be assigned to a “character_name” column; any text found after one tab was assigned to a “dialogue” column; blank lines were assigned to a “blank_line” column; anything that did not fall under those patterns was assigned to a “directions” column. The regular expressions were also designed to delete any blank space after the lines of dialogue, or double spaces within the lines. Although it was unlikely this would affect the outcome of the data analysis, the main goal of the creation of these pre-processing techniques was to create a dataset as tidy as possible. However, not all scripts were in the same format as Figure 3.1. The following are a few examples where different instructions had to be written for the regular expressions to extract the desired information.

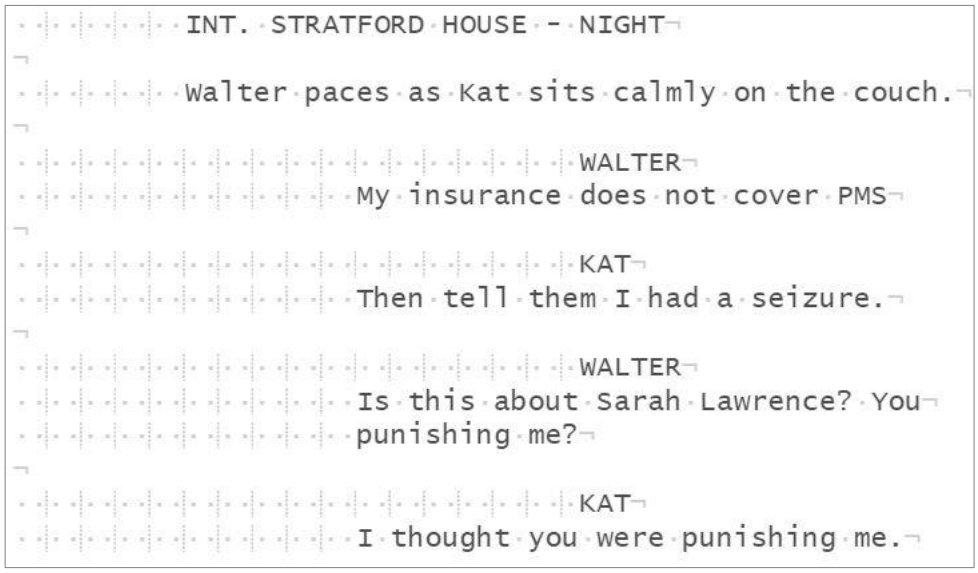


**Figure 3.2**: Screengrab of *10 Things I Hate About You* (1999) script extract.

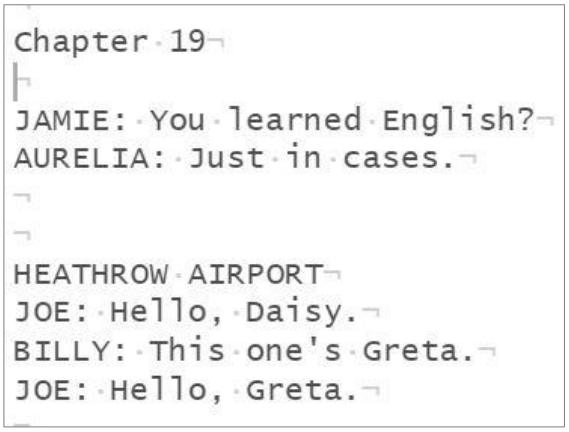


**Figure 3.3:** Screengrab of *Love Actually* (2003) script extract.

Some scripts followed a pattern similar to the one illustrated in Figure 3.2, where the characters' name, the beginning of the dialogue, and the directions are preceded by a number of spaces (each dot in Figure 3.2 represents a space). In the case of the *10 Things I Hate About You* (1999) script, the regular expressions were instructed that characters' names were found after 33 spaces, the beginning of dialogue is anteceded by 20 spaces, and directions by 10 spaces. Other scripts, such as the one illustrated in Figure 3.3, did not have spacing patterns that the data cleaning techniques could be instructed to detect. Therefore, in order to extract important information, the way in which the characters' names were written in the text were used as guidance. For instance, in the *Love Actually* (2003) script (see Figure 3.3), the regular expression used was designed in a way so that words written in all capital letters *and* that were followed by a colon, were assigned to the "character_name" column, and anything that followed a

character's name was dialogue. Lines in the text which did not follow that pattern, or that were not blank lines, were assigned to the "directions" column.

The figures exemplify the three general patterns followed by the scripts that were used in this corpus. However, each script was checked manually to verify the number of tabs, or number of spaces for that particular script. In cases where spacing was not used as a guide, and did not follow the exact same format as Figure 3.3, slight modifications were made to adapt the regular expression, on a case-by-case basis, to retrieve the correct information. Furthermore, the output of each pre-processed script was checked manually to confirm that information that needed to be included, was in fact included in the output, and that content which was not relevant was left out. If any irregularities were detected, the source was manually modified for it to follow the structure of the rest of the script.

The next step involved the creation of a table which included the character name and their gender and, as mentioned in Section 3.4.1, given the nature of the data, only male and female genders were assigned to each character. Once each table was generated, the gender of each character was cross-referenced by checking each film's IMDb cast page. The output of the data cleaning tools for each script was merged with the character-gender table, and joined by the "character_name" column. Once again, the output of the combination of both files was manually checked to corroborate that each character had been assigned the intended gender. In a number of instances, the name of the character was slightly misspelled in the original file, and in those cases the original source was manually changed to the correct spelling. In order to obtain information regarding the gender of the listener, another regular expression was used to populate a new column by checking the gender of the character of the previous line. This approach assumes that all scenes are between two participants, and does not take into consideration cases in which a scene ends, and another begins. Although it is true that the gender of the listener might not be correctly assigned in some cases, for a vast majority of the cases that assumption is correct. In view of the fact that there are nearly 60,000 lines of dialogue in this corpus, doing this process manually would not have been feasible. Furthermore, its accuracy, compared to the chosen approach, would not have been significantly different to justify the time devoted to this task.

Another step involved creating an additional table which indicated the year in which the film was released and the gender of the screenwriter for each film. Three labels were used to identify each group: M (male screenwriters), F (female screenwriters), and MG (mixed-gender teams). Following this, the output of the regular expressions for all

films was combined into one file and merged with the table which contained information on the gender of the screenwriter and year of release. Finally, the output of the combination of these two files was manually inspected to verify that the information in the corpus was accurate.

Although the process of creating this corpus was time-consuming, it meant that the data was in the best possible format to be analysed, it is easily manipulated, and most importantly, it meant that the researcher was extremely familiarised with the content of the corpus. Furthermore, the development of the 56 pre-processing techniques[1] means that other researchers can easily use their structure and make minimal modifications to pre-process any film script available to them[2]. The availability of easily accessed film scripts in recent years combined with the acknowledgement that film discourse is an enduring source of culture and a reflection of language at a point in time (Beckwith, 2009), make this tool valuable for those studies.

## 3.6 Politeness Package

Once the corpus was created, the *politeness()* function in the 'politeness' package (Yeomans et al., 2018) was used to identify markers of politeness included in this tool in the dataset used in this research. As mentioned in Section 2.6.1, its development is based on the finding of previous research on politeness and text classification (Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al., 2013; Voigt et al., 2017). The *politeness()* function processes a text of N-length and returns a data frame containing N-rows of feature counts. Each row is populated by the counting of a given feature from a closed-category list of tokens. Moreover, depending on the feature, tokens will be matched using unigrams, part-of-speech-tags, specialised dictionaries, or pre-defined phrases. The following table (Table 3.1) summarises the features from the package used in this research to explore differences, if any, between male and female characters.

[1] Raw script files and their corresponding set of regular expressions are available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AYz660BHqj7a-QQa0-j6-RVbR98VSxS6/view?usp=sharing
[2] The corpus amassed in this study is available at https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JanrE8RWI0TS5xiw-qLeMCB0j9tXNtyM?usp=sharing

| FEATURES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Acknowledgement | First Person Plural | Hello | Positive Emotion |
| Agreement | First Person Singular | Impersonal Pronouns | Reassurance |
| Apology | Formal Title | Informal Title | Second Person |
| Ask Agency | Give Agency | Intensifiers | Swearing |
| Bare Command | Goodbye | Negation | WH. Questions |
| Can You | Gratitude | Negative Emotion | Yes/No Questions |
| Could You | Hedging | Please | |

**Table 3.1: Features from 'politeness' package** (Yeomans et al., 2018).

***Acknowledgement:*** *I understand, I see, I acknowledge, I hear, I get, we understand, we see, we acknowledge, we hear* as nominal subjects. And *take the/a point* as a direct object.

***Agreement:*** *I agree, I concur, we agree, we concur* as nominal subjects. And *'re right, are right, 're correct, are correct, 's right, is right, 's correct, is correct, 's true, is true* as when it is a clausal complement of a verb or an adjective. Also [good, great, excellent, brilliant, fair, amazing] + [idea, point, suggestion].

***Apology:*** *woops, oops, whoops*. Also *am sorry, I'm sorry, 'm sorry, we are sorry, we're sorry, was sorry, were sorry, I apologize, we apologize, want-apologize, like-apologize*. *I regret, we regret, excuse me, excuse us, excuse our, forgive me, forgive us, forgive our, pardon* (at the beginning of the sentence), *your forgiveness, your pardon, my apologies, our apologies, apologize me, apologize us*.

***Ask Agency:*** *do me a favour, let me, allow me, can I, should I, may I, might I, could I*.

***Bare Command:*** Matched when the first word in a sentence is a bare verb tagged as such, except with the following verbs: *be, do, have, hope, excuse, thank, please, hang, let*.

***Can You:*** *can you, will you*.

***Could You:*** *could you, would you, might you*.

***First Person Plural:*** *we, our, ours, us, ourselves*.

***First Person Singular:*** *I, my, mine, myself*.

***Formal Title:*** *gentleman, lady, ma'am, maam, madam, miss, mister, mr*, ms*, sir*.

***Give Agency:*** *let you, allow you, you can, you may, you could*.

***Goodbye:*** *goodbye, bye, see you later*.

***Gratitude:*** *thank, grateful, gratitude*.

***Hello:*** *hi, hello, hey, greetings, good morning, good evening, good afternoon*.

***Informal Title:*** *dude*, bro*, boss, bud, buddy, champ, man, guy*, guy, brotha, sista, son, sonny, chief*. The asterisks in some these tokens is used to indicate that the package would also be able to capture the plural form of those words. However, in the case of *bro** it creates problems, since every token beginning with those three letters is counted within this feature. Issues in relation to this feature are discussed in more detail in chapter 4.

***Intensifiers:*** *really, actually, honestly, surely, in fact, yeah, yes, ok, okay, perfect, fine, wow, great, amazing, fantastic, good, nice, interesting, cool, excellent, awesome*. It is evident from this category that some elements within this group might not count as clear members of this group. This will be discussed further in chapter 4.

***Please:*** *please*.

***Reassurance:*** *is okay, not worry, no big deal, not a big deal, no problem, no worries, is fine, you are good, it's fine, it's okay*.

**Second Person:** *you, your, yours, yourself, yourselves*.

**Swearing:** *arse, arsehole*, arses, ass, asses, asshole*, bastard, bitch*, boobs, butt, cock, crap*, damn*, dick, dumb*, dyke*, fuck*, goddam*, hell, homo, nigger*, piss*, prick*, pussy*, queer*, screw*, shit*, sob, sonofa*, suck, sucked, sucks*.

***WH. Questions:*** [*who, what, where, when, why, how, which*] at the start of the sentence, except when any of the tokens work as an adverb, determiner, or possessive pronoun.

***Yes/No Questions:*** Detected when a question mark is found, except when features of WH. Questions are also present.

The content of the features not discussed here can be found in Appendix C.

## 3.7 Statistical Modelling and Analysis

Statistical analysis was conducted to determine whether there were differences between male and female characters with respect to the proportion of formal linguistic politeness tokens. Generalised linear mixed models (GLMMs) were used to determine the effect of the gender of the characters (as speakers and listeners) and screenwriters in explaining potential differences in linguistic markers of politeness.

The GLMMs were performed using the function *glmer()* from the package 'lme4' (Bates et al., 2018). Considering the difference in length of dialogue among characters, a binomial distribution was implemented to be able to make comparisons between characters regardless of their centrality in the film. Using GLMMs allows for analysis of differences in response variables considering the explanatory variables as fixed effects as well as the potential interactions with each other. Motivated by the research question, the gender of the speaker, the listener, and the screenwriter were included as fixed effects. Furthermore, the interaction between the gender of the speaker and the listener, and the gender of the speaker and the screenwriter were also included in the full model for each feature derived from the package. Including the decade in which the film was released in the models was considered, as it would have allowed to investigate differences from a longitudinal perspective. However, there were not sufficient scripts to be able to reliably analyse potential changes over time.

In the models used here random effects were included to better account for the distribution of the response variable. Including them in the GLMMs allows the correction of issues related to non-independence of observations (Coupé, 2018). In this case, the random effect was the character's identity - which was included to account for potential dependencies between lines assigned to a character. In this way the model is able to account for a character's individual way of expressing themselves; the character's identity was defined as the name of the character followed by the name of the film they

were in. It was important to include both elements as that made the character's identity unique, since some character names were on occasion found in different films. Grouping all the dialogue spoken by each character was considered, but that would have meant that all information on the gender of the listener would have been lost. For each feature from the package, the best fitted model was determined by running full models and removing factors one by one until the most parsimonious model was identified. Model parsimony was evaluated based on the *Akaike Information Criterion* (AIC) - a method used to determine the best model out of a possible number of models for a given dataset, the lower the value the better the fitness of the model. The adequacy of the models was verified by plotting and visually inspecting the residuals. Finally, the output of the models was visualised using the *plot_model()* function from the 'sjplot' package (Lüdecke, M. D., 2021). For the features where significant differences were observed, the most parsimonious model, its output, and the analysis of politeness tokens in context is provided in Chapter 4, Section 4.2.

## 3.8 Package Evaluation

The use of the GLMMs described in the previous section helped identify differences between male and female characters with regards to the estimated proportions for different features out of the total word count. These markers were then examined in context to determine their individual contribution to politeness. Question 1(c) in this thesis is concerned with the evaluation of the tools used to analyse politeness.

In order to have a more thorough understanding of how the package worked when processing text, a sub section of the corpus was analysed in detail. Three films were selected for further analysis: *Notting Hill* (1999), *When Harry Met Sally* (1989), and *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009). The criteria adopted for the selection of the films was determined by the gender of the screenwriter so that, each screenwriting group is represented in this subset. Although the analysis of these films did not hinge on the gender of the screenwriter, it provided a frame for the selection of films. The selection of the scenes for qualitative analysis was informed by the master plot of the genre. Grindon (2011, pp.9-10) put forward a series of "moves" very frequently found in romantic comedies, a full description of these elements is provided in Section 2.4. The *meet cute*, *fun together*, *new conflicts*, and *epiphany* were the chosen "moves" for qualitative analysis. By focusing on the same key scenes parallels could be found with regards to

the face needs and personal goals of the characters, which could potentially influence their choice of politeness strategies.

A qualitative analysis of each scene for every film was conducted within a politeness theory framework motivated by previous research as described in Section 2.2. Factors such as sociological variables, gender, face wants and needs, and linguistic politeness strategies and their motivation were taken into consideration. In the quantitative analysis, for each linguistic marker of politeness which showed statistically significant differences between male and female characters, extracts which contained said markers were analysed in context. This allowed for the previously mentioned factors that the package does not capture to be taken into consideration (see Sections 4.2 and Appendix E). This approach contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of how characters pursuit their personal goals and its reflection in their linguistic politeness choices. On the basis of this analysis, it was possible to assign a classification of politeness for each line within the sub-corpus, which was 281 lines of dialogue in length. Before embarking on the manual classification of each line, each entry was inspected with respect to the package's feature counts in the data frame returned for these scenes. For every instance that the package indicated the presence of a feature, the original text was inspected to verify whether that marker was in fact present or not. In cases where the reason for a feature being counted was not clear, a thorough inspection of the elements which constituted the pre-defined feature were inspected until a match was found with elements from the original text. While this was a rather time-consuming task, it was quite informative as it provided the opportunity to have a clear understanding of the inner workings of the NLP tool as well as its strengths and limitations.

The manual classification involved inspecting each line in the selected scenes and classifying them as polite, impolite, or neutral, as informed by the qualitative analysis. Given that no other raters participated in the classification due to the nature of this study, the lines of dialogue were classified at two different points in time to provide validity to the classification. Each classification was also assigned a label to indicate the nature of the factor which most contributed to the decision made with regards to politeness. The three categories are described in Table 3.2.

| Categories |
| --- |
| *LxContent* – The presence of linguistic elements in the text was the deciding factor in the classification. |
| *LxContentContextualised* – The presence of linguistic elements used in a given context was the deciding factor in the classification. |
| *ParaLx* – The presence of elements beyond the text was the deciding factor in the classification. |

**Table 3.2**: **Description of categories informing human politeness classification**.

The label *LxContent* was used in instances in which the presence of linguistic expressions were the deciding factor in classifying a given line as polite or impolite. In texts where the presence of swearing or negative emotion words, for example, were the main contribution to a line of dialogue being interpreted as polite, this category was used. Conversely, this label was also used when markers of politeness such as reassurance, gratitude, or intensifiers, for instance, were the deciding element to the classification of text. *LxContentContextualised* was used in in cases where the decision was made based on the use of certain linguistic expression combined with contextual information. This label was used in cases where the use of certain lexical items contributed to polite or impolite interpretation, but their interpretation was highly sensitive to context. Sarcastic comments, condescending remarks, content specific compliments, or jokes were labelled within this category for example. Finally, *ParaLx* labels were allocated to utterances in which the most salient feature when classifying the line of dialogue was due to paralinguistic content. Text where non-lexical elements such as tone of voice, or body language contributed to the polite or impolite interpretation of an utterance were labelled as *ParaLx*.

In the description of the package, an account of the *politenessProjection()* function is depicted as being able to classify and provide a politeness score for a set of texts. Comparing this classification to the researcher's would have been extremely advantageous. However, when trying to apply said function to the present dataset, it did not yield a politeness score. Although many attempts were made trying to obtain a classification, the lack of clarity in how this function works made it impossible to achieve this. In order to obtain a form of comparison between the package and what was actually observed in the text, a hypothesis of the most informative features' from the package was formulated, as described below. The inclusion or exclusion of features in this theory was based on findings from the analysis of features as they appeared in the corpus, the qualitative analysis of the scenes, and the motivation for including them in the 'politeness' package (Yeomans et al., 2018).

The features included in the aggregation in relation to politeness were: *positive emotion*, *reassurance*, *gratitude*, *hedging*, *intensifiers*, *please*, and *apology*. With regards to impoliteness the following features were considered: *negative emotion*, *swearing*, *negation*, and *bare command*. The classification of the package was created on the basis of the aggregation of these features. In cases where the sum of the 'polite' divided by the total number of features ('polite' and 'impolite') was higher than 0.5, the text was classified as polite. In cases where it was lower than 0.5, it was labelled as impolite, and neutral labels were assigned for cases where the result was exactly 0.5. By dividing the sum of 'polite' markers by the total number of features, issues when one token counted towards more than one category were addressed. It should be noted here that cases where a word was marked in two different categories can be useful if the features are being analysed individually. This is not described as a problem with the tool; the point here is to emphasize how the cross-classifications are treated approximately as count data. A good way to exemplify this is through cases of swearing. The package identifies a number of words (but not all) both in the *swearing* category and as *negative emotion* words. Other words such as 'sorry', 'like', or 'wonder' have similar issues but for different categories. In fact, because the presence or not of swearing appeared informative, a second hypothesis was produced. The aggregation of polite and impolite features remains the same, with the addition that when the original hypothesis of the most informative features in relation to politeness yields a polite classification and swearing is 0, then the polite label remains the same, if not, it is labelled as impolite. Both theories were compared with the manual classification.

Text which was classified as either polite or impolite was then compared with the classification derived from the package features. Cases where the human classification was 'neutral' were not examined in contrast with the tool's classification. Following that, comparisons were made for polite and impolite classifications separately. Within each classification, comparisons were made by focusing on the deciding categories (*LxContent, LxContentContextualised, ParaLx*). In the cases where it was not clear from the contrast of the figures, chi-squared tests were used to determine whether there was an interaction between the deciding categories and the classification label.

## 3.9 Conclusions

This chapter presented the methodology used in this research. A computational approach was implemented when analysing markers of formal linguistic politeness. This was combined with the use of GLMMs to investigate potential differences between male and female characters while also considering elements such as gender of screenwriters and listeners. These procedures were described in this chapter as well as their application to the corpus used in this research.

Using statistical analysis narrowed down the number of aspects of linguistic politeness markers for further analysis in context. By refining the scope of aspects of politeness indicators in which male and female characters differed, it was possible to interpret them to determine their contribution to politeness in the context in which they were observed. Further, a number of scenes were analysed qualitatively and contrasted with the data frame returned by the package. This led to a better understanding of the extent to which these tools can be relied on to study politeness in film discourse.

# Chapter 4

# Analysis and Findings

## 4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present and describe the findings of this research. The use of natural language processing tools and the output of the GLMMs are evaluated. Furthermore, differences in formulaic politeness expressions in three selected films are explored qualitatively to identify differences, if any, between male and female characters.

The research questions are outlined below. The first research question aims at establishing how the use of certain politeness features differ between male and female characters in romantic comedies, while also taking into account the gender of the listener and the screenwriter. In order to address this, GLMMs are used to evaluate significant contrasts regarding differences in relative frequency of politeness markers among male and female speakers, listeners, and screenwriters. The second objective is to explore the how much a statistical approach to politeness analysis can explain and which nuances cannot be captured through the use these methods.

1. *What differences in formal linguistic politeness are there between male and female characters in romantic comedies?*
   (a) Is there a statistical difference in the use of politeness markers between male and female characters?
   (b) To what extent do interacting factors, such as screenwriter and addressee gender, affect the presence of these tokens of politeness?
   (c) To what extent can politeness detection be reliably automated by using text classification tools and statistical analysis?

An annotated corpus of romantic comedies is analysed in this research in order to address the questions outlined above. In this chapter, the statistical analysis of features where significant differences were observed is presented, followed by a more in-depth

reading of key scenes in three films. The concluding section encapsulates the results of both approaches to illustrate the findings in relation to the aims of this study.

## 4.2 Corpus Analysis of Politeness Markers

The corpus being analysed is comprised of 56 romantic comedy film scripts ranging from 1979 to 2018. Scripts were downloaded from various open access websites, and then transferred to plain text files where all extraneous material was removed before tagging speaker, listener, and screenwriter gender.

The *politeness()* package was the NLP tool used, combined with statistical tests, were used to explore differences in the use of politeness markers between characters. The data was carefully examined to select the most appropriate technique to establish the existence of any statistically significant differences in the corpus. Furthermore, the politeness features yielded from the text analytics tools were closely inspected to establish a connection with formulaic politeness markers from previous studies. It is important to note that the analysis of politeness in this research does not include paralinguistic features, such as tone of voice, gestures, body language, among other types of behaviour. Despite these considerations and possible limitations of corpus analysis, it is not the intention of this study is to disregard previous research with a greater emphasis on pragmatics, but to provide a different insight through a complementary approach. Moreover, it is important to highlight that when using a corpus, context and relationships between interlocutors are difficult to take into consideration. Although it is true that the use of certain politeness or impoliteness markers in dialogue does not equate to an utterance being polite or impolite, the question of whether any differences between genders can be identified can lead to interesting findings. Furthermore, the working hypothesis in this study is that the absence of more nuanced qualitative analysis of scenes will be compensated for by the large amount of data. Therefore, local misalignments between linguistic politeness and politeness interpreted as such by the interlocutors is likely to average out.

| Summary of Findings | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Politeness Marker** | **Tested Effects and Interactions** | **Statistical Significance** | **Page Nº** |
| Intensifiers | Gender of speaker and listener as main effects, and their interaction. | All effects and interactions are significant. | 61 |
| Reassurance | Gender of speaker and listener as main effects, and their interaction. | Interaction between gender of speaker and listener is significant. | 64 |
| Hedges | Gender of speaker and listener as main effects, and their interaction. | Gender of speaker is significant. | 68 |
| Please | Gender of speaker as main effect. | Gender of speaker is significant. | 71 |
| Positive Emotion | Gender of speaker, listener, and screenwriter as main effects, and interaction of speaker and listener. | All effects and interactions are significant, except screenwriter gender. | 74 |
| Swearing | Gender of speaker, listener, and screenwriter as main effects, and interaction of speaker and listener. | All effects and interactions are significant. | 79 |
| Linguistic Negation | Gender of speaker and listener as main effects, and their interaction. | All effects and interactions are significant. | 83 |
| Informal Title | Gender of speaker and listener as main effects, and their interaction. | All effects and interactions are significant. | 87 |
| 2nd Person Pronouns | Gender of speaker and listener as main effects, and their interaction. | All effects and interactions are significant. | 91 |
| 1st Person Singular Pronouns | Gender of speaker and listener as main effects, and their interaction. | All effects and interactions are significant. | 96 |
| Yes/No Questions | Gender of speaker, listener, and screenwriter as main effects, and interaction of speaker and listener. | All effects and interactions are significant, except screenwriter gender. | 99 |

**Table 4.1**: **Summary of Findings**. Overview of GLMMs results for selected politeness markers.

### 4.2.1 Intensifiers

An aspect of language in which men and women have been theorised to differ, are intensifiers or boosters. These lexical devices have been linked to politeness strategies since they can reflect the speaker's involvement in the conversation or they can be used enhance the listener's positive face, for example. Women have been traditionally associated with the use of intensifiers (Holmes, 1995; Coates, 2004) and this could be potentially related to the fact that "women are more oriented to affective, interpersonal meanings than men" (Holmes, 1995, p.197). Other studies claim that difference in use of intensifiers are not as straightforward as once believed and that, even though gender is an important variable, social background, age, and changes in language use over time also play an important role (Xiao and Tao, 2007; Fuchs, 2017). An important point to note here is that in this package pre-designed category there are some elements that are not clear examples of intensifiers. Many definitions of what intensifiers have been put forward, in this research they are understood as words that "maximise or boost meaning, in other words, to scale the quality up" (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003, p. 258). While most of the words in this category are clear members, other such as *yeah*, *yes*, *okay*, *fine*, or *nice* are not quintessential examples. Although in some context they may function in such a way, it is something to consider when interpreting the results.

The models revealed significant differences between male and female characters both as speakers and listeners. The interaction between these two variables is also significant in this dataset (see Table 4.2). The model which best describes the distribution of the dependent variable includes gender of the speaker and listener and their interaction; screenwriting groups were not included as they did not contribute to the best model fit for this politeness marker.

| 'Intensifiers' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -4.75640 | 0.03946 | -120.545 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.38712 | 0.05572 | 6.948 | 3.71e-12 *** |
| listener_gender_F | 0.27444 | 0.03315 | 8.278 | < 2e-16 *** |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.55805 | 0.04972 | -11.225 | < 2e-16 *** |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '[3]

**Table 4.2:** GLMM output for 'Intensifiers' tokens.

[3] Considering the size of the dataset being analysed, the level of significance in this research is set at 0.001 to ensure strong evidence against the null hypothesis (Johnson, 2013).

Figure 4.1 reveals that there are clear differences between male and female characters and that the gender of the listener has an impact on the proportion of this marker. This illustrates that both male and female characters significantly vary the use of intensifiers when talking to members of the opposite sex. More specifically, when male characters address female characters or when female characters address male characters, the presence of this feature increases significantly.

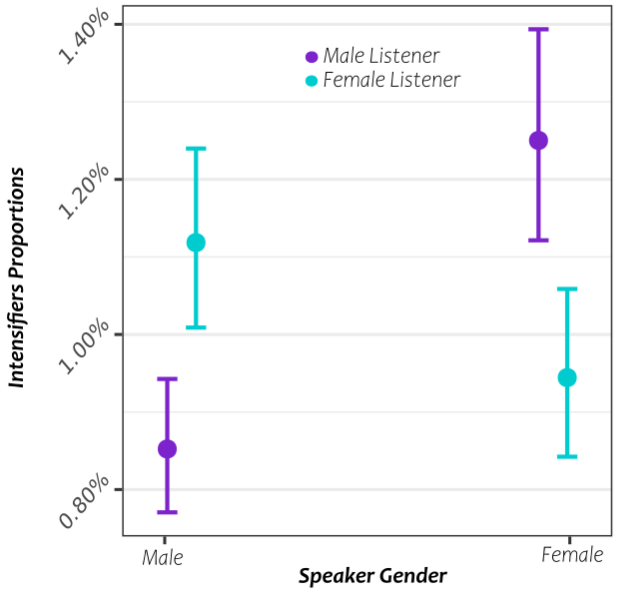


**Figure 4.1: Intensifiers Interaction Plot**. The GLMM output for 'intensifiers' was visualised using the sjPlot package. Results are presented as means of intensifiers proportion and error bars represent the estimated confidence interval.

### *Male Dialogue*

Interactions between male speakers and female listeners show a much higher proportion of intensifiers compared to male-male dialogue. For interactions between male characters addressing female characters, 2,163 entries were observed which contained at least one token of these markers. Intensifiers comprised roughly 1.1% of the words in those lines of dialogue. For male-male interactions, on the other hand, 1,724 lines were observed. This subgroup displays the lowest estimated proportion of this marker out of all he groups (roughly over 0.9%) as illustrated in Figure 4.1.

(1)
ERNIE: **Great** work, Jane, **really** -- You know? **Really**. You were **fantastic**!

JANE: Well, there were no major gaffs anyway. Thanks, everybody.

[Film: "Broadcast News" (1987). Screenwriter: James L. Brooks. Jane is in charge of an important news report being broadcast live.]

In extract (1), Ernie - Jane's boss - congratulates Jane on her performance and the way she dealt with a high-stakes situation. He addresses her positive face needs by praising her work and uses boosting devices to demonstrate commitment to his statement and maximising the intensity of his compliment. Given that Ernie is Jane's boss, it is very likely that praise from him would please her and it is something that she seeks. Furthermore, he expresses his admiration while her peers are present, and this would publicly promote Jane's positive face through Ernie's evaluation. Even though it is very likely that she values his compliment, Jane deflects the compliment by using negative politeness, avoids a form of self-praise and expresses her gratitude to her colleagues for their work instead.

### *Female Dialogue*

Out of the four groups, interactions with female characters as speakers and male characters as listeners present the highest proportion intensifiers (just under 1.30%) as illustrated in Figure 4.1. For this subgroup, 2,254 lines of dialogue were observed containing at least one intensifying token. Contrastingly, for female-female interactions the ratio of intensifying markers is less than 1% in the 1,169 lines extracted for this subgroup.

(2)
JEREMIAH: And you're just looking so great. I just, uh…

MARY: You, you're so thin. You lost a lot of weight, didn't you?

JEREMIAH: Well, uh, I have an exercise machine.

MARY: Just fabulous-looking . . . Well, you **really** look good . . . **really** good.

JEREMIAH: God, well, I'm a bit late, but. . . uh, it's just so **nice** seeing you. And, uh -

MARY: It's **great**

[Film: "Manhattan" (1979). Screenwriter: Woody Allen, Marshall Brickman. Mary runs into her ex-husband in a store while she is shopping with her current boyfriend.]

In example (2), the exchange could have potentially gone very differently, given that they are a divorced couple, but both characters acted in a very pleasant manner towards each other. Jeremiah compliments Mary on her appearance and she responds by showing admiration of his weight loss, but he shifts the compliment's force. She then pays him a more overt compliment and uses intensifiers and positive adjectives to strengthen the force of her statement. Mary is using positive politeness strategies by positively remarking on Jeremiah's looks and it can be inferred that he will be pleased by her comments and considering that her current boyfriend is present at the time, the compliment becomes even more valuable since it addresses Jeremiah's positive face wants.

To summarise, significant differences were observed between male and female characters in their overall use of affirmation and intensification markers. The gender of the screenwriting team, on the other hand, had no impact on the ratio of these markers and therefore was not included in the model. Furthermore, when taking into consideration the gender of the listener, marked contrasts were found between the genders. When male characters interact with female characters, the predicted proportion of boosting devices is higher than in male-male interactions. A similar pattern can be found for female characters, where the predicted proportion of intensifying devices is much higher when addressing characters of the opposite gender than other female characters. It is true that these devices do not express politeness on their own, but they are frequently used to intensify the illocutionary force of utterances, as illustrated by the examples above. Different interpretations for the contrast between characters using these indicators of politeness when addressing the opposite gender can be theorised. In the context of romantic comedies, where male and female characters' goal is to establish a positive relationship with their love interest (in this corpus the vast majority of the couples are heterosexual), appealing to their positive face needs and showing admiration can contribute to achieving their goals.

### 4.2.2 Reassurance

One of the features included in the *politeness()* package, labelled *reassurance*, was constructed by drawing from the findings of Voigt et al. (2017), where a high correlation between expressions within this category and politeness was found. The package includes phrases with semi-formulaic structure that help the speaker minimise obligation or feeling of debt on the first speaker's behalf (Watts, 2003). While it cannot be said that these expressions are inherently polite, and context should be taken into consideration

when analysing, it is also true that quite frequently they are used by speakers to demonstrate to the listeners that no burden was imposed on them as a politeness strategy.

The models revealed that although there is only a borderline significance between male and female characters as speakers or listeners, the interaction with the between the variables is highly significant (see Table 4.3). This is to say that the gender of the listener affects the proportion of expressions of reassurance. The model which best describes the distribution of this variable includes gender of the speaker and listener as main effects as well as their interaction. Screenwriting teams were not included in this model as they did not contribute to the most parsimonious model.

| 'Reassurance' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -7.4782 | 0.1127 | -66.333 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.4247 | 0.1418 | 2.996 | 0.00273. |
| listener_gender_F | 0.3265 | 0.1207 | 2.704 | 0.00685. |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.8046 | 0.1882 | -4.275 | 1.91e-05 *** |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**Table 4.3:** GLMM output for 'Reassurance' tokens**.**

Figure 4.2 illustrates that there are differences between male and female characters particularly when the gender of the listener is taken into consideration. Similarly to the previous feature, the likelihood of a character using a reassuring expression increases when they address a member of the opposite gender.

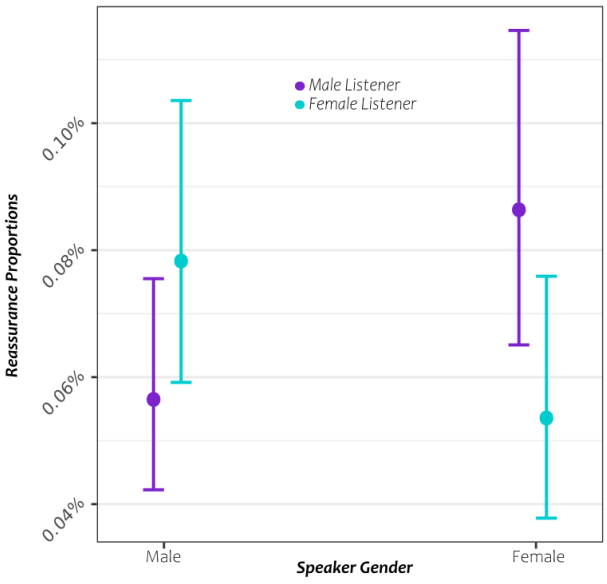


**Figure 4.2: Reassurance Interaction Plot.** The GLMM output for 'reassurance' was visualised using the sjPlot package. Results are presented as means of reassurance proportions and error bars represent the estimated confidence interval.

### *Male Dialogue*

Interactions between male characters show one of the lowest proportions of reassurance markers (just under 0.06%) in the 126 entries containing at least one of these expressions. In male characters' dialogue, the modes revealed that the likelihood of these markers being used increases when addressing female characters. For these interactions 152 lines of dialogue were observed where the proportion of expressions of reassurance is approximately 0.08% as illustrated in Figure 4.2.

(1)
ADAM: I just found out there's a French Film Festival in town and that made me think of you, so I was wondering if you'd like to go to the opening night tomorrow night.

JANE: Oh, that sounds so fun... Let me think, tomorrow's what? Oh, um, you know, I'd really love to, but my son is coming home from college the next day and I have a bunch of things I have to do to get ready... I'm so sorry.

ADAM: No, **don't worry**. **No problem**. Maybe we can see something another night.

JANE: Absolutely. I would love that.

[Film: "It's Complicated" (2009). Screenwriter: Nancy Meyers. Adam calls Jane to ask her out on a date.]

In interaction (1), Adam calls Jane to ask her out on a date, until that point in the film their relationship was a professional one, as Adam was hired as Jane's contractor in charge of renovations in her house. As they spend more time together and get to know one another, their relationship starts to morph into a romantic one. In this scene, Jane declines Adam's invitation, but provides valid reasons for not being able to join him. Both characters use different politeness strategies when addressing one another – from hedging, intensifiers, apologies. The focus in this example, however, is the way Adam reacts when Jane tells him she is not able to go out with him on that occasion. As a response to Jane's apology for declining Adam's invitation, he uses two reassuring expressions followed by a second hedged invitation. In the first line he commits an FTA by potentially imposing on Jane to accept his invitation and mitigates it by using modality and past tense to distance Jane from the FTA. She also uses a number of politeness strategies, but in the end has to decline the invitation accompanied by an apology. Tom's use of formulaic lexical expressions of reassurance attempts to minimise any sense of debt or obligation from Jane towards him. Bearing in mind that the characters are at the beginning of their courtship, it is not surprising that they both make use of various strategies to either avoid threatening their negative face or to attend to their positive face needs.

### *Female Dialogue*

Interactions between female speakers and male listeners show the highest proportion of reassurance markers out of all the subgroups, almost double the proportion of these markers compared to female-female interactions. For these interactions, 159 entries were observed containing at least one expression of reassurance. The ratio of expressions of reassurance in these lines is estimated to be almost 0.09% as illustrated in Figure 4.2. On the other hand, for female-female interactions 74 lines were extracted containing at least one count of these expressions, which are estimated to comprise just over 0.05% of those lines of dialogue. The results indicate that the likelihood of expressions of reassurance in female characters' dialogue increases when addressing male characters.

(2)
MELVIN: I was going to do that for you.

CAROL: **It's okay. No problem.** Where should we sit?

MELVIN: I -- uh, I ... Well, there is no place cards or anything.

[Film: "As Good as It Gets" (1997). Screenwriter: James L. Brooks. Melvin and Carol are going on a trip to Baltimore]

In interaction (2), Carol and Melvin are about to depart on their first road trip together, but it is somewhat difficult to define the nature of their relationship at this point of the film. Melvin is an obsessive-compulsive writer, known for being unpleasant and rude to most people with the exception of Carol, the waitress who serves him on an almost daily basis. After a series of events, Melvin starts to develop feeling for Carol but, because of his personality, he finds it difficult to convey them to her. In an attempt to start a relationship beyond waitress and customer, he invites her to go to Baltimore with him and his neighbour. In this interaction, Carol is loading her luggage onto the car and Melvin expresses that he wanted to do that for her. Carol uses formulaic expressions to reassure Melvin that no debt was incurred and swiftly changes the topic of conversation. It could be argued that Carol is trying to find polite ways of distancing herself from Melvin, as her assuming he would help her might lead him to believe their relationship is romantic in nature. When Melvin indirectly excuses himself for not helping Carol, it might be implied that he felt the need to attend to her positive face's needs since he is trying to pursue a romantic relationship with her. Moreover, when considering Melvin's past behaviour towards most people in his life, an act of politeness is perceived as out of character by Carol, who at this stage of the film does not reciprocate Melvin's feelings. By using those linguistic expressions as opposed to direct rejection, she minimises a

potential attack on Melvin's face while at the same time helping her imply that their relationship does not require such acts of curtesy.

To conclude, significant differences were found between male and female characters in their overall use of formulaic expressions of reassurance. The gender of the screenwriting team, on the other hand, had no impact on the ratio of these markers. Moreover, when talking into account the gender of the listener, marked contrasts were found between the genders. When male characters interact with female characters, the predicted proportion of expressions of reassurance is higher than in male-male interactions. A parallel can be drawn for female characters, where the predicted proportion of these expressions is much higher when addressing characters of the opposite gender than other female characters. Even though the presence of these expressions does not invariably yield politeness, they are frequently used as a politeness strategy to express solidarity, or as an attempt to minimise any sense of debt or obligation on the listeners' part. The examples provided and their analysis illustrates this point. It is common to find these expressions after speech acts such as thanking and apologising (Watts, 2003). Different interpretations for the contrast between genders using formulaic reassurance expressions when addressing characters of the opposite gender can be put forward. As with other politeness features and in the context of romantic comedies, where male and female characters' goal is to develop a positive relationship with their love interests, minimising any sense of imposition on the listener's part or showing solidarity towards them, can be seen as a form of achieving their goals aided by these linguistic devices.

### 4.2.3 Hedges

Research in gender differences in language has, among other aspects, investigated the use of hedges by men and women. Lakoff's (1975) pioneer work identified hedges as an aspect of language where significant differences can be found. Women's language has been described as tentative, and a higher proportion of hedges is linked to this assertion. These linguistic forms help the speaker to mitigate the force of an utterance (Underhill, 1988) or to demonstrate uncertainty of a statement and reduce its force (Coates, 2004; Newman et al., 2008). Lakoff argued that the reason women use more hedges than men due to the fact that women "are socialised to believe that asserting themselves strongly isn't nice or ladylike, or even feminine" (Lakoff, 1975, p.54). Other studies (Precht, 2008), however, claim that overall no significant differences are found between men and women, but also report that contrasts were observed for specific types of hedging. On the other hand, a number of studies have concluded that women do use more hedges

than men, but it was also noted that depending on context their function and contribution to politeness may vary (Holmes, 1995; Dixon and Foster, 1997).

For the corpus in this research, the models revealed that a significant contrast is found between male and female characters. Unlike other politeness markers, however, there are no significant differences when considering the gender of the listener (see Table 4.4). The model which best describes the distribution of the dependent variable includes gender of the speaker and listener as main effects and their interaction; screenwriting groups were not included as they did not contribute to the most parsimonious model.

| 'Hedges' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -3.46632 | 0.01939 | -178.745 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.10428 | 0.02882 | 3.618 | 0.000296 ** |
| listener_gender_F | 0.04559 | 0.02007 | 2.271 | 0.023130. |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.09109 | 0.03009 | -3.027 | 0.002470. |
| | | | Signif. codes: | 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' ' |

**Table 4.4:** GLMM output for 'Hedges' tokens**.**

Figure 4.3 illustrates the differences between male and female characters and the impact gender has on proportions. While the contrast between male and female characters is not as stark as in other features, there is a significant difference. Tokens of hedging composed 3% of the words spoken by female characters, while for male characters it was just over 2.7%. This finding is in line with studies outlined in Chapter 2 that observed a higher frequency of hedging in women's speech compared to that of men.

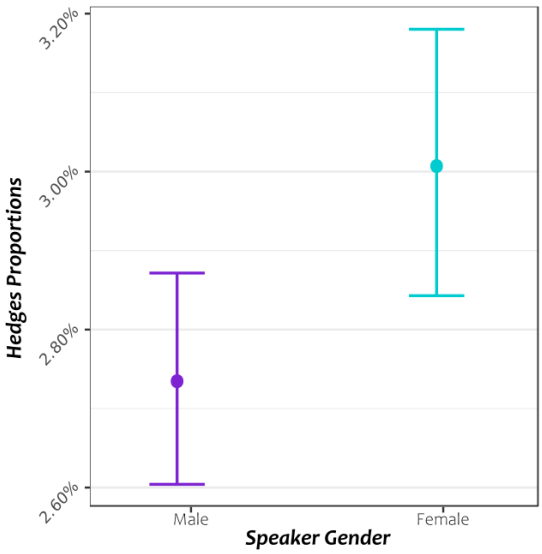


**Figure 4.3: Hedges Interaction Plot**. The GLMM output for 'hedges' was visualised using the sjPlot package. Results are presented as means of intensifiers proportion and error bars represent the estimated confidence interval.

### *Male Dialogue*

For male speaker, 8,083 lines of dialogue were observed which contained at least one token of hedging. While fewer lines were matched for female characters, the proportion of hedges is lower for this group at approximately 2.7% as illustrated in Figure 4.3.

(1)
LEOPOLD: It's quite a beautiful day, have you noticed? **Perhaps** you would permit yourself some time off and grant me the privilege of escorting you around the city this fine spring afternoon.

KATE: Oh, I'd love to, but I can't. I've got too much work to do. Ask Charlie though. He'll go with you.

[Film: "Kate and Leopold" (2001). Screenwriter: James Mangold. Leopold attempts to ask Kate on a date.]

In extract (1), Leopold uses various politeness strategies, with hedges being one among them. For this example it is important to highlight that the premise of the film is that Leopold travels in time from the 19th century to modern day New York, and this clearly affects his linguistic choices. Combined with different politeness strategies, Leopold avoids directly asking Kate on a date, and hedges his offer to allow for the possibility of her declining his invitation. Throughout the film his linguistic choices draw attention from other characters due to his use of politeness markers in most interactions. Hedged indirect questions frequently aim at protecting the listener's negative face and avoid assuming a positive answer and impose on the speaker.

### *Female Dialogue*

For female speakers, 6,702 lines of dialogue were found which contained at least one token of hedging. This group shows a higher proportion of hedges (an estimated of 3%) than male characters' lines as illustrated by Figure 4.3.

(2)
JULIET: Can I come in?

MARK: Er, yeah, well, I'm a bit busy but..

JULIET: I was **just** passing, and **I thought** we **might** check that video thing out. **I thought I might** be able to swap it for some banoffee pie or maybe Munchies?

MARK: Actually, I was being serious - I don't know where it is. I'll have a poke around tonight.

[Film: "Love Actually" (2003). Screenwriter: Richard Curtis. Juliet wants to ask Mark a favour.]

In interaction (2), Juliet uses linguistic expressions to minimise the threat of imposing on Mark. From previous scenes in the film, it is known that there is a certain amount of animosity from Mark towards Juliet, although at that stage in the film the reasons are unclear. Juliet notices Mark's apathy towards her, and therefore is aware that making requesting something from him is unlikely to be met with a positive response. The use of various hedges contributes to lessen the impact of her request as well as signalling that she does not intend to impose an action on the part of the listener. She combines these strategies with positive politeness by offering pie as a token of appreciation for creating a sense of obligation from him. In spite of Mark's indifferent attitude towards her, her behaviour and linguistic choices are open to be interpreted as polite.

In summary, significant differences were found between male and female characters in their overall use of hedging phrases. The models indicate that the probability of hedges being found in dialogue in romantic comedies increases when in female characters' dialogue. The gender of the screenwriting team or the listener, on the other hand, had no impact on the use of these markers. The presence of these lexical phrases generally helps the speaker attenuate the force of their illocutionary acts, can demonstrate reluctance to impose, and help the speaker express their propositions in a less direct and assertive way. Much of the research in the use of hedges has noted that hedges can have a myriad of linguistic functions depending on various elements (Ng and Bradac, 1993; Holmes, 1995; Adolphs, 2008; House and Kasper, 2011). The examples provided help to illustrate how the presence of these devices contributes to text being open to interpretation as polite. However, the difference in use of these functions between genders, is beyond the scope of this research and will not be addressed here.

### 4.2.4 Please

Politeness markers such as *please* are within taxonomies created in previous research as relevant to the study of politeness. Furthermore, this marker is a strong candidate for corpus analysis as it has a correlation with politeness (Rühlemann, 2010). Although it is true that the presence of this marker does not consistently equate to polite utterances, in English it remains an important feature of politeness and its absence can make an utterance be perceived as less courteous (Wichmann, 2004; Sato, 2008). This marker is frequently found with requests, and is commonly used in negative politeness strategies. Bearing in mind the perception that women are more polite than men (Holmes, 1995; Coates, 2004), it would stand to reason that differences between men

and women can be found for this marker. In the context of romantic comedies, where men and women tend to be represented in a more conventional manner, it would not be surprising to find contrasts between the two.

For this corpus, the models revealed that there are only significant differences between male and female characters as speakers. The most parsimonious model to describe the distribution of *please* only includes gender of the speaker as a main effect; screenwriting groups, listener gender or any interactions were not included as no significance was found and their inclusion in the model did not create a better model fit.

| 'Please' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -7.4504 | 0.1121 | -66.48 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.4245 | 0.1245 | 3.41 | 0.00065 ** |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**Table 4.5:** GLMM Output for 'Please' tokens**.**

Figure 4.4 illustrates the differences between male and female characters with regards to the use of *please* in this dataset.

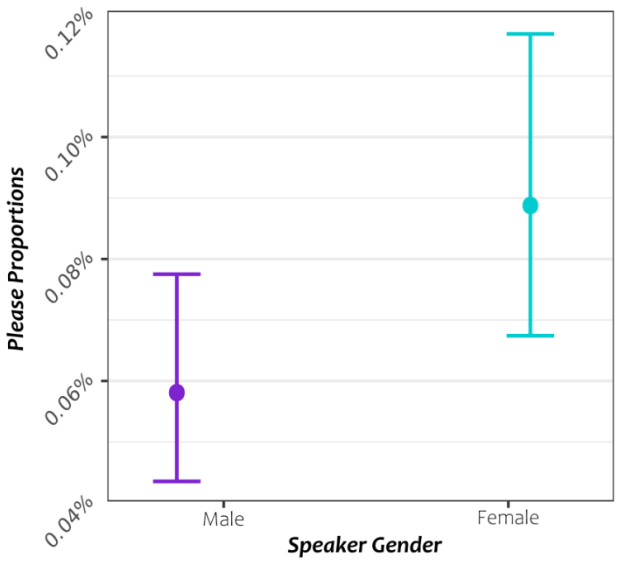


**Figure 4.4: Please Interaction Plot**. The GLMM output for 'please' was visualised using the sjPlot package. Results are presented as means of intensifiers proportion and error bars represent the estimated confidence interval.

### *Male Dialogue*

311 lines of dialogue were extracted from the corpus which contained at least one *please* token. This marker comprised an estimated 0.06% of those lines, as illustrated in Figure 4.4.

(1)
LLOYD: Hello. May I **please** speak with Diane **please**?

[Film: "Say Anything". Cameron Crowe. Lloyd calls his love interest, Diane, at her house, but her father answers the phone.]

In example (1), the use of *please* following the modal verb *may* and again at the end of the request are used by Lloyd to make a polite request. In this interaction, it is important to consider that Lloyd is talking to Diane's father on the phone, and therefore wants to show respect towards him and minimise, as much as possible, any FTA he might commit. The use of first instance of *please* would be interpreted as politic in most cases, and by using it a second time at the end of his request he is attempting to reinforce his intention to show respect and therefore the utterance can be interpreted as polite. This strategy also helps him increase his chances of his request being accepted and therefore achieve his goals. Although Lloyd's request is fairly routine and compliance on the part of the listener is expected, when taking into consideration the power dynamics between the interactants Lloyd chooses to use more than one token of please to avoid causing offence.

### *Female Dialogue*

337 lines of dialogue were extracted from the corpus which contained at least one *please* token. For this group, it is estimated that *please* comprised approximately 0.09% of those lines (see Figure 4.4).

(2)
NANCY: Can I just get two beers, **please**?

[Film: "Man Up" (2015). Screenwriter: Tess Morris. Nancy is ordering a drink at a bar while on a date.]

The use of *please* in extract (2) is found in a formulaic demonstration of politeness when making requests. Although in the context of bartender-customer interactions a direct, unmitigated request would not have been interpreted as rude or an attack on the bartender's face, Nancy uses *please* as well as hedging devices when making her request. It can be theorised that since in this example, she makes her request in front of

her date, it would be in her favour to demonstrate to her potential romantic partner she possesses positive qualities, one of them being her politeness towards others. Considering the power dynamic between Nancy and the bartender, Nancy's request being denied is highly improbable. With this in mind, the use of *please* in this interaction is exclusively to express politeness and adhere to social expectations of behaviour in hospitality and similar contexts.

To summarise, in this corpus significant contrasts were observed regarding the use of *please* between male and female characters. As evidenced by previous research, the use of please may serve different functions depending on its position in the sentence and the grammatical structures surrounding it (Stubbs, 1983; Whichmann, 2003; Sato, 2008; Rühlemann, 2010). Nevertheless, it is also important to note that in many cases its use helps the speaker modify the force of requests or commands and can make an utterance be perceived as polite to the addressee. Given its syntactic constraints, the use of *please* in initial, middle, or final positions in a sentence has also been the subject of study by other researchers. Generally, the use of *please* is found in requests which are typically seen as threatening the addressee's negative face. Therefore, a higher tendency by female characters contradicts, to an extent, Holmes's (1995) claim that women are more positively polite than men. Nevertheless, in order to have a clearer understanding of the distribution of *please* in men and women, a more detailed analysis of every instance of *please* in the corpus would have to be conducted, but this is not one of the aims of the present study.

### 4.2.5 Positive Emotion

Emotion words are an area in which conflicting findings have been put forward, even though traditional views of language and gender seem to have a rather clear stereotype. Studies have claimed that overall, women tend to express emotion when describing events or in speeches, for instance, than men do (Mulac et al., 1990, 2013). However, in a later study Mehl and Pennebaker (2003) reported that women tend to use positively charged words, while men have a tendency to express negative emotions, such as anger. Busso and Vignozzi (2017) found similar results in language used by male and female characters in films, which are in line with gender stereotypes in language in Western culture. Newman et al. (2008) also theorised that women tend to have more "rapport" than men as they discuss feelings and thoughts more frequently than men. On the subject of rapport management, Spencer-Oatey (2005) discusses the link between emotional reactions and face negotiation and how the display of certain emotions can

impact the type of facework being done by the speaker and how it is perceived by the listener. Furthermore, Langlotz and Locher (2017) argue that emotions expressed in interactions "must be considered to play an important role for the study of relational work as a discursive phenomenon." (Langlotz and Locher, 2017, p.316).

For this feature, the models revealed that while there are no substantial differences among the writing groups, contrasts were observed between male and female characters as listeners. The interaction between the gender of the speaker and the listener had the most significant differences (see Table 4.6). The most parsimonious model to describe the distribution of positive emotion words includes gender of the speaker, listener, and screenwriter as a main effects and the interaction between the speaker's and the listener's gender.

| 'Positive Emotion' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -3.10966 | 0.01863 | -166.929 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.06221 | 0.02511 | 2.477 | 0.01324. |
| listener_gender_F | 0.07481 | 0.01764 | 4.240 | 2.23e-05 *** |
| screenwr_gender_F | -0.07876 | 0.02552 | -3.086 | 0.00203. |
| screenwr_gender_MG | -0.03229 | 0.02863 | -1.128 | 0.25935 |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.12474 | 0.02673 | -4.667 | 3.05e-06 *** |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**Table 4.6:** GLMM Output for 'Positive Emotion' tokens.

Figure 4.5 illustrates the contrasts in proportions of positive emotion words between male and female characters taking into consideration the gender of the listener. Positive emotion words in this feature include all words in the "Positiv" category in the Harvard General Inquirer (See Appendix C).

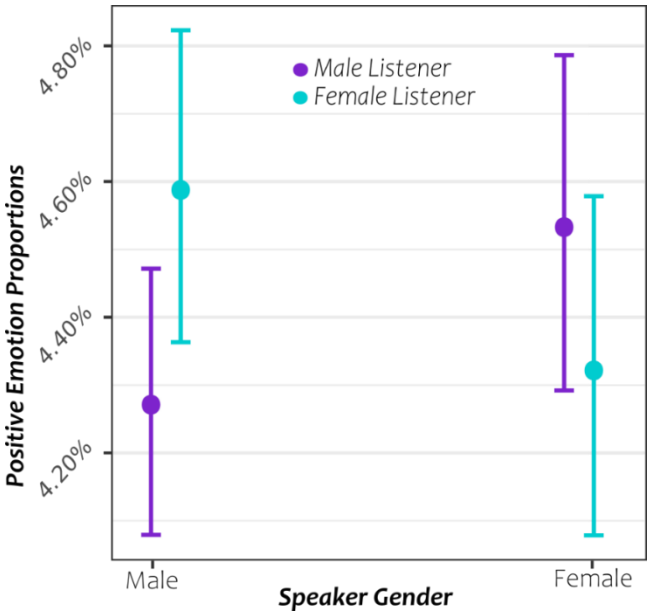


**Figure 4.5: Positive Emotion Interaction Plot**. The GLMM output for 'positive emotion' was visualised using the sjPlot package. Results are presented as means of intensifiers proportion and error bars represent the estimated confidence interval.

### *Male Dialogue*

Interactions between male characters and female listeners display one of the highest estimated proportion of tokens of positive emotion markers. 5246 lines of dialogue were extracted from the corpus matching at least one instance of this feature. In these lines, positive emotion tokens represent approximately 4.6% of the total word count. Male-male interactions, on the other hand, display a lower estimated ratio of this marker (nearly 4.3%) in the 5284 lines extracted from the corpus (see Figure 4.5). As supported by the output of the models, the likelihood of male characters using positive emotion tokens, increases when they address female characters.

(1)
MELVIN: Hey, I've got a great compliment for you.

CAROL: You know what? I ...

MELVIN: Just let me talk. I'm the only one on the face of the earth who realizes that you're the **greatest** woman on earth. I'm the only one who **appreciates** how **amazing** you are in every single thing you do -- in every single thought you have ... in how you are with Spencer -- Spence ...in how you say what you mean and how you almost always mean something that's all about being straight and **good** ...

[Film: "As Good As It Gets" (1997). Screenwriter: James L. Brooks. After a fight, Melvin tries to express to Carol his feelings for her.]

In example (1), Melvin tries to express his feelings for Carol by explaining all the qualities he admires about her. Melvin is not a well-liked person by most, and he does not enjoy the company of others and is often quite vocal about it, but he struggles to express his emotions, particularly any that would demonstrate affection. In this scene, Carol is reluctant to continue their relationship as his disagreeable personality towards most people bothers her. In (1), Melvin uses a range of positive emotion tokens to appeal to Carol's positive face and achieve his goal of developing a romantic relationship with her. He uses positive words to pay her quite specific compliments about her, not only as a potential partner but also as a mother. He avoids paying her compliments that are overly general and would apply to most women, and therefore demonstrates his level of affection for her. Bearing in mind his inability to demonstrate affectionate feelings towards people, displaying his emotions in front of her and showing vulnerability can be seen the ultimate act of admiration for Carol. The presence of tokens of this feature help him achieve his goal and positively enhance their relationship.

### *Female Dialogue*

Interactions between female characters and male listeners also display one of the highest estimated proportion of tokens of positive emotion markers. 4592 lines of dialogue were observed in the corpus containing at least one instance of this feature. These markers represent approximately 4.5% of the total words found in this subgroup. For female-female interactions, 3416 lines were extracted containing this feature, and over 4.3% of the overall count of lexical items are tokens from this category (see Figure 4.5). As revealed by the models, the gender of the listener has an impact on the estimated proportions of this marker in dialogue. More specifically, when female characters address male characters they are more likely to use positive emotion tokens compared to when they interact with other female characters.

(2)
MILES: Okay. Let's go. I'm making you some fettuccini. It's Christmas Eve and we're going to celebrate being young and being alive.

IRIS: Miles, you really are an **incredibly decent** man.

[Film: "The Holiday" (2006). Screenwriter: Nancy Meyers. After explaining why she has been feeling unhappy, Miles offers to make dinner for Iris to lift her spirits.]

After a heartfelt conversation where Iris explained why her previous relationship ended, Miles offers to make dinner for them as she is visibly upset. Up until this stage in the film,

the characters appeared to be happy with as friends and were not seeking a more intimate relationship. However, after Miles finds out his girlfriend is cheating on him and asks Iris for advice, she shares with him details of her past failed relationship and the two characters realise they have more in common than they once thought. Miles notices Iris is distressed and takes action to enhance her positive face. As seen in (2), Iris reacts positively to his offer and pays him a compliment as a way of showing her appreciation for him. In this interaction, both characters use positive politeness strategies which help them achieve the common goal of advancing the relationship and become closer.

In conclusion, in the romantic comedies in this corpus significant contrasts were observed regarding the use of positive emotion tokens between male and female characters, but most importantly, the contrasts were significant when taking into account the gender of the listener. Both male and female characters were estimated to use a higher proportion of positive emotion words when addressing characters of the opposite gender. Previous studies have theorised that connections can be made between the emotions expressed by participants in a conversation and the facework being carried out to achieve interpersonal connections (Mehl and Pennebaker, 2003; Spencer-Oatey, 2005; Culpeper et al., 2014; Langlotz and Locher, 2017). As with every politeness marker, generalisations regarding the link between politeness and emotion should be interpreted with caution and where possible culture, context, among other elements of discourse should also be taken into consideration. Moreover, it is also important to consider the difference between referring to positive emotion and expressing it. Although the examples provided illustrate cases in which the characters express positive emotion, there may be cases in which they simply refer to it. In the context of romantic comedies and the contrasts observed between characters when addressing opposite-gendered characters, it could be hypothesised that displaying positive emotion facilitates the enhancement of potential romantic relationships. Further research would be needed to determine the extent to which positive emotion words yield politeness strategies as well as their reception by the listeners.

### 4.2.6 Swearing

Culpeper (2011), in his study of conventionalised impoliteness formulae, identifies insults as a strong candidate for formulaic impoliteness. Swear words or taboo language are generally associated with face-threatening acts, and a higher frequency of use has traditionally been attributed to men (Coates, 2014). Even though a number of studies have shown that there are no significant differences in the use of swearwords between genders (Coates, 2004; Baker, 2014; Gauthier and Guille, 2017), it is true that these ideas remain a part of societal stereotypes. With this in mind, Hollywood romantic comedies - which have traditionally perpetuated these preconceived notions (Bowler 2013) – might display patterns associated with stereotypical gender expectations.

For this feature, the models identified significant differences for all effects and the interaction in the model. While for female screenwriters there are clearly significant differences with male screenwriters, mixed-gender screenwriting teams approach significance (see Table 4.7). The most parsimonious model to describe the distribution of positive emotion words includes gender of the speaker, listener, and screenwriter as a main effects and the interaction between the speaker's and the listener's gender.

| 'Swearing' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -5.44334 | 0.08442 | -64.482 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | -0.54445 | 0.10919 | -4.986 | 6.15e-07 *** |
| listener_gender_F | -0.32185 | 0.05456 | -5.899 | 3.66e-09 *** |
| screenwr_gender_F | -0.58798 | 0.11992 | -4.903 | 9.44e-07 *** |
| screenwr_gender_MG | -0.41318 | 0.13119 | -3.149 | 0.00164. |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | 0.40816 | 0.09012 | 4.529 | 5.93e-06 *** |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**Table 4.7:** GLMM output for 'Swearing' tokens.

Figure 4.6 illustrates that there is a general pattern of higher proportion of swearing lexicon among male characters, regardless of the gender of the screenwriter, compared to female characters. Furthermore, male speakers for the three screenwriter teams consistently display a higher ratio of swear words when speaking to male counterparts than when speaking to female characters. On the other hand, female speakers, regardless of screenwriter gender, show similar trend in the sense that a higher ratio of swear words is observed when addressing same-gender characters than when addressing males.

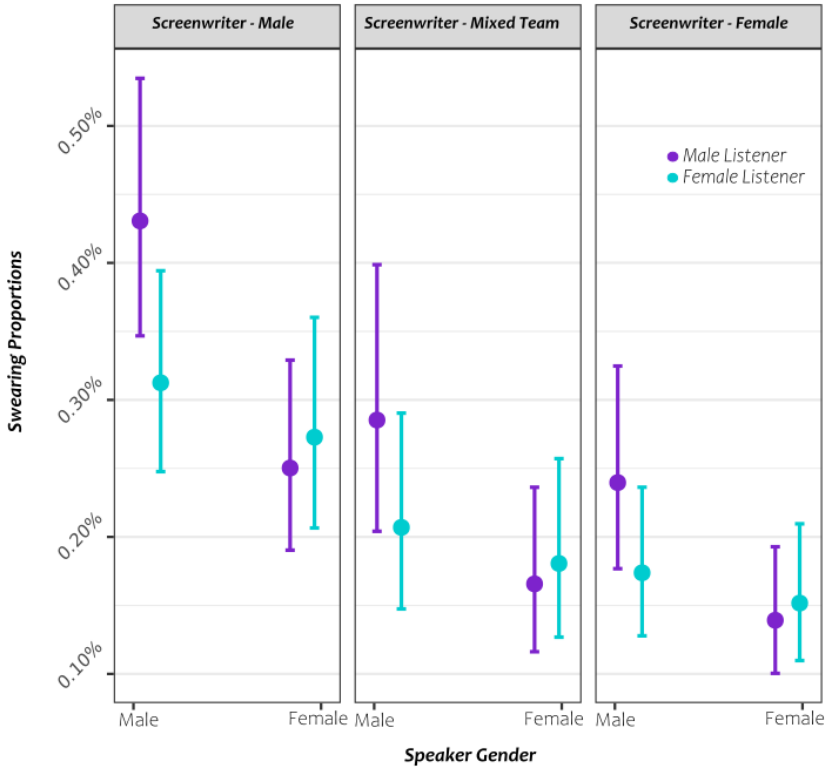


**Figure 4.6: Swearing Interaction Plot**. The GLMM output for 'swearing' was visualised using the sjPlot package. Results are presented as means of intensifiers proportion and error bars represent the estimated confidence interval.

### *Male Dialogue*

In cases where male characters are speaking to other male characters there are marked differences in the proportion of swear words when compared to other subgroups. Figure 4.6 illustrates that in films written by men, the proportion of swearing by male characters (approximately 0.45%) almost doubles that of male-male interactions in female-written scripts (approximately 0.25%) and is 1.5 times higher than for a mixed-gender team (approximately 0.30%). It should be noted male-written scripts display a higher proportion of swearing for all speaker-listener interactions when compared to the other screenwriting groups. This is to say that when the screenwriter is male, the proportion of swearing for all their characters is likely to increase compared to the other writing teams.

Dialogue lines were extracted from the corpus to examine the context in which swearing was used by male characters speaking to other male counterparts. For male screenwriters, 847 dialogue lines were observed where at least one token of swearing can be found. In films written by women 145 lines of dialogue were found, and for mixed-gendered teams it was 89. Female screenwriters show the lowest ratio of swearing for

male-to-male interactions out of the three groups. No lines of dialogue with more than two swearing tokens can be found for this specific subset of the corpus when it was manually inspected. Compared to male screenwriters, in mixed-gendered screenwriting teams, the ratio of swearing is less than half. In contrast, differences with female screenwriters are not as striking as evidenced by the overlap in estimates of male-to-male interactions in panels two and three in Figure 4.6.

With respect to males talking to female characters differences were also identified among the writing groups. For male screenwriters, 316 lines of dialogue were found which contained swear words, compared to 132 for female writers and 104 for mixed-gender teams. In male-written films the highest proportion of swearing is found compared with the other two groups (see Figure 4.6). Female screenwriters display the lowest proportion of swearing when contrasted with the other two groups. The pattern found in male-male interactions with regards to screenwriters is replicated for male speakers and female listeners interactions. It is interesting to note that, in male-to-female dialogue written by female or mixed-gender teams compared to male screenwriters, examples where the speaker uttered insults directly to the listener were more difficult to find when manually inspecting the sub-corpus. To summarise, it is clear that when writing, male screenwriters tend to use a higher proportion of swearing, regardless of the gender of the speaker or listener. Within this group, a higher proportion of swearing was observed in male characters, particularly when addressing male listeners. Although some differences were noted between mixed-gender teams and female screenwriters, the largest contrast remains between male and female screenwriters as illustrated in Figure 4.6.

Interaction (1) exemplifies a case in which the presence of swear words is used in an impolite utterance. A number of insults are uttered towards the male doctor. Even though the situation can be considered as an emergency, it is a clear FTA, given that the speaker intends to cause offence. Many of the insults follow some of Culpeper's (2011, p.135) structures for formulaic impoliteness expressions such as personalised negative vocatives ([you] [negative connotated adjective] [negative connotated noun]) and negative expressions such as cursing or ill-wishes.

(1)

BEN: Hey, Doc Howard. Ben Stone calling. Guess what the **fuck**'s up? Alison's going into labour and you are not **fucking** here. Now, where are you? You're at a **fucking** Bar Mitzvah in San Francisco, you **motherfucking piece of shit**! And you know I'm going to have to do now? I'm going to have to kill you. I'm going to have to pop a cap in your **ass**. You're dead! You're Tupac! You are **fucking** Biggie, **you piece of shit**! I hope

you **fucking** die or drop the **fucking** chair and kill that **fucking** kid! Hope your plane crashes. Peace, **fucker**!

[Film: "Knocked Up (2007)" Screenwriter: Judd Apatow . Ben is calling his doctor after finding out he is unexpectedly unavailable to deliver his baby]

### *Female Dialogue*

Having discussed the differences in writing for male characters, the following section explores contrasts in interactions involving female speakers. For all writing teams, the estimated proportion of swearing was higher in conversations between female characters than when women addressed male characters. In interactions with male listeners 289 lines of dialogue were found for male screenwriters, 114 in female-written films, and 84 lines in mixed-gendered teams. As illustrated in Figure 4.6, the lowest proportion of swearing is found in female screenwriters' films and the highest in films written by men. No striking contrasts are seen when comparing mixed-gender screenwriting groups with male or female writers.

With respect to females talking to females, some differences were identified when contrasting writing groups. Moreover, while the estimated proportion of swearing is consistently higher when women address women, the contrast are not as stark as for men when addressing male or female characters. For male screenwriters, 168 lines of dialogue were observed; male writers display the highest proportion of swearing for the subgroup of female-to-female interactions. 115 lines were found for female screenwriters and 81 for mixed-gender teams. In films written by male screenwriters, the proportion of swear words used by female characters talking to females almost doubles that found in films written by women (see Figure 4.6). Compared to the two other groups, the contrasts seen are not as striking. The proportion of observed swearing is marginally higher than for female groups as observed in the overlap when comparing female and mixed-gender teams, as is can be seen in panels two and three in Figure 4.6.

Extract (2) presents the highest number of swear words in one piece of dialogue for female speakers. Here to illustrate how the presence of these tokens makes the dialogue a strong candidate for impoliteness interpretation. The female character becomes agitated after not being allowed into a nightclub and insults the doorman; it is clear that the speakers' intention is to cause offence by using different taboo words. A number of conventionalised impoliteness formulae are used, including personalised negative vocatives, personalised negative assertions, unpalatable questions, and negative expressions (Culpeper, 2011a:135-136).

(2)
DEBBIE: I'm not going to go to the end of the **fucking** line. Who the **fuck** are you? I have just as much of a right to be here as any of these little skanky girls! What, am I not skanky enough for you?! You want me to hike up my **fucking** skirt?! What the **fuck** is your problem?! I'm not going anywhere! You're just some `roided out freak with a **fucking** clipboard. And your stupid little **fucking** rope! You may have power now, but you're not God. You're a doorman! Okay? You're a doorman! So ... **fuck you, you fucking fag** with your **fucking** little **faggy** gloves.

[Film: "Knocked Up" (2007). Screenwriter: Judd Apatow. Debbie is denied entrance to a nightclub and insults the doorman for not being allowed in]

To summarise, male and female characters written by men showed the highest proportion of swearing, and within these films, men talking to other men are estimated to use more swear words overall. Furthermore, when talking into consideration the listener, similar patterns can be seen for all three writing groups. When men talk to men they tend to swear more. The opposite is observed for female speakers, who consistently show a higher proportion when talking to other women. However, a much clear contrast can be seen between male-male vs. male-female interactions than for female speaker addressing either gender regardless of the screenwriter. Although other studies have found no clear evidence of men swearing more than women, these studies were based on different types of discourse. Romantic comedies for Anglo-American audiences tend to portray men and women in a more stereotypical light, and the results discussed above reflect these views to some extent.

### 4.2.7 Linguistic Negation

In their study of differences between men and women in language use, Newman et al. (2008) were able to replicate findings from other studies (Mulac & Lundell, 1986; Mulac, Lundell, & Bradac, 1986) and observed that women used negation more frequently than men. In simple terms, negation is an operator which makes the value of a proposition false, and every language has devices to achieve this (Miestamo, 2007), no for example is one of the most frequent signals of negation (Morante and Daelemans, 2009). In Brown and Levinson's (1987) terms, negation can be seen as an FTA in situations when a listener wishes to decline a request, or contradict the interlocutor. Negation (i.e.: no, not, never, none, etc.) can be found in different politeness strategies. The speaker can use bald on record strategies without any mitigating elements, which would increase the risk of causing offence to the listener. Alternatively, negation can also be used in negative or positive politeness strategies, which will depend on the context in which the

utterance is made and the power relationships between participants, and the aims of the speaker.

In this dataset, significant differences were observed between male and female characters; the gender of the speaker also had an impact on the estimated proportion of linguistic negation in dialogue. Screenwriting teams were not included in the models for negation as they made no contribution to the performance of the model. The model which best describes the distribution of this feature includes the gender of the speaker and the listener as main effects as well as the interaction between these two variables.

| 'Negation' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -3.59498 | 0.02004 | -179.346 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.23674 | 0.02844 | 8.324 | < 2e-16 *** |
| listener_gender_F | 0.16784 | 0.02047 | 8.200 | 2.41e-16 *** |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.35464 | 0.03104 | -11.427 | < 2e-16 *** |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**Table 4.8:** GLMM Output for 'Linguistic Negation' tokens.

Figure 4.7 illustrates the contrast between estimated proportions for the two genders depending on the gender of the listener. For this feature, when the speaker is addressing a member of the opposite gender the likelihood of tokens of this marker being used increases significantly.

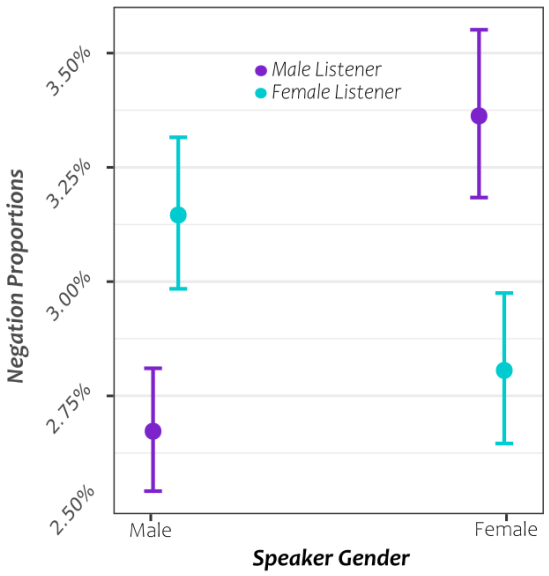


**Figure 4.7: Linguistic Negation Interaction Plot**. The GLMM output for 'hedges' was visualised using the sjPlot package. Results are presented as means of intensifiers proportion and error bars represent the estimated confidence interval.

***Male Dialogue***

As illustrated in Figure 4.7 the gender of the listener affects the estimated proportion of linguistic negation for male speakers. When male characters interact with female characters the estimated proportion (approximately 3.1%) is higher than when they interact with other male counterparts (approximately 2.6%). Interactions between male characters and female listeners also display one of the highest estimated proportion of negation among the four subgroups. For male-male interactions 4263 lines of dialogue were extracted from the corpus containing at least one token of this feature; for male-female interactions 3970 lines were observed.

(1)
CHERYL: What the heck are those for?

MELVIN: **No. No.** Get Carol.

[Film: "As Good as It Gets" (1997). Screenwriter: James L. Brooks. Melvin arrives at his usual diner and takes out his own utensils and places them on the table.]

In interaction (1), Melvin uses a form of negation to refuse being served by any waitress that is not Carol, who normally looks after him. Melvin is an ill-tempered middle-aged man who has difficulty communicating with people, but when he does he is rude and offensive. Example (1) demonstrates his poor communication skills, when the waitress asks her about his unusual habit of bringing in his own cutlery, he completely ignores her question and uses a direct negative statement followed by an order to find a replacement. By going on the record without any form of redressive action, his words are likely to cause offence on the listener. In fact, in the lines subsequent to this interaction the conversation becomes more and more hostile after Melvin insults the waitress and demands she leave. Although it is not possible to make generalisations about every utterance in which *no* is used without any mitigating devices, in most cases its use as a response to a question or request is likely to be interpreted as rude or offensive.

(2)
ADAM: Jane, I need to ask you something...

JANE: Anything...

ADAM: You would**n't** happen to have any of those amazing chocolate croissants, would you?

[Film: "It's Complicated" (2009). Screenwriter: Nancy Meyers.]

In example (2), the use of negation in Adam's utterance helps him express he does not wish to impose on Jane with his request. By phrasing his request in a pessimistic way -

as Brown & Levinson (1987) refer to this strategy – he minimises the imposition on Jane and does not assume she will comply. As observed in (2), it is also common to see the use of modality, combined with negation and a question tag in this strategy to minimise the effect of imposing when making requests. The participants in this interaction are involved in a romantic relationship, and therefore in terms of power dynamics they are seen as equals and therefore even if Adam had not used these strategies he still would have achieved his aim. However, the linguistic choices he made increase the probability of Jane granting his request. These interactions help exemplify the use of different forms of linguistic negation and how they yield almost a complete opposite interpretations of politeness.

***Female Dialogue***

A similar pattern to male characters is observed when female characters use linguistic politeness. The gender of the listener has a significant impact on the estimated proportion of this feature. When addressing male characters, the proportion of linguistic negation compared to all the other words in the dialogue is roughly 3.7%, with a lower proportion being observed for female-female interactions at around 2.8% as illustrated in Figure 4.7. 4205 lines of dialogue were extracted from the corpus containing at least one token of this feature for female-male interactions and 2591 were extracted for female-female interactions.

(3)
CAROL: I **don't** think I can wait until tomorrow. This needs clearing up.

MELVIN: What needs clearing up?

CAROL: I'm **not** going to sleep with you. I will **never**, ever sleep with you. **Never**. **Not** ever.

[Film: "As Good as It Gets" (1997). Screenwriter: James L. Brooks. After Melvin offers to help Carol with her son's health issues, Carol tries to understand the reason behind his actions.]

In interaction (3), Carol delivers her message in an extremely direct manner to ensure that Melvin understands her feelings regarding their arrangement. While it is understandable that she wants to convey her message without room for interpretation, the repeated use of various forms of negation are a direct attack on Melvin's positive face needs. Her rejection is blunt and it is reinforced by the repetition of negation; the lack of any sort of mitigating devices in her remarks result in Melvin feeling hurt and quite possibly offended by her curt message delivery.

(4)
CAROL: Oh, I'm sorry. Sorry.

DANIEL: That's OK. My fault.

CAROL: **No, no,** really, it was**n't.** You're Sam's dad, aren't you?

[Film: "Love Actually" (2003). Screenwriter: Richard Curtis. Carol and Daniel bump into each other.]

In example (4), although the use of *no* is technically contradicting the listener, the intention of the speaker here is to assume responsibility for her wrongdoing. The use of the intensifier *really* also helps Carol strengthen her message. Her original apology on its own is more than appropriate in the context of the interaction and while Daniel also apologises as well, if she had not reinforced her apology in the last line it is unlikely she would have been seen as rude or impolite. However, taking into consideration the fact that Daniel is a potential love interest, using these strategies help her ensure that any FTA she might have committed is minimised and assist her in advancing the relationship.

Overall, as evidenced by the output of the GLMM (see Table 4.8) there are significant differences in the use of linguistic negation between male and female characters, and the gender of the listener has a clear effect on the estimated proportions of this feature. However, it is difficult to draw conclusions with regards to its contribution to politeness in dialogue as evidenced by the examples provided and the different uses of linguistic negation in them.

### 4.2.8 Informal Title

The way in which people address someone usually depends on the type of relationship between participants. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), using certain terms of address helps the speaker express in-group membership and mark familiarity with the listener. In cases where the power relations between participants are balanced, the use of informal terms of address such as 'mate', 'pal', honey' are generally interpreted by the listener as a sign of connection or a term of endearment. In such cases, the use of these forms of address can be interpreted as a form of positive politeness. On the other hand, in exchanges where there is a difference in hierarchies between participants, the use of these markers may be perceived as disrespectful and an attack on the positive face of the listener. Voigt et al. (2017) found that the informal terms of address used in the *politeness()* package, showed a high correlation with perceived disrespect by the participants in their research. In a different study, Kiesling (2004) argued that the use of

‘dude’ as a form of address, particularly among men, was used as an important feature of discourse to show solidarity in groups of friends. It can be argued, that in appropriate contexts address systems can be interpreted as a form of positive politeness.

In this corpus, the models showed that there are significant contrasts between male and female characters in terms of the use of informal titles. Furthermore, the gender of the listener had a clear impact on the estimated proportion of the choice of address. The best model to describe the distribution of ‘informal title’ includes gender of the speaker and listener as main effects, as well as the interaction between these two variables. The gender of the screenwriting groups was not included as it did not contribute to the most parsimonious model.

| ‘Informal Title’ GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -5.06013 | 0.04808 | -105.253 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | -0.62626 | 0.07770 | -8.060 | 7.65e-16 *** |
| listener_gender_F | -0.48660 | 0.05151 | -9.446 | < 2e-16 *** |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | 0.68131 | 0.08148 | 8.362 | < 2e-16 *** |

Signif. codes: 0 ‘***’ 0.0001 ‘**’ 0.001 ‘*’ 0.01 ‘.’ 0.05 ’ ‘

**Table 4.9:** GLMM Outputs for ‘Informal Title’ tokens.

Figure 4.8 demonstrates the differences between male and female characters based on the gender of the listener. For this particular feature is important to highlight that the terms included in the package are as follows: *dude*, *bro*, *boss*, *bud*, *buddy*, *champ*, *man*, *guy*, *brotha*, *sista*, *son*, *sonny*, and *chief*. It is patent that the majority of these terms are used when addressing men, and therefore the contrasts in use cannot be completely attributed to differences in preference by gender. Moreover, any words beginning with ‘bro-‘ were also classified as belonging to this category. These issue and the consequences it carries regarding their interpretation of the results will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

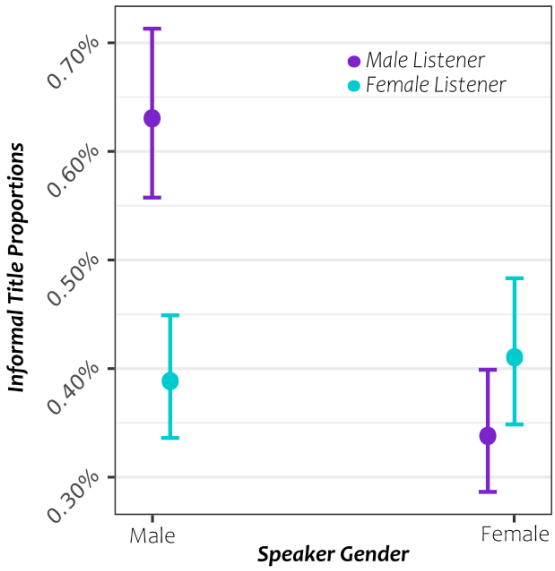


**Figure 4.8: Informal Title Interaction Plot**. The GLMM output for 'hedges' was visualised using the sjPlot package. Results are presented as means of intensifiers proportion and error bars represent the estimated confidence interval.

### *Male Dialogue*

Interactions between male characters show the highest estimated proportion of tokens of *informal title* out of all the subgroups. 1,203 lines of dialogue were extracted which contained at least one token of this feature for male-male interactions and 617 for male-female dialogue. Compared to any of the other interactions, male-male exchanges show the highest estimated ratio (approximately 0.5%), almost doubling any of the other subgroups as seen in Figure 4.8. However, as previously noted, this stark contrast is not surprising seeing as most of the terms in this category are gendered.

(1) MIKE: No, **dude**, I'm the talent. [Film: "The Ugly Truth" (2009). Screenwriter: Nicole Eastman, Karen McCullah, Kirsten Smith]

(2) STEWART: Oh yeah, **dude**. She hates you. [Film: "The Bounty Hunter" (2010). Screenwriter: Sarah Thorp.]

(3) KUMAIL: Great set, **dude**! [Film: "The Big Sick" (2017). Screenwriter: Emily V. Gordon, Kumail Nanjiani]

The use of *dude* among men is frequently used as an expression of camaraderie and solidarity (Kiesling, 2004). In examples (1) to (3), the characters are speaking to either friends or acquaintances, and thus using *dude* as a term of address is not inappropriate and is highly unlikely for it to cause offence on the listener. Kiesling (2004) also argues that the use of 'dude' or 'bro' is part of the discourse of young men in the United States

within what he called “a masculine stance”. Although it cannot be said that the presence of this term of address equates to politeness, the speaker can use it when complimenting the listener and intensify their message, as in (3), or as a way of attenuating the seriousness of a situation (as in 1-2).

(4) ROMEO: You got to relax, **boss**! [Film: “Tin Cup” (1996). Screenwriter: John Norville, Ron Shelton]

(5) SIMON: Right-o, **boss** man. [Film: “Bridget Jones’s Diary” (2001). Screenwriter: Andrew Davies, Richard Curtis]

(6) NUKE: Hey **boss**, I got a question [Film: “Bull Durham” (1988). Screenplay: Ron Shelton]

In examples (4) to (6), the characters use the term *boss* to address their listeners, who are in fact in a position of power over them. In more formal contexts, where the relationship between the participants is strictly professional the term *Sir* or *Mr.* might be favoured. In this case, however, the characters have professional relationships, but the contexts are less formal and more relaxed. The use of a more informal term of address demonstrates that the speaker has respect for the listener but also shows in-group membership without risking causing harm to the addressees’ faces.

### *Female Dialogue*

Interactions between female characters and male listeners display the lowest estimated proportion of tokens of ‘informal title’ out of all the subgroups. 535 lines of dialogue were extracted from the corpus containing at least one instance of this feature. However, once they were analysed in more detail, the vast majority of the entries found containing these tokens were not used to address the listener and but as a reference to a third party. For female-female interactions no examples were found in the corpus in which the speaker uses one of the terms of address when interacting with another female character. Although there are, of course, lines of dialogue containing some of these tokens, they are used to refer to someone who is not the listener and not as part of a politeness strategy.

(7) CELESTE: Thanks, **dude**! [Film: “Celeste and Jesse Forever” Screenwriter: Rashida Jones, Will McCormack.]

(8) GABBY: Speak for yourself **dude**. I'm definitely damaged from the divorce. [Film: “It’s Complicated”. Screenwriter: Nancy Meyers.]

From the few examples present in the corpus, it is evident that the use of dude as an expression of camaraderie is not as frequent in female characters’ speech. Although

some examples (7, 8) were found where this term was used with similar aims as in previous examples (1 to 3), female characters display a much lower ratio of *dude* to express in-group membership. In example (7), Celeste addresses a salesman as dude, after he offers help with her purchase. By thanking him and using an informal term of address, she attempts to establish a positive customer-salesperson relationship. In example (8), Gabby is addressing her brother and uses a more casual form of address to compensate for disagreeing with him, the use of dude allows her to make her utterance more informal and lessen the importance of the disagreement.

(9) DOROTHY: Don't worry about it, **boss**. [Film: "Jerry Maguire" (1996). Screenwriter: Cameron Crowe.]

(10) SARAH: Certainly. Excellent. Will do. Thanks, **boss**. [Film: "Love Actually" (2003). Screenwriter: Richard Curtis]

In examples (9) and (10), both Dorothy and Sarah use the term *boss* when addressing their superiors. Their use of this term helps them express that while they acknowledge their bosses' hierarchy, they feel comfortable using a less formal term of address. In fact, in both cases, the two characters become involved in a romantic relationship later on in the film. For both characters, using a friendlier address term helped them express that they viewed their work relationship as more casual and open to evolve into something else.

To summarise, the models yielded significant contrasts in the use of terms of informal address between male and female characters. It is true that the use of certain in-group markers can be used as a form of positive politeness in certain context and taking into consideration the power balance between participants. However, as previously mentioned, it would be unwise to hypothesise on the reasons behind the contrasts between male and female characters with regards to politeness when taking into consideration that most terms are frequently used to address men only. Should researchers wish to use this tool to examine the use of informal forms of address and gender effects extreme caution should be exercised.

### 4.2.9 Second Person Pronouns

One of the aspects of language in which men and women have been found to differ in their frequency of use, is pronouns. Argamon et al. (2003) found that in fiction and non-fiction written texts, the use of pronouns was overwhelmingly more frequent in female writers. Although there were some exceptions for certain types of pronouns, these

differences held true for second person pronouns (i.e.: you, your, yourself, yourselves). Newman et al. (2008) also found evidence that overall, female speakers used more pronouns in conversation than their male counterparts. With the creation of the LIWC (Pennebaker et. al, 2015) in 1993 and its subsequent updates and further development, it is now possible to investigate a link between words and their possible psychological meaning. Tausczik and Pennebaker (2010) believe that the use of pronouns can be associated with the quality of relationships since they show how participants refer to one another. They theorise that the use of second person pronouns can be linked to lower relationships quality. They base their claim on a study conducted by Simmons, Chambless, and Gordon (2008), in which evidence revealed that second person pronouns signalled poor relationships with the interactants. Subjects in this study who used second person more frequently also scored high on instances of criticism and hostility towards the addressee. Another study (Slatcher, Vazire, and Pennebaker, 2008) found that in text conversations between heterosexual couples, a higher proportion of second person by male subjects correlated with lower satisfaction in the relationship.

In many languages, unlike in English, the use of different second person pronouns allow the speaker to demonstrate respect or solidarity with the listener. In Spanish, for example, if the speaker knows the addressee well the use of *tu* (or *vos* in Uruguayan Spanish, for example) is an acceptable form of address between interactants who know each other well or where there are no differences in hierarchy. The use, on the other hand, of *usted* is a clear sign of respect, particularly with elder listeners or social superiors. This system does not apply to modern English, as there are no distinctions in second person pronouns, and therefore it is not possible to convey solidarity or respect with their use. In her study of expressions of politeness in Cypriot Greek, Terkourafi (2001) found that the presence of second person singular or plural in certain formulaic structures were frequently perceived as polite utterances by the listener. Bearing in mind that English does not have these grammatical systems, it would be difficult to draw conclusions based on the use of second person pronouns and politeness strategies.

In this corpus, the models showed that there are significant differences between male and female characters with regard to the use of second-person pronouns. Moreover, the gender of the listener had a strong impact on the proportions of the use of these pronouns as demonstrated by the significance of the interaction between the two variables in Table 4.10. The best model to describe the distribution of this marker includes gender of the speaker and listener as main effects, as well as the interaction

between these two variables. The gender of the screenwriter was not included as it did not contribute to the most parsimonious model.

| 'Second Person Pronouns' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -2.93173 | 0.01795 | -163.354 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.17469 | 0.02726 | 6.408 | 1.47e-10 *** |
| listener_gender_F | 0.08476 | 0.01619 | 5.237 | 1.64e-07 *** |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.26552 | 0.02506 | -10.596 | < 2e-16 *** |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**Table 4.10:** GLMM Output for 'Second Person Pronouns' tokens.

Figure 4.9 illustrates the differences between male and female characters considering the gender of the listener. It is clear that when characters are addressing members of the opposite gender, they are more likely to use second person pronouns. Female characters show a substantially higher proportion of second person use when addressing male characters when compared to the other subgroups.

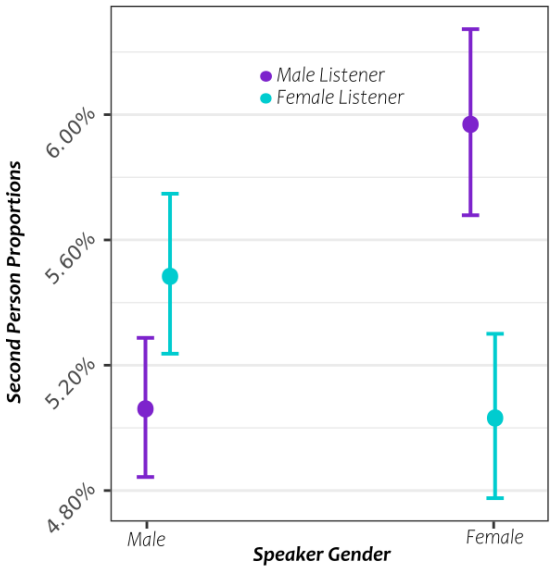


**Figure 4.9: Second Person Pronouns Interaction Plot**. The GLMM output for 'hedges' was visualised using the sjPlot package. Results are presented as means of intensifiers proportion and error bars represent the estimated confidence interval.

### *Male Dialogue*

For male-female interactions, 6,299 lines of dialogue were observed with at least one count of second person pronouns. 2nd person pronouns accounted for approximately

5.5% of the words in this subset. Male-male interactions displayed an estimated proportion of roughly 5% in the 6256 lines extracted containing this feature (see Figure 4.9). The use of second person can be interpreted in many different ways, depending on the context is used and the type of words its accompanied by. This feature was included in the *politeness()* package based on findings from Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al. (2013). They observed that when used in requests, the use of second person pronouns is likely to be perceived as polite. In this dataset, a number of requests and offers were found which are strong candidates to be interpreted as polite by the listener. Examples (1) to (3) illustrate this point. However, it should also be noted that these examples are followed or preceded by other politeness markers such as modal verbs, or conditionals.

(1) WILLIAM: Peter? Would **you** like to join us? [Film: "Forgetting Sarah Marshall" (2008). Screenwriter: Jason Segel.]

(2) EDWARD: Excuse me, would **you** mind leaving us, please? [Film: "Pretty Woman" (1990). Screenwriter: J.F. Lawton.]

(3) NICK: **You** couldn't toss me my lighter, could **you**, babe? [Film: "What Women Want" (2000). Screenwriter: Josh Goldsmith, Cathy Yuspa.]

(4) SAM: Josie--**you** make a really beautiful prom queen. [Film: "Never Been Kissed" (1999). Screenwriter: Abby Kohn, Marc Silverstein.]

It is not surprising that tokens of second person pronouns were found in different illocutionary acts. As evidenced by the examples, it is the lexical items that co-occur with the pronouns that help both the speaker and listener interpret the utterance as polite or not. In examples (1) to (4), it is highly probable that the listener will perceive the messages as a demonstration of politeness or as meeting their positive face needs. In contrast, examples (5) and (6) are unlikely to be well-received by the listener. In most cases they are alongside insults or negative emotion words which would contribute to the listener interpreting these utterances as FTAs.

(5) ALVY: Hey, **you** are in a bad mood. **You- you- you** must be getting your period. [Film: "Annie Hall" (1977). Screenwriter: Woody Allen, Marshall Brickman.]

(6) BOB: **You** POISONOUS BITCH! **YOU** CAN'T FIRE ME! [Film: "The Proposal" (2009). Screenwriter: Peter Chiarelli.]

### *Female Dialogue*

For female-male interactions 6,005 lines of dialogue were observed with at least one second person pronoun token, approximately 6% of the text is constituted by 2nd person pronouns. In contrast, 5% of the words in the 3814 lines extracted for female-female interactions were these pronouns. For female character dialogue, the models indicate that the gender of the listener has an impact on the estimated proportion of this marker.

As evidenced by Figure 4.9, when women address men, the probability of this pronoun being used increases significantly. As in previous examples, the presence of these pronouns does not consistently yield polite or impolite utterances. Depending on the type of illocutionary act and other lexical items present in the utterance, the message conveyed can be interpreted by the listener in different ways and also help the speaker mitigate potential FTAs. Examples of requests and offers were found in these lines where the use of second person is observed. Extracts (7) to (9) exhibit politeness markers in combination with second person pronouns and are likely to be interpreted as polite by the listeners in these interactions.

(7) ANNIE: Uhm...Can I offer **you** some coffee? [Film: "Bull Durham" (1988). Screenplay: Ron Shelton]

(8) CHER: I'm fine. Do **you** want some, something to drink? You know, I could get **you** some wine. [Film: "Clueless" (1995). Screenwriter: Amy Heckerling.]

(9) FAITH: Would **you** be willing to have dinner with me? [Film: "Only You" (1994). Screenwriter: Diane Drake.]

Other lines of dialogue were found where the use of second person was not a part of requests or offers. As it was the case for previous examples, it is the tokens which accompanied the second pronoun that are expected to help the listener interpret the utterances as polite or impolite. Extracts (11) and (12) are in all probability to be seen by the listener as an attack on their face, while examples (13) and (14) will presumably be welcomed by the listener as they address their positive face wants. In the same fashion as in offers and requests, the presence of negative emotion tokens or lexical items typically found in compliments assist the listeners in perceiving these speech acts on either end of the spectrum of politeness.

(11) TEACHER: **You** should be ashamed of **yourself**. [Film: "Annie Hall" (1977). Screenwriter: Woody Allen, Marshall Brickman.]

(12) TESS: **You** snake! [Film: "Working Girl" (1988). Screenwriter: Kevin Wade]

(13) JULIA: Oh Robbie **you'**re the best! [Film: "The Wedding Singer" (1998). Screenwriter: Tim Herlihy]

(14) JULIET: Oh. Oh, bingo. That's lovely. Well done, **you**. [Film: "Love Actually" (2003). Screenwriter: Richard Curtis.]

In summary, in this dataset significant differences were observed between male and female characters and the overall use of second person pronouns. Moreover, the models indicate significant contrasts when speakers are addressing characters of the opposite gender. The estimated proportion of second person in this corpus is higher when males address female characters and when female address male characters. Although there

is evidence that the presence of these pronouns correlates with negative or hostile relationship between participants (Simmons, Chambless, and Gordon, 2008; Tausczik and Pennebaker, 2010), other studies found that, in requests, the use of second person is more likely to be interpreted as polite by the speaker (Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al., 2013). Furthermore, Aljanaideh, Fosler-Lussier, and de Marneffe (2020) observed examples similar to those found in this study. Their models also discovered highly polite and impolite utterances in which second person pronouns are present. They proposed that future research would benefit from analysing finer-grained patterns which contain these pronouns to be able to generalise the results when using NLP tools. It would be interesting to draw from Terkourafi's (2001) methodology and find similar patterns in English examples to be able to better understand which formulaic expressions containing second person pronouns generally yield politeness interpretations. However, this in-depth analysis is beyond the scope of this research. In light of the array of different kinds of speech acts in this corpus, it would be imprudent to draw conclusions on the connection between second person pronouns and politeness for this corpus at this time.

### 4.2.10 First Person Singular Pronouns

Men and women have been theorised to differ in their use of pronouns. Mehl and Pennebaker (2003) reported that women are more likely to use first-person singular pronouns. Newman et al. (2008) note that, intuitively, the use of first-person singular pronouns (i.e.: *I, me, mine, myself*) denotes selfishness or individualism on the part of the user. This view has been contested arguing that studies have found that people higher in social hierarchy use *I* words less (Pennebaker, 2009). Mulac & Lundell (1994) found that the use of first-person singular pronouns were more frequent in women's writing given that they were normally found with phrases denoting uncertainty. Slatcher, Vazire, & Pennebaker (2008) found that in conversations via text message between romantic partners, women's increased use of these pronouns correlated with higher relationship-satisfaction ratings. First-person singular pronouns were included in the *politeness()* package in light of findings in Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al. (2013). They found that requests which included *I* were slightly more likely to be perceived as polite by the listener. In contrast, Aljanaideh, Fosler-Lussier and de Marneffe (2020), reported that both polite and impolite requests were found in their dataset containing first-person singular nouns. Upon closer inspection, they found that requests which started with *I* and were followed by a direct question were more likely to be seen as impolite. Requests

which started with a politeness marker such as a greeting, and formulated questions using *I* and modality, were in their majority perceived as polite.

In this dataset, the models showed that there are significant differences between male and female characters regarding the use of first-person single pronouns. The gender of the listener influenced the proportion of these pronouns. The best model to describe the distribution of this feature includes gender of the speaker and listener as main effects, as well as the interaction between these two variables. The gender of the screenwriter did not contribute to a more accurate performance of the model.

| 'First Person Singular Pronouns' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -3.05473 | 0.02206 | -138.445 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.10594 | 0.03232 | 3.278 | 0.00105. |
| listener_gender_F | 0.07869 | 0.01566 | 5.026 | 5.02e-07 *** |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.13921 | 0.02379 | -5.852 | 4.84e-09 *** |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**Table 4.11:** GLMM Output for 'First Person Singular' tokens.

Figure 4.10 illustrates the differences between male and female characters taking into consideration the gender of the listener. Although the models revealed that differences between gender of the speaker were borderline significant, the interaction between the gender of the speaker and the gender of the listener is highly significant (see Table 4.11). When characters are addressing members of the opposite gender, they are more likely to first-person singular pronouns.

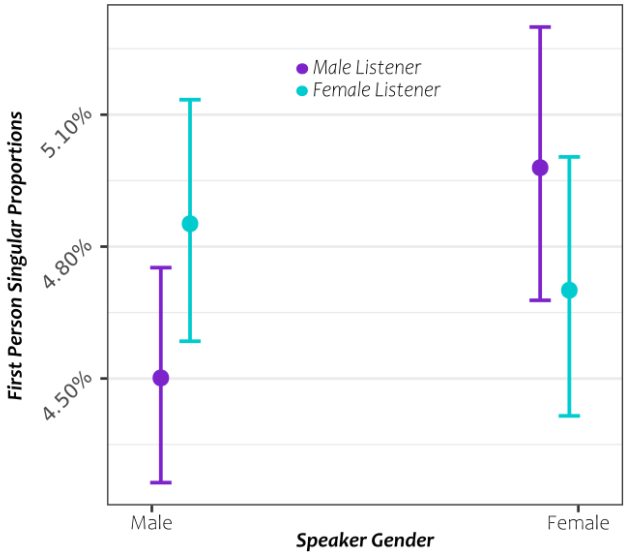


**Figure 4.10: First-person Singular Pronouns Interaction Plot**. The GLMM output for 'hedges' was visualised using the sjPlot package. Results are presented as means of intensifiers proportion and error bars represent the estimated confidence interval.

### *Male Dialogue*

5899 entries were found for male-male interactions with at least one count of first-person singular pronouns with 1st-person-singular pronouns representing approximately 4.5% of the tokens. For male-female interactions 6259 lines were extracted with these pronouns comprising just over 4.8% of the tokens in the text (see Figure 4.10). As with other pronouns, the use of first-person singular can be interpreted in different ways, where context and the type of words it is surrounded by can play an important role in the interpretation of the utterance. In this dataset, a large variety of speech acts were found containing these pronouns, where the intention of the speaker varies from case to case. Extract (1) illustrates a case in which the utterance is likely to be perceived as polite by the listener or as an attempt on the speaker's part to address the listener's positive face wants. Examples (2) on the other hand, is expected to be seen as a potential FTA. Although in this example negative tokens are not aimed directly at the listener, the aggressive and angered tone are unlikely to be interpreted as polite.

(1) NICK: Listen to **me, I** think you're one of the great women. **I** really do. [Film: "What Women Want" (2000). Screenwriter: Josh Goldsmith, Cathy Yuspa.]

(2) KIRK: You know what's wrong with **me**!? **I**'ll tell you! **I**'m fat! **I**'m bald! **I**'m ugly! **I**'m hairy! **I**'m uncoordinated! **I**'m uncreative! **I**'m not a college graduate! **I**'ve never been to Europe! **I** have a shitty job! **I** drive a shitty car! You want **me** to go on!? Because **I** can! [Film: "She's Out of My League" (2010). Screenwriter: Sean Anders, John Morris]

### *Female Dialogue*

Female-male interactions display the highest proportion of these pronouns (approximately 4.9%) in the 6,002 dialogue lines extracted with at least one count of first-person singular pronouns. Female-female interactions has a proportion of just over 4.6% of this feature in the 3849 lines extracted (see Figure 4.10). Example (3) represent an instance in which the statements is likely to be interpreted as polite by the listener. The other politeness indicators help the speaker express their message in a more polite manner. Example (4) displays a different pattern. This line is highly likely to be interpreted as a direct attack on the listener's face and be interpreted as impolite owing to the presence of insults and negative emotion words included in the utterance.

(3) MARY: **I**'m really sorry for bothering you. You know what **I** mean? [Film: "Manhattan" (1979). Screenwriter: Woody Allen, Marshall Brickman.]

(4) ALISON: Firstly, you are a stupid asshole and **I** hate you and Secondly ... Secondly... [Film: "How to Lose Friends & Alienate People" (2008). Screenwriter: Peter Straughan]

To conclude, differences were found in the use of first-person pronouns between male and female characters in romantic comedies. While the gender of the screenwriter did not have an impact on the distribution of this marker, the gender of the listener contributed to significant differences between genders (see Table 4.11). When female characters address male characters and vice versa, the estimated proportion was higher than when characters interacted with same-gendered characters. As highlighted by Tausczik and Pennebaker (2010), the evaluation of pronouns and other function words should be done with caution. As evidenced by the examples extracted from the corpus, the presence of the pronouns does not consistently yield polite or impolite utterances. Further investigation of the co-occurrence of these pronouns and other markers of politeness is needed to allow for further generalisations on the role first-person singular pronouns play in politeness realisations.

### 4.2.11 Yes/No Questions

Research on language and gender suggests that compared to men, women use interrogative forms more frequently than men. Fishman (1980) analysed the use of yes/no and tag questions in conversations between heterosexual couples. She observed that yes/no questions were used by women three times as much as the men. Fishman theorised that women's higher frequency of question-asking are a part of their conversational strategy. Questions invite the listener to interact in the conversation and facilitate engagement of the participants. By contrast, other studies have found that the use of questions is linked to powerful speakers (Coates and Cameron, 1989). Viewing the use from a different perspective to Fishman, the use of questions can be interpreted as the speaker having control of how the interaction develops and narrows what the listener is allowed to contribute (Harris, 1984). Similar findings were observed in contexts where men and women are equal in terms of power, but the context is of high status (e.g.: conferences, meetings, seminars), men asked questions more frequently (Bashiruddin et al., 1990; Holmes, 1995; Hinsley et al., 2017). With regard to a possible connection between questions and politeness, as evidenced by previous research, the relationship between interactants and the linguistic function of the questions needs to be taken into consideration. In romantic comedies a large proportion of the conversations are between the two main characters, which can be considered a similar context as the one in Fishman's (1980) study. The NLP tool used in this study claims to differentiate between open-ended and yes/no questions. While no significant differences were found between male and female characters in the use of open-ended questions, contrasts were

observed in the use of yes/no questions. When investigating the entries which matched with yes/no questions, it was observed that the package did not truly differentiate between the type of questions on the texts. Each time a question mark was found in a line of dialogue, it was labelled as a yes/no question. The examples below (1 to 4) illustrate the various types of questions in lines of dialogue which indicated the presence of a yes/no question according to the package.

(1) JACK: Parker, yeah... Now, what did you wanna tell me**?** Huh**?** [Film: "Working Girl" (1988). Screenwriter: Kevin Wade.]

(2) MICHAEL: Damn straight, it's how I feel! What's their wedding gift, a little gold collar that says "Mikey-poo"**?** Or do I have to change my name to "Binky"**?** [Film: "My Best Friend's Wedding" (1997). Screenwriter: Ronald Bass.]

(3) TRACY: Rob, what do you want to be when you grow up? [Film: "Never Been Kissed" (1999). Screenwriter: Abby Kohn, Marc Silverstein.]

(4) ANNIE: You don't love me, is that it**?** [Film: "Sleepless in Seattle" (1993). Screenwriter: Nora Ephron, David S. Ward.]

Although the models yielded significant differences between male and female characters regarding the frequency of yes/no questions, (see Table 4.12) as demonstrated by the examples this feature contains all kinds of questions with different functions. With this in mind, it is difficult to draw conclusions relating to the connection between politeness, questions, or any differences between male and female characters.

| 'Yes.No Questions' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -3.69921 | 0.02860 | -129.329 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.14433 | 0.03746 | 3.853 | 0.000117** |
| listener_gender_F | 0.13442 | 0.02237 | 6.008 | 1.88e-09 *** |
| screenwr_gender_F | 0.08629 | 0.03918 | 2.202 | 0.027657 |
| screenwr_gender_MG | -0.02544 | 0.04441 | -0.573 | 0.566705 |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.25533 | 0.03416 | -7.474 | 7.78e-14 *** |
| | | | | Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' ' |

**Table 4.12:** GLMM Output for 'Yes.No Questions' tokens.

## 4.2.12 Discussion of Findings

Measurable differences in signals of politeness were visible when considering the gender of the speaker in isolation and its interaction with gender of addressee and the screenwriting team.

Tokens of *intensifiers*, formulaic expressions of *reassurance*, and lexical items from the *positive emotion* word list showed differences between male and female characters. For these three features the gender of the listener had an effect on the estimated proportion of these markers. In all three, when characters address members of the opposite gender, the likelihood of these politeness indicators increased significantly. Within these differences female characters are estimated to use them more frequently than male counterparts. The examples provided in Sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2, and 4.2.5 illustrate cases in which the presence of these markers contributes to the utterance being open to interpretation as polite. The estimated proportion of *hedges* and *please* in this dataset only showed differences between male and female speakers. It is estimated that these markers are more frequently found in female dialogue, and the gender of the listener or screenwriter did not impact their estimated proportions, as shown in Sections 4.2.3 and 4.2.4. Further examples for all features and their analysis in context regarding their contribution towards politeness interpretation can be found in Appendix E.

*Swearing* was the only feature in which the gender of the screenwriting team had an effect on the estimated proportion of these marker, as well as the gender of the speaker, listener, and their interaction (see Section 4.2.6). Some of the most statistically significant contrast were observed for this feature. Overall, and for all screenwriting teams, male characters are estimated to use swearing more frequently than female characters. The gender of the listener, particularly for male speakers, had a clear impact on the likelihood of this marker being used. When male characters address other male characters, they are far more likely to use swear words than when interacting with female characters. Female speakers are more likely to use swear words when addressing female characters than when interacting with men. However, the contrasts are not as stark as they are for male speakers. In films written by male screenwriters, the estimated proportion of this tokens increases for all interactions; female-written scripts show the lowest estimated proportion for all interactions.

Differences were found in *linguistic negation*, *2nd person* and *1st person singular pronouns*, where the patterns were similar to the ones found in features such as intensifiers or reassurance, for example. However, after inspecting the contexts in which

these features were observed, it is difficult to theorise on their contribution to politeness in this context. Finally, contrasts were observed in *informal title* and *yes.no questions* where the interaction between the gender of the speaker and the listener impacted the estimated ratio of these markers. However, due to issues with the design of this feature in the NLP tool used, conclusions with regards to politeness and gender effects could not be reached.

Overall, there appears to be a general pattern of characters accommodating linguistic strategies when addressing characters of the opposite gender. In mixed-gender interactions a more frequent estimated use of signals of politeness, and a less common use of markers of impoliteness was observed. This may indicate that, in the context of romantic comedies where a large part of the male-female interactions are between potential love interests, a more frequent use of politeness signals can help them establish or enhance their relationship. The results found are in line with findings from previous research on linguistic accommodation (Burgoon et al., 2017) Hilte, Vandekerckhove, and Daelemans (2020), for example, found that in instant messaging platforms, both genders modified their texting style when interacting with the opposite gender. These changes were particularly significant when the interactants were trying to flirt with one another. Parallels can be drawn here with characters in romantic comedies and the differences in the use of politeness indicators. In this genre, where a lot of the male-female interactions are between characters potentially pursuing a romantic relationship, the use of different indicators of politeness can help them advance the relationship and contribute towards achieving their goals.

## 4.3 Analysis of Selected Scenes

This section presents the analysis of linguistic politeness use in selected scenes from the following films: *Notting Hill* (1999), *When Harry Met Sally* (1989), and *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009). The films were chosen based on the gender of the screenwriter – male *(Notting Hill, Richard Curtis*), female (*When Harry Met Sally*, Nora Ephron), and a mixed-gender team (*He's Just Not That Into You*, Abby Kohn and Marc Silverstein). The rationale used to determine which scenes were to be qualitatively analysed is presented in Chapter 3, Section 3.8. A qualitative analysis of each scene is presented which takes into consideration sociological variables (e.g.: social distance and power), gender, the notion of face, and linguistic politeness strategies and their motivation. This approach will contribute to a better understanding of how the pursuit of the characters' own goals is reflected in their linguistic politeness choices.

### 4.3.1 Notting Hill

Notting Hill was first released in 1999, written by Richard Curtis and directed by Roger Michell, the film tells the story of the romantic relationship between William Thacker (Hugh Grant) and Anna Scott (Julia Roberts). Since its release, it has become one of the classics of the genre and was well-received by audiences and critics alike.

William is the owner of a failing travel bookstore in a London neighbourhood and, early in the film, we also learn that his wife has recently left him. The story begins to develop when Anna Scott, a famous Hollywood film star, walks into the store and the characters first meet. The film centres around the romance between the two main characters, and the obstacles their relationship experiences and how the characters try to navigate them. The film is portrayed from William's point of view, therefore a lot of what the audiences are exposed to and the contrasts between characters are seen from his perspective. We know from the beginning of the film that there is something lacking in William's life, his business is unsuccessful and so is his romantic life. Grant portrays him as a modest, sheepish, but endearing man - characteristics which are common to other roles Grant has played. However, it is hinted that he is very close to his circle of friends, which contrasts with Anna's Hollywood lifestyle. Roberts' character appears to be more in control of her life; she certainly has a more successful career than William does and, from his perspective, is happier than he is. Later in the film it is revealed that her life is not all that it seems to be, and that the reason she lacks her own identity is caused by the need to meet the expectations of others. Roberts has played other

characters who struggle to find their identity, become more assertive and disregard the opinions of others; this is a conflict to which many women can relate (Kord &Krimmer, 2005).

## *Meet Cute*

This is the scene in which the two main characters meet for the first time when Anna walks into William's bookstore. As soon as she enters the store, William recognises her; even though he attempts to act normal, it is clear that he perceives her as someone in a more powerful position given her social status and fame. As in many romantic comedies, it becomes very clear to the audience that there is chemistry between the characters and therefore potential for a happy ending. The power dynamic between the two characters is reflected in the politeness strategies used in the following conversation.

[Extract 1]

1. WILLIAM: Can I help you?

2. ANNA: No, thanks. I'll just look around.

3. WILLIAM: Fine. That book's really not good -- just in case, you know, browsing turned to buying. You'd be wasting your money.

4. ANNA: Really?

5. WILLIAM: Yes. This one though is... very good. I think the man who wrote it has actually been to Turkey, which helps. There's also a very amusing incident with a kebab.

6. ANNA: Thanks. I'll think about it.

In line 1, William offers help to Anna in finding something she might need. Given the context of customer-shop assistant, it is a standard offer by which the speaker requests an action for themselves and empowers the speaker. In line 2, she politely declines by the use of *thank you* and *just* to hedge not accepting his offer. In line 3, William continues to offer advice in spite of her stating she only wanted to browse. The use of phrases such as *just in case* or *you know* help him mitigate imposing on Anna, while at the same time he uses his knowledge and recognises her needs by trying to prevent her from buying a book that is *really not good*. Rather than stating for a second time that she is not interested in his advice, she uses the intensifier in question form *really* to demonstrate some interest in what William is saying but at the same time she does not try to engage in the conversation any further. In line 5 he continues to recommend a different book from the one she's planning on buying; to avoid any imposing on her prompts the use of hedges (*think*) to minimise the imposition and jokes as a positive

politeness strategy. In line 6, she thanks him once again; furthermore, rather than directly going on record stating she is not interested in the book he recommends, she hedges her answer so as not to commit to a decision which clashes with William's suggestion.

[Extract 2]

7. WILLIAM: Sorry about that...

8. ANNA: No, that's fine. I was going to steal one myself but now I've changed my mind. Signed by the author, I see.

9. WILLIAM: Yes, we couldn't stop him. If you can find an unsigned copy, it's worth an absolute fortune.

10. ANNA: I think I will try this one.

11. WILLIAM: Oh -- right -- on second thought maybe it wasn't that bad. Actually -- it's a sort of masterpiece really. None of those childish kebab stories you get in so many travel books these days. And I'll throw in one of these for free. Very useful for lighting fires, wrapping fish, that sort of thing.

12. ANNA: Thanks.

After being interrupted by a shoplifter, William apologises for the disruption in line 7. In this case, his utterance is within the bounds of politic behaviour as it is not in excess of what the context merits. Anna uses reassurance in her turn, to minimise any sense of debt from William towards her; this is followed by a joke about the incident with the shoplifter which helps defuse any sense of tension. In line 9, William continues the interaction by also making a joke which helps him establish positive rapport and create a sense of familiarity with Anna. This positive facework helps William put her at ease and develop intimacy. In the following turn Anna decides to buy a book which is not the one that William recommended. To soften the fact she is going against his advice which might be interpreted as an FTA she hedges her statement: *I think I'll take this one*. In line 11, William briefly hesitates and uses right to demonstrate agreement with her choice. This is followed by him retracting his original opinion of the book she is buying and describes it in a more positive way. He also makes fun of himself by being sarcastic about an aspect of the book he had previously mentioned and gives her a book as a gift. Her reply in line 12 can be interpreted as politic since there is no excess of politeness markers in her utterance.

In extracts 1 and 2, more tokens of linguistic politeness are found in William's utterances, this is not unexpected as he has more lines of dialogue. The difference in how much each character talks also contributes to establishing characters and their relationship in this initial encounter, which contributes to making the scene more

humorous. In the context of interactions between customer and shopkeeper, politic utterances are to be expected as it is in the best interest of the salesperson to maintain harmony in the conversation. Taking into consideration Anna's well-known status and the fact that William is presumably attracted to her in a romantic way, it is not surprising that he uses politeness strategies to establish a positive relationship with her and go above and beyond to attend to her positive face needs. Anna, on the other hand, does not display as many markers of politeness as William, while there are tokens of linguistic politeness, given her status she does not need to resort to strategies to meet William's face needs and thus her utterances can be characterised as politic and apt for the context. Gender can play an important role regarding the presence of politeness or impoliteness features, and in romantic comedies the type of discourse used by male and female characters can be influenced by traditional gender roles. In the case of Notting Hill, however, conventional gender roles are somewhat reversed. Anna's career is far more successful than William's and in the first interaction she is portrayed as being more powerful than her male counterpart. As evidenced by lines 1 to 14 William uses a mixture of positive and negative politeness strategies which helps him to present himself in a positive light in front of Anna as he admires her and sees her as a platonic love interest. And while it is true that as the owner of the bookstore he is expected to treat his customers politely, it is unlikely that he uses the same linguistic politeness markers in interactions with other patrons. With this in mind, it can be argued that in this scene social power, as opposed to gender, has a stronger influence on the use of politeness markers by the two characters.

## *Fun Together*

In *fun together* scenes, it is confirmed that the characters are attracted to each other as they become closer and spend more time with one another. In this scene the faces assigned to the participants differ from the ones in the meet cute, and this is likely to affect the type of strategies used by the characters. Anna is meeting William's friends and some members of his family for the first time and in all likelihood, she wants to make a good first impression and present herself as pleasant and likeable. Given her fame, William's friends might see her as someone in a position of more power therefore influencing their strategies as well. William, on the other hand, finds himself almost in an opposite situation to Anna; in the meet cute his goal was to present himself in a positive way to Anna and saw himself in a lower power position to her. As evidenced by the following extract, William does not participate as much in this scene, while Anna engages

more in conversation with his friends and family which provides an opportunity to make a good impression.

[Extract 1]

1. BELLA: Hiya -- sorry -- the guinea fowl is proving more complicated than expected.

2. WILLIAM: He's cooking guinea fowl?

3. BELLA: Don't even ask.

4. ANNA: Hi.

5. BELLA: Hi. Good Lord -- you're the spitting image of...

6. WILLIAM: Bella -- this is Anna.

7. BELLA: Right.

8. MAX: Okay. Crisis over.

9. WILLIAM: Max. This is Anna.

10. MAX: Hello, Anna ahm...Scott -- have some wine.

11. ANNA: Thank you.

In lines 1 to 11, all of the character's utterances are open to interpretation as politic; the greetings in 1, 4, 5, and 10 are what is expected in this interaction. In lines 5 and 7, Bella is certainly surprised that her guest is a celebrity but does a good job at keeping her composure, since overly reacting may make Anna feel uncomfortable and therefore meeting her positive face needs. In line 10 Max reacts in a similar way, he is clearly shocked but continues the conversation with a ritualised offer. Although he uses a bald-on-record imperative it is by no means an impolite utterance, quite the opposite in fact, as his direct offer lets Anna know that she is not imposing on him by accepting. Anna uses the linguistic politeness marker *thank you* in line 11, which here is interpretable as politic behaviour.

[Extract 2]

12. HONEY: Hi guys. Oh holy fuck.

13. WILLIAM: Hon -- this is Anna.  Anna -- this is Honey -- she's my baby sister.

14. ANNA: Hiya.

15. HONEY: Oh God this is one of those key moments in life, when it's possible you can be really, genuinely cool -- and I'm going to fail a hundred percent.  I absolutely and totally and utterly adore you and I

think you're the most beautiful woman in the world and more importantly I genuinely believe and have believed for some time now that we can be best friends. What do you think?

16. ANNA: Ahm... I think that sounds -- you know -- lucky me. Happy Birthday.

17. HONEY: Oh my God. You gave me a present. We're best friends already. Marry Will -- he's a really nice guy and then we can be sisters.

18. ANNA: I'll think about it.

In lines 12 to 18, William's sister has a very different reaction to meeting Anna than his friends did. In Honey's first turn she does not conceal she is surprised to see Anna, and her first utterance is slightly brusque given the use of *fuck*. It should be noted here that she does not use this swear word as an insult or with the intention of offending Anna, but rather to emphasise her surprise. While in other contexts swearing is open to interpretation as impolite, in this extract it is not the speaker's intention to offend. Nevertheless, her utterance can be interpreted as an FTA as Honey's strong reaction might make Anna uncomfortable. It is difficult to gauge how Anna truly feels since she is concerned with her own facework and aim to be liked, and had it been the case Anna perceived it as an FTA it is unlikely she would have reacted negatively. In line 15 Honey exhibits a string of positive politeness markers which she uses to enhance Anna's positive face. Although compliments can be interpreted as polite as they fulfil the needs of the hearer to be liked and/or admired, in this case they are not necessarily strong candidates to be interpreted as polite utterances. Brown and Levinson (1987), for example, consider them FTAs, as they may impose on the receiver of the compliment as they are put in the delicate situation. They are confronted with the choice of having to either contradict the complimenter or accept the compliment and risk appearing vain. Honey has just met Anna and it is clear that she is a fan of her and her work, however the types of compliments given are rather ardent and put Anna in a potentially uncomfortable position. Given her line of work this type of declarations from strangers are probably not uncommon for Anna, nonetheless in this situation she may not want to receive this kind of attention. This is illustrated in line 16, Anna begins her turn by hesitating followed by *I think*, which in this case is not used to hedge her opinion but it can be interpreted as referential. She also adds *you know* followed by a positive evaluation of Honey's comments; *you know* which can be read as a solidarity marker (Watts, 2003) signals to the hearer that they are expected to interpret the proposition in the same way the speaker does. In the following turn, Honey uses more positive politeness to show in-group membership with Anna followed by a bald-on record imperative: *marry Will*. Unlike the imperative used in previous lines, it does not function

as an offer and is open to be seen as imposing on Anna's wishes. Anna probably wants to refuse Honey's imperative, but opts for a less confrontational and more polite response by saying she will think about it.

[Extract 3]

19. ANNA: I wonder if you could tell me where the...?

20. BELLA: Oh, it's just down the corridor on the right.

21. HONEY: I'll show you.

[...]

22. ANNA: That was such a great evening.

23. MAX: I'm delighted.

24. ANNA: And may I say that's a gorgeous tie.

25. MAX: Now you're lying.

26. ANNA: You're right. I told you I was bad at acting. Lovely to meet you.

27. BELLA: And you. I'll wait till you've gone before I tell him you're a vegetarian.

28. MAX: No!

29. ANNA: Night, night, Honey.

30. HONEY: I'm so sorry about the loo thing. I meant to leave but I just... look, ring me if you need someone to go shopping with. I know lots of nice, cheap places ... not that money necessarily ... Nice to meet you.

31. ANNA: You too -- from now on you are my style guru.

Towards the end of this sequence more politeness strategies are observed in the characters' utterances. In line 19 Anna wants to find out where the toilet is, the use of *I wonder if you could* make this utterance a good example of politeness, given that a more direct question would not have been interpreted as rude or offensive. As they are leaving the party, Anna uses positive politeness in line 22, 24, and 26; the use of *such a* followed by a positive adjective and complimenting the hosts helps her enhance their positive face and establish positive rapport with them. She also says goodbye to Honey, who, in line 30, apologizes for her intrusive behaviour earlier in the evening and offers her help should Anna want it. In line 31, Anna enhances Honey's positive face by telling her she is her guide when it comes to fashion advice. While this is clearly not true, she is aware that Honey desperately wants to be liked by her and her approval is important.

Compared to the previous scene, Anna uses far more positive and negative politeness strategies when addressing William's friends. William's role is not as prominent in this extract as the focus is mainly on Anna and how she interacts with his friends and family. Despite the fact that William's friends are aware of her fame and success, she is no longer in a position of power as it was the case in the *meet cute*. Furthermore, if her goal is to begin a relationship with William, it is in her best interest to make a good impression on his friends and the use of politeness strategies will contribute to that aim. The devices she uses in her politeness strategies - such as the use of intensifiers, compliments, and hedging - are often associated with women's speech. One of the biggest changes when compared to the previous interaction is that the facework she believes is expected of her in this situation has completely changed and therefore so have her linguistic choices.

## *New Conflicts*

*New conflict* scenes are generally found half-way through the film, as the relationship evolves new issues arise which often lead to an end of the relationship. After spending the night together for the first time, and their relationship seemingly moving to a new level, paparazzi unexpectedly find out about Anna's whereabouts and it creates problems between the couple. After William realises there is a horde of paparazzi outside his apartment, he tries to hide it from Anna. After seeing them herself, she becomes increasingly agitated and angrier throughout the scene. The tension between Anna and William is reflected in their conversational behaviour as different strategies are used to attack or save each other's face.

[Extract 1]

1. ANNA: What?

2. WILLIAM: Don't ask.

3. ANNA: You're up to something...Oh my God. And they got a photo of you dressed like that?

4. WILLIAM: Undressed like this, yes.

5. ANNA: Jesus.

6. SPIKE: Morning, daring ones.

7. ANNA: It's Anna. The press are here. No, there are hundreds of them. My brilliant plan was not so brilliant after all. Yeah, I know, I know. Just get me out then. Damnit.

[...]

In line 3 Anna asks William if they photographed him in his underwear, when he confirms this she is clearly annoyed, and it expressed by the use of *Jesus* in line 5. In her next turn, she calls her manager/publicist presumably and asks them to help her. In the utterance *just get me out then* she mixes a form of linguistic politeness to hedge her command, but in this case it helps express her irritation rather than hedging her statement. Although the use of *damnit* in line 7 is not necessarily aimed at the manager/publicist, it is used to demonstrate her exasperation with the situation.

[Extract 2]

8. WILLIAM: How are you doing?

9. ANNA: How do you think I'm doing?

10. WILLIAM: I don't know what happened.

11. ANNA: I do. Your furry friend thought he'd make a buck or two telling the papers where I was.

12. WILLIAM: That's not true.

13. ANNA: Really? The entire British press just woke up this morning and thought 'Hey --I know where Anna Scott is. She's in that house with the blue door in Notting Hill.' And then you go out in your goddamn underwear.

[...]

14. WILLIAM: I'm so sorry.

15. ANNA: This is such a mess. I come to you to protect myself against more crappy gossip and now I'm landed in it all over again. For God's sake, I've got a boyfriend.

16. WILLIAM: You do?

[...]

William tries to bring harmony to the conversation by asking her how she is feeling. She replies with a rhetorical question in line 9, which expresses some hostility on her part and can be interpreted as impolite behaviour. He explains that he is confused by the sudden change in her attitude and the situation in general, she replies by blaming William's housemate, Spike, for the circumstances and utters a personalised third-person negative reference to describe him *your furry friend*. While this formulae is not intended as an attack on William's face, her comments are likely to cause offence since he and Spike are friends. When he challenges her view in line 12, in her turn the use of *Really?* is not intended to express interest in what William is saying, but has a sarcastic connotation followed by another sarcastic utterance. She follows this by criticising William and uses a taboo intensifier *goddamn underwear* (Culpeper, 2011) to mark her

anger, this utterance can be interpreted as impolite. In line 14 William uses a form of conventionalised politeness as he tries to de-escalate the situation and attempt to restore balance to the interaction. Anna does not acknowledge his apology in the following turn and continues to express her anger describing the situation as *such a mess*. The use of *God's sake* emphasise her irritation and can also be interpreted as a taboo intensifier. In line 16 William is taken aback by her saying she has a boyfriend, as this means that it puts into question where they stand as a couple, and while this revelation might not have a disgust reaction in him it certainly hurts his feelings.

[Extract 3]

17. ANNA: As far as they're concerned I do. And now tomorrow there'll be pictures of you in every newspaper from here to Timbuktu.

18. WILLIAM: I know, I know -- but...just -- let's stay calm...

19. ANNA: You can stay calm -- it's the perfect situation for you -- minimum input, maximum publicity. Everyone you ever bump into will know. 'Well done you -- you slept with that actress -- we've seen the pictures.'

20. WILLIAM: That's spectacularly unfair.

21. ANNA: Who knows, it may even help business. Buy a boring book about Egypt from the guy who screwed Anna Scott.

22. WILLIAM: Now stop. Stop. I beg you -- calm down. Have a cup of tea.

23. ANNA: I don't want a goddamn cup of tea. I want to go home.

[...]

In line 17 Anna does not acknowledge her utterance might have hurt William, and briefly mentions that the paparazzi think she is in a relationship with someone else, but quickly moves on to mentioning the negative consequences of him being photographed will have for her. In line 18 William uses a number of politeness strategies to try to restore harmony; the use of *I know* twice helps him show some degree of sympathy with what Anna is going through. This is followed by *but*, which signals that his next utterance will contradict what was previously said and therefore what Anna said, is paired with the hedge just to minimise the impact of going against what she previously stated. He follows this by suggesting to stay calm, the use of first-person plural helps him demonstrate that this is a shared problem and not something that Anna has to face on her own. Anna does not respond well to his comments and repeats what he said in line 18, but changes the pronoun to second person which implies she does not see this as a shared problem. This is followed by her claiming that he will benefit from her hardship as it would enhance his positive face in his social circles, her intention by saying this is clearly to cause

offence as it implies that she sees him as taking advantage of the situation to an extent and therefore her behaviour can be characterised as impolite. In line 20 he rejects her view and emphasises that he thinks her comments are unjust with the use of *spectacularly* which help him express strong feelings which oppose hers. In the following turn, she continues to attack his positive face by saying that he and possibly his business will benefit from *screw*ing her. She also implies that she believes the books he sells are *boring*, and while this is not an attack on William's positive face, it hints that she does not see his bookstore in a positive light and once again her remarks can be interpreted as impolite. William tries once again to restore balance to the interaction, he begins with a command *stop*, but to mitigate the force of his utterance he adds *I beg you* followed by an offer. Although the offer is phrased as a command, in the context it helps him minimise the impact of his fist utterance in this line. In line 23 she rejects his offer, and the use of the swear word as an intensifier *goddamn* express her anger as a response to her frustration.

[Extract 4]

24. ANNA: And remember -- Spike owes you an expensive dinner. Or holiday --depending if he's got the brains to get the going rate on betrayal.

25. WILLIAM: That's not true. And wait a minute...this is crazy behaviour. Can't we just laugh about this? Seriously -- in the huge sweep of things, this stuff doesn't matter.

26. SPIKE: What he's going to say next is – there are people starving in the Sudan.

27. WILLIAM: Well, there are. And we don't need to go anywhere near that far. My best friend slipped -- she slipped down- stairs, cracked her back and she's in a wheelchair for the rest of her life. All I'm asking for is a normal amount of perspective.

28. ANNA: You're right, of course, you're right. It's just that I've dealt with this garbage for ten years now -- you've had it for ten minutes. Our perspectives are different.

29. WILLIAM: I mean -- today's newspapers will be lining tomorrow's wastepaper bins.

30. ANNA: Excuse me?

31. WILLIAM: Well, you know -- it's just one day. Today's papers will all have been thrown away tomorrow.

32. ANNA: You really don't get it. This story gets filed. Every time anyone writes anything about me -- they'll dig up these photos. Newspapers last forever. I'll regret this forever.

33. WILLIAM: Right. Fine. I will do the opposite, if it's all right by you -- and always be glad you came. But you're right – you probably better go.

The confrontation continues and in line 24 she mentions once again that she believes it was his housemate who created her problem, and insinuates that he is not particularly bright: *if he's got the brains*. Even though this is not a direct attack on William, as in line 11, in extract 2, it is expected that he will be offended as she insults one of his friends. In the next turn William goes on record contradicting her, followed by a command *wait a minute* which helps him reinforce that he does not agree with her comments and adds that he thinks the way she is acting is disproportionate to the situation. The use of *this is crazy behaviour* as opposed to *you are behaving in a crazy way* or *you are being crazy* helps him make his utterance less personalised against Anna and mitigates the force of the attack on her positive face. He suggests approaching the situation in a less serious way, and uses first-person plural to demonstrate that he still sees himself as part of the problem at hand. He continues to say that he does not see the situation as consequential as she does and claims that *this stuff doesn't matter* when put into perspective as he suggests in line 25 and 27. This can be interpreted as an attack on Anna's face as it shows lack of empathy when it comes to Anna's obstacle. Judging by her reply in line 28, she takes offence to his comments and begins her turn by agreeing with him, although it is clear that she is not being sincere. In the following utterance, before contradicting him, she hedges her statement with *just* and continues to explain that his way of approaching the issue is too simplistic as he has not experienced it the way she has. William's *I mean* in line 29 can be seen as a defensive strategy to justify his previous comments. He adds that he thinks that her problem is fleeting and with no real consequences in the long term. The use of *Excuse me?* in line 30 helps Anna demonstrate that she is irked by his remarks. He paraphrases his earlier comments, but uses linguistic politeness markers such as *Well, you know…* and *just*, which functions as a hedge in his utterance, to minimise the impact of his FTA. In the next turn, she uses *really* to intensify her utterance and show William that his stance does not consider her position. She adds that she will *regret this forever*, which is undoubtedly meant as an attack on William's positive face. It is after she says those words that William realises their relationship is over, and ceases to try to bring harmony to the interaction. In spite of his feelings being hurt, he attempts to use linguistic politeness to end the conversation. He tells her he does not think of their time together in a negative way and that he does not regret what happened between them. The use of *if it's alright by you* in some way minimises the impact of contradicting her utterance in line 33. He agrees with her and hedges asking her to leave with the use of *probably should*.

As the quarrel between the characters becomes progressively more tense, linguistic politeness markers and strategies used by the characters reflect the tone of the

interaction. The stakes for the characters in the light of recent events are rather different, and the issue of power comes into play once again. Anna believes that what has happened will have extremely negative consequences for her but a positive outcome for William. She demonstrates her anger openly and throughout the interaction does not attempt to mitigate her speech and attacks on William's face. Her utterances are aimed at hurting him as she believes he is, to an extent, part of her problem. Contrastingly, for most of the interaction, William uses positive and negative politeness strategies to restore harmony and balance to the interaction. In the same was as in the first exchange between the two characters, William displays linguistic politeness markers more often associated with women. Anna's speech is diametrically opposed to his as her view of the type of facework is expected of her in this situation has changed drastically from previous interactions. Gender stereotypes in this scene are not conformed in terms of linguistic politeness; power, however, can be hypothesised to be a stronger influence in the character's discourse. Furthermore, in this scene Anna feels aggrieved and is facing significant consequences, while William is not; his attempts to downplay their importance further anger her and this is reflected in her linguistic choices.

## *Epiphany*

After their break-up prompted by the paparazzi, Anna returns to London to shoot a new film and before leaving she visits William at his bookstore to apologise for her behaviour and ask for a second chance. In romantic comedies, the *epiphany* represents the culmination of a learning process in the couple and the personal sacrifice leads to the resolution of their problems and therefore a happy ending. In *Notting Hill* (1999) it is Anna who realises she has behaved poorly and is willing to sacrifice her Hollywood lifestyle to save the relationship. Although William initially rejects her, her request leads to him eventually forgiving and the couple continuing their relationship.

[Extract 1]

1. ANNA: Hi.

2. WILLIAM: Hello.

3. ANNA: You disappeared.

4. WILLIAM: Yes -- I'm sorry -- I had to leave...I didn't want to disturb you.

5. ANNA: Well...how have you been?

6. WILLIAM: Fine. Everything much the same. When they change the law Spike and I will marry immediately. Whereas you...I've watched in wonder. Awards, glory...

7. ANNA: Oh no. It's all nonsense, believe me. I had no idea how much nonsense it all was -- but nonsense it all is... Well, yesterday was our last day filming and so I'm just off -- but I brought you this from home, and... I thought I'd give it to you.

8. WILLIAM: Thank you. Shall I...

9. ANNA: No, don't open it yet -- I'll be embarrassed.

10. WILLIAM: Okay -- well, thank you. I don't know what it's for. But thank you anyway.

11. ANNA: I actually had it in my apartment in New York and just thought you'd... but, when it came to it, I didn't know how to call you... having behaved so... badly, twice. So it's been just sitting in the hotel. But then...you came, so I figured... the thing is... the thing is...

[...]

In the first two lines, they exchange greetings as expected and then in line 3 Anna comments on William leaving the set the day before without saying goodbye. In the next turn William uses linguistic politeness to apologise for leaving abruptly and explains he did not want to be a burden. In line 5, she uses *well* to preface her question to express she is interested in what his life has been like since they last saw each other. William replies using a ritualised utterance *fine*, which is appropriate for its context and therefore can be described as politic behaviour. He then makes a joke about marrying his housemate, this helps him establish that the two of them share some common background and putting her at ease in the conversation. He then proceeds to compliment her on her achievements in her career *I've watched in wonder*. His utterance in line 6 can therefore be interpreted as polite seeing as they are in excess of what is expected. In the following turn, Anna uses negative politeness to deflect William's compliment and refers to her achievements as *nonsense* and avoids self-praising. She then tells him she has something for him, but avoids directly stating that she wants to give him a present by combining *I thought* followed by a modal verb, which helps her minimise the force of her utterance and be less direct. William's reply in lines 8 and 10 can be described as politic since the use of *thank you* as a politeness markers when being given a present is the norm in most interactions. In line 11, Anna uses a string of linguistic politeness markers which make her utterance more tentative such as *actually* and *I just thought*. This is followed by her acknowledging that the previous time they saw each other she was not kind to William, which can be seen as an indirect way of apologising for her behaviour. The use of *just* again, and *I figured* demonstrate that she is avoiding being assertive. Since her main goal is to persuade William to forgive her, these politeness

markers indicate that she is trying not to impose and meet his face needs which she attacked in the past.

[Extract 2]

12. WILLIAM: You were saying...

13. ANNA: Yes. The thing is... I have to go away today but I wondered, if I didn't, whether you might let me see you a bit... or, a lot maybe... see if you could...like me again.

14. WILLIAM: But yesterday...that actor asked you who I was...and you just dismissed me out of hand...I heard -- you had a microphone...I had headphones.

15. ANNA: You expect me to tell the truth about my life to the most indiscreet man in England?

[...]

After being briefly interrupted by a customer, William encourages her to continue with what she was saying. In line 13 Anna wants to ask for a second chance, however, considering her past behaviour she avoids being making any type of forceful utterances. She uses a number of linguistic politeness markers such as *I wondered*, the use of conditional forms *if I didn't* and *whether*, modality in *might* which all help make her request as indirect as possible and minimise any sense of imposition on William. The use of *let me* in this line insinuates that William has the power to decide the way their relationship will develop in the future. Moreover, when she requests to spend more time with him, the choice of *a bit* helps her express that she is trying to avoid further imposing, and she uses the same strategy when she follows *a lot* with *maybe*. She ends her line of dialogue with a plea for him to like her again which indicates to William that she wants to be cared about by him, she attempts to minimise her request by preceding it with the use of a conditional and a past modal. The strategies Anna uses in line 13 are beyond of what would be expected in this interaction, and therefore can be interpreted as polite behaviour. In line 14 William does not directly reject her request, but refers to a previous incident where she *dismissed me out of hand*, which would seem to contradict what she has just expressed to William. In the following turn she implies that she was not telling the truth to the person William refers to as he is *the most indiscreet man in England*, and considering her fame it is understandable that she did not want to share personal details of her life with him.

[Extract 3]

16. WILLIAM: Sorry about that.

17. ANNA: That's fine. There's always a pause when the jury goes out to consider its verdict.

18. WILLIAM: Anna. Look -- I'm a fairly level-headed bloke. Not often in and out of love. But... can I just say 'no' to your kind request and leave it at that?

19. ANNA: Yes, that's fine. Of course. I... you know... of course... I'll just... be getting along then... nice to see you.

20. WILLIAM: The truth is...with you, I'm in real danger. It looks like a perfect situation, apart from that foul temper of yours -- but my relatively inexperienced heart would, I fear, not recover if I was once again...cast aside, which I would absolutely expect to be. There are too many pictures of you everywhere, too many films. You'd go and I'd be...well, buggered, basically.

21. ANNA: I see. That really is a real 'no,' isn't it?

22. WILLIAM: I live in Notting Hill. You live in Beverly Hills. Everyone in the world knows who you are. My mother has trouble remembering my name.

23. ANNA: Okay. Fine. Fine. Good decision. The fame thing isn't really real, you know. Don't forget -- I'm also just a girl. Standing in front of a boy. Asking him to love her.

[...]

Before William has the opportunity to reply to Anna's request, he is interrupted by his mother calling him on the phone, which is why he uses linguistic politeness to apologise in line 16. She uses a formulaic expression of politeness in her turn to reassure him that there was no imposition and follows it by a joke which helps minimise any sense of discomfort before he replies. In line 18 he uses a string of politeness markers to respond to her request, he begins with the use of *look*, which here helps him maintain a sense of harmony before he rejects her. *But* in the following utterance forewarns Anna that he is not going to accept her request, and when he does decline her request he pairs it with *can I just* and *kind request* to minimise the impact of what can be considered an attack on Anna's face. A less mitigated utterance would have been appropriate for this interaction and seen as politic, however, the presence of various linguistic politeness tokens open it to interpretation as polite behaviour. Her reply is line 19 is also open to interpretation as polite based on the strategies used in this context as it is not difficult to infer that Anna's feelings are hurt by William's decision. By making use of affirmation and reassurance *Yes, that's fine*, and *of course* on two separate occasions she is able to express to William that no offense was caused by his rejection. She then uses a ritualised form of politeness before she parts which helps her demonstrate once again

that she understands his decision and is not angered by it. In line 20 William gives a more detailed insight as to why he did not accept her offer. He opens his line with *the truth is* which indicates he is trying to be honest with her and show that there is a reason behind his decision. He begins by saying that while it might seem like a good idea *except for that foul temper of* hers, while his intention might have been to alleviate the tension, his remarks can also be interpreted as an attack on her face at a moment where she is vulnerable. He goes on to explain that he believes that if things do not work out between them it would have negative consequences for him, while she would not suffer. While he uses some politeness tokens to make his utterance less direct (i.e.: *well*, *basically*), his message is quite clear. In the following turn Anna remarks on the fact that he comes across as determined to decline her request, to which her replies by pointing out more differences between the two and making another joke in line 22. She ends the conversation with the same strategy used in line 19, but also adds that she feels her request is simpler than he believes it to be and implies that she loves him and wishes he would feel the same way. While the utterance itself might not be a clear candidate to be seen as polite, it is certainly a strategy which enhances William's positive face.

In one of the final scenes of the film as Anna realises she has made a mistake and wants to be in a romantic relationship with William, the type of facework displayed is a complete opposite to the one in the *new conflict* scene. It is clear that her success had been an issue in the past as it affected the power balance between the couple, and this is something she addresses in this interaction in an attempt to demonstrate that she sees them as being equals. This shift is clearly reflected in the linguistic choices made by the two characters. Anna resorts to the use of hedges, reassurance, and agreement with the listener. William, on the other hand, remains polite for most of the interaction but, unlike in previous exchanges, he does not always attempt to restore balance to the conversation and rejects Anna. He does, however, continue to use linguistic politeness markers as he has throughout most of the film. It could be argued that the differences in politeness strategies assigned to the pair were in the service of characterising them in a certain light to the audience. Overall, in the film traditional gender roles and stereotypes are not particularly upheld and this is, to an extent, reflected in their linguistic politeness strategies.

## 4.3.2 When Harry Met Sally

Written by Nora Ephron and directed by Rob Reiner, *When Harry Met Sally* was released in 1989. It follows the friendship between Sally Albright (Meg Ryan) and Harry Burns (Billy Crystal) from the day they meet when they finish college and over the course of the following 12 years. Their story begins when they share a car ride from Chicago to New York when they graduate college. From the beginning of the film the characters' personalities clash, Harry is characterised as somewhat cynical and opinionated but with a carefree personality. Sally, on the other hand, is portrayed as a more idealistic and bright woman who appears to have clear goals and is determined to achieve them. 10 years after they part ways since their journey, the two characters meet again in New York City, both Harry and Sally have successful careers as a political consultant and a journalist respectively.

The narrative of the film is balanced by providing Harry and Sally's perspectives equally as the plot develops. The majority of the topics the characters discuss throughout the film are related to friendship, sex, and courtship, and one of the main topics in which they disagree is that men and women cannot be friends. Harry argues that sex will always "get in the way", while Sally has a more optimistic view. Although at the beginning their relationship is characterised as antagonistic, as time passes they become very close friends and eventually get married. Harry is portrayed in a stereotypical male light in the sense that for most of the film he claims to be afraid of commitment and, when it comes to love, struggles to express his feelings. Sally is characterised as an independent woman, with a successful career but can be perceived as uptight and insecure at times. In spite of her achievements, the film's focus and ostensibly Sally's ultimate goal, is marriage. The film's undeniable success can be attributed to the fact that audiences would find it easy to relate to one of the main characters as their dreams and fears are, to an extent, universal.

### *Meet Cute*

Unlike in *Notting Hill* (1999), the *meet cute* in *When Harry Met Sally* (1989) portrays the characters as clashing with one another. Harry and Sally are about to embark on a road trip from Chicago to New York, but before they begin their journey there already is some tension between the characters since Harry does not notice Sally is waiting for him as he is kissing his girlfriend. Sally tries to get their attention by clearing her throat and becomes irritated when they continue to ignore her and then honks her horn repeatedly showing her irritation. At this point they are introduced for the first time by Amanda, and

they begin their journey. In spite of their apparent dislike for one another in this interaction, the audience knows that the nature of their relationship will evolve into a romantic one as the plot unfolds.

[Extract 1]

1. SALLY: There's a... there's a map on the huh... visor that I've marked to show the locations so we can change shifts.

2. HARRY: Grapes?

3. SALLY: No, I don't like to eat between meals.

4. HARRY: I'll roll down the window. Why don't you tell me the story of your life.

5. SALLY: Story of my life?

6. HARRY: We've got eighteen hours to kill before we hit New York.

7. SALLY: The story of my life isn't even going to get us out of Chicago I mean nothing's happened to me yet. That's why I'm going to New York.

8. HARRY: So something can happen to you?

9. SALLY: Yes.

10. HARRY: Like what?

11. SALLY: I can go into journalism school to become a reporter.

12. HARRY: So you can write about things that happen to other people.

13. SALLY: That's one way to look at it.

14. HARRY: Suppose nothing happens to you. Suppose you lived out your whole life and nothing happens, you never meet anybody, you never become anything and finally you die in one of those New York deaths which nobody notices for two weeks until the smell drifts into the hallway.

15. SALLY: Amanda mentioned you had a dark side.

16. HARRY: That's what drew her to me.

17. SALLY: Your dark side.

18. HARRY: Sure. Why? Don't you have a dark side? No you're probably one of those cheerful people who dots their i's with little hearts.

19. SALLY: I have just as much of a dark side as the next person.

20. HARRY: Oh, really? When I buy a new book I always read the last page first that way in case I die before I finish I know how it ends. That, my friend, is a dark side.

21. SALLY: That doesn't mean you're deep or anything, I mean... yes, basically I'm a happy person...

22. HARRY: So am I.

23. SALLY: ... and I don't see that there's anything wrong with that.

24. HARRY: Of course not, you're too busy being happy. Do you ever think about death?

25. SALLY: Yes.

26. HARRY: Sure you do, a fleeting thought that jumps in and out of the transient of your mind. I spend hours, I spend days...

27. SALLY: And you think that makes you a better person.

28. HARRY: Look, when the shit comes down I'm gonna be prepared and you're not that's all I'm saying.

29. SALLY: And in the meantime you're gonna ruin your whole life waiting for it.

The choice of strategies used by the two characters help the audience to create a fairly accurate representation of their personalities. In line 1, Sally explains to Harry the schedule she has planned for their long drive to New York. In line 2, Harry entirely ignores Sally and offers her grapes, violating Grice's relevance maxim. In Brown and Levinson's view, an offer is seen as an attack on the hearer's negative face, and therefore certain strategies should be used to minimise the impact of the FTA. In this case, however, the imposition on Sally is minimal, the offer is made between two characters of equal power status, therefore and the lack of politeness markers is unlikely to make Harry's request be perceived as rude or impolite. Nevertheless, had he used certain politeness markers such as *Would you like…?* would have helped build rapport with Sally and start developing a more positive relationship with her, particularly considering he ignores her previous remark. In line 3 Sally declines the offer with no mitigating devices either, such as *thank you*; she does, however, explain why she does not accept the offer. While it cannot be said that either character is rude to the other in these lines, the lack of any politeness markers indicates to the viewers a strain in the relationship.

In line 4, Harry asks Sally to tell him about herself, and even though it is a question it can almost be interpreted as a command. As previously mentioned, the power status between the characters is balanced, but at this point of the film they are very new acquaintances and therefore such a personal question has the potential to be seen as an invasion of Sally's privacy. In the next turn, Sally avoids answering the question by rephrasing what Harry said, and in line 7 she deflects attention from herself. The use of *I mean* followed by an explanation as to why she did not answer the question and the reason why she is going to New York help her restore some balance to the conversation.

In lines 8 and 10 Harry asks her two direct questions to get her to reveal more about her plans. Her replies in lines 9 and 11 are within the bounds of politic behaviour, even though Harry's questions can be seen as intruding she does not react negatively to them. In the following turn, Harry rephrases Sally's previous answer (line 7) making his remarks open to interpretation as condescending and belittling her future plans. Rather than reacting to his comments, in line 13, Sally avoids confrontation by acknowledging Harry's perspective. In line 14 the tone of the conversation begins to shift, as Harry is more direct in expressing a very pessimistic future outcome of Sally's plans. Although the use of *suppose* and phrasing his thoughts in a hypothetical manner helps him distance himself from his comments, it is easy to interpret his remarks as an attack on Sally's face. Instead of directly addressing his negative views, once again she deflects from his remarks and mentions that she was made aware of this aspect of his personality. However, the way in which she phrases her comments, help her indicate that this might not be necessarily her own opinion of him, but rather something that was mentioned to her about Harry and thus mitigating the attack on Harry's face.

In line 18, Harry enquires whether she shares his *dark side*, but before she is able to answer the question, he says that he believes her to be a *cheerful* person. While the adjectives in isolation might have a positive connotation, it is evident that he is patronising Sally by describing her in a very stereotypical, negative way. In the following turn she implies that his description is not necessarily accurate and that there is more to her than the way he describes her, but she continues to avoid directly contradicting or attacking his face in the way he is attacking hers. In line 20, Harry continues to be overtly condescending, the use of *oh, really?* and *my friend* in his response denote that he sees himself as being superior to Sally to an extent. For the first time in this interaction in line 21, Sally contradicts Harry and challenges the way he views himself. The use of *or anything*, *I mean*, and *basically* make her utterance less direct and are useful to attempt to restore harmony in the interaction. Harry continues to question her attitude towards certain aspects of life, and in the same way as in line 18, he uses positive adjectives to describe her, but his intention is not to compliment her since he sees these qualities as something negative. Once again he compares himself to Sally (line 26), and implies he is better than her. She uses a similar strategy as in previous lines where she does not contradict him, but phrases her view to distance herself from her negative opinion of him (*And you think that*…). In line 28 Harry is even more direct when he claims he will be in a better position than Sally will be at some point in the future. The use of *that's all I'm saying* might help to mitigate FTAs, but in this context and considering his previous statements in the interaction it does not make his comments less impolite. In the last line

of this extract Sally states her opinion more openly which is a departure from strategies she previously used to minimise the impact of her FTAs.

Overall, in these extracts Harry's lines are open to interpretation as impolite on more occasions than in Sally's dialogue. However, as argued in the analysis of the interaction, in many instances it was the character's arrogance and what was implied by his utterances that allowed for his lines to be interpreted as impolite. Sally, on the other hand, displays more politic behaviour in her lines of dialogue. While there are some markers of linguistic politeness in her lines, her discourse is not particularly distinguishable for its politeness markers. However, when considering the type of face attacks from Harry, it would have been justifiable to see linguistic impoliteness mirrored in her own speech. For most of the interaction, she attempts to avoid confrontation or resorting to the same strategies used by Harry which would have led to a possible confrontation between the characters. In terms of gender and politeness, the characters conform to gender stereotypes to an extent. Sally is characterised as agreeable and avoiding confrontation, whereas Harry is portrayed as more direct and does not try to mitigate possible attacks on Sally's face.

## *Fun Together*

After their car ride from Chicago to New York, years pass and Harry and Sally cross paths at different stages of their lives. Shortly after they have both broken up with their significant others they unexpectedly meet at a bookstore and bond over their recent heartbreaks. Their friendship blossoms as they both find comfort and understanding in one another as they are both experiencing a difficult time. At this point in the film they are no longer strangers, and therefore expectations about their behaviours have changed since the first time they met. Even though they are both adamant to remain friends, the audience is aware that this time together will serve as the foundation of their romantic relationship.

[Extract 1]

1. HARRY: You know, the first time I met you, I really didn't like you that much.

2. SALLY: I didn't like you.

3. HARRY: Yeah you did, you were just so uptight then. You're much softer now.

4. SALLY: You know, I hate that kind of remark. It sounds like a compliment but really it's an insult.

5. HARRY: OK, you're still as hard as nails.

6. SALLY: I just didn't want to sleep with you and you had to write it off as a character flaw instead of dealing with the possibility that it might have something to do with you.

7. HARRY: What's the statute of limitation on apologies?

8. SALLY: Ten years.

9. HARRY: Ohh, I can just get it in under the wire.

10. SALLY: Would you like to have dinner with me sometime?

11. HARRY: Are we becoming friends now?

12. SALLY: Well... yeah.

13. HARRY: Great! A woman friend... You know you may be the first attractive woman I have not wanted to sleep with in my entire life.

14. SALLY: That's wonderful, Harry.

[...]

In line 1 of this extract, the use of *you know* helps Harry minimise the FTA he is about to commit. This is followed by an attack on Sally's positive face, but it is mitigated to an extent by the presence of *really* and *that much*. In the following turn, Sally goes bald-on-record by stating she did not like him without any mitigating devices; both utterances are open to interpretation as impolite as they are an open attack on each other's faces. In line 3, Harry contradicts Sally's statement and adds that he thought she was *uptight*, which is downgraded by the use of *just*, and follows it by saying that she has changed presumably in a positive way in his view. Sally interprets this as an attack on her face as she does not think that characterisation of her is fair. In line 4 she demonstrates that she does not appreciate his backhanded compliment; she downgrades the force of her utterance through the use of *you know* in a similar function as in line 1, and *but really* signals what she interpreted from his comments without directly contradicting him. In the next turn, Harry agrees with her (*OK)*, but follows it by a comment which does not seem sincere but simply used to restore some form of harmony to the conversation. In line 6 she challenges Harry's perception of her as uptight and explains that the reason he saw her that way had a lot more to do with his own personality than hers. The use of *just* and *might* mitigate the impact of her attack on his positive face but the utterance is still open to interpretation as impolite. In spite of the potentially offensive comments, the characters appear to be comfortable with being direct and honest with each other. At this point in their relationship their discourse could be described as banter between two friends and therefore not understood as serious criticism. This interpretation is supported by the fact that in line 10 Sally extends an invitation to Harry to have dinner. The use of *would you like* and *sometime* help her minimise any imposition on Harry or pressure for

him to accept. Harry asks whether this means they are becoming friends and in line 13 he responds positively to the confirmation that they are friends. He follows it by another backhanded compliment by saying he thinks she is attractive but insinuating some aspects of her personality make him not sexually attracted to her. Sally's response might be interpreted as polite in other contexts, due to her positive evaluation of what Harry said, but in this case it is open to be seen as sarcastic.

[Extract 2]

15. HARRY: Ooh, Ingrid Bergman, now she's low maintenance.

16. SALLY: Low maintenance?

17. HARRY: There are two kinds of women. High maintenance and low maintenance.

18. SALLY: And Ingrid Bergman is low maintenance?

19. HARRY: In LM, definitely.

20. SALLY: Which one am I?

21. HARRY: You're the worst kind. You're high maintenance but you think you're low maintenance.

22. SALLY: I don't see that.

23. HARRY: You don't see that? Waiter, I'll begin with a house salad, but I don't want the regular dressing. I'll have the Balsamic vinegar and oil, but on the side. And then the Salmon with the mustard sauce, but I want the mustard sauce, on the side. On the side is a very big thing for you.

24. SALLY: Well I just want it the way I want it.

25. HARRY: I know. High maintenance.

The audience are able to see how Harry and Sally's friendship develops through a series of montages which shows the pair spending more time together and discuss their daily lives. In this scene the characters are talking on the phone while they both watch Casablanca. Similar strategies are found in this extract, as some of the utterances are understood by the characters as friendly banter. In line 21 Harry tells Sally she is *high maintenance*, and what makes her *the worst kind* is that she is unaware of it. In a different context, his utterance would be considered aggressive facework as it is a direct, unmitigated attack on Sally's face. In the following turn Sally disagrees with him, but expresses it in an indirect way by stating her point of view. In line 23 Harry rephrases her statement as a question to show surprise, followed by mocking the way she orders food in a restaurant. It would be justifiable for Sally to reply in the same tone; however, she stands by her way of doing things. She prefaces her reply with *well* paired with *just* which helps minimise the force of her utterance, had she said *I want it the way I want it* on its own, it might have signalled to Harry that she took offence to his comments.

As the relationship becomes less hostile as the characters move from being strangers to close friends, some of the strategies used also shift. Although Sally generally makes an effort to preserve balance in their interactions, she maintains her stance when it clashes with that of Harry. She does not resort to tentative language often, but does use devices to lessen the force of her utterance when appropriate. Conversely, Harry continues to express his views openly with few mitigating devices even when they are likely to cause offence. In terms of gender and politeness, Sally's discourse cannot be described as stereotypically feminine, as in this interaction she generally commits to her statements confidently and does not overuse linguistic politeness markers typically associated with women. It could be argued that her character is stereotypical in certain themes of the film, such as the quest for love being the central element of the character's life. On the other hand, Harry upholds male stereotypes in romantic comedies both in his discourse and elements that are beyond the text. His bluntness and unmitigated utterances are frequent in his lines of dialogue, while this is not to say that in general men's speech is as direct as his, it is not marked by the use of tentative elements.

## *New Conflicts*

Their friendship continues to develop, and the physical attraction grows between the two characters. Both Harry and Sally are forced to face their past when Harry unexpectedly comes across his ex-wife with another man, and Sally finds out her ex-boyfriend is engaged to his secretary. They find comfort in each other which eventually leads to sex, which completely changes the nature of the friendship as both characters seem uncertain about what they want moving forward. They both agree that that night together was a mistake but unlike Harry, Sally seems disappointed that their friendship did not evolve into a romantic relationship; sex created a rift between the couple instead of a union. They meet again at their friends' wedding and Harry tries to initiate a conversation with Sally hoping that their relationship has returned to the same balance as before they slept together. The tension and conflict between the characters is expressed in their linguistic choices in this interaction.

[Extract 1]

1. HARRY: Hi.

2. SALLY: Hello.

3. HARRY: Nice ceremony.

4. SALLY: Beautiful.

5. HARRY: Boy, the holidays are rough. Every year I just try to get from the day before Thanksgiving to the day after New Year's.

6. SALLY: A lot of suicides.

7. HARRY: Hmm.

8. Harry: How have you been?

9. SALLY: Fine.

In lines 1 to 4 they exchange pleasantries, but Sally mainly replies with one-word answers and makes no effort to contribute to the conversation. When Harry asks how she is, she only replies with *fine* and does not reciprocate the question. While her answer can be interpreted as politic behaviour on its own, her not asking about Harry can be interpreted as a deliberate choice to demonstrate she is not interested in knowing about his life, and therefore open to interpretation as an attack on his positive face.

[Extract 2]

10. HARRY: Are you seeing anybody?

11. SALLY: Harry.

12. HARRY: What?

13. SALLY: I don't want to talk about this.

14. HARRY: Why not?

15. SALLY: I don't want to talk about it.

16. HARRY: Why can't we get past this? I mean, are we going to carry this thing around forever?

17. SALLY: Forever? It just happened.

18. HARRY: It happened three weeks ago. You know how a year to a person is like seven years to a dog?

19. SALLY: Yes. Is one of us supposed to be a dog in this scenario?

20. HARRY: Yes.

21. SALLY: Who is the dog?

22. HARRY: You are.

23. SALLY: I am!? I am the dog!?

24. HARRY: Mmm hmm.

25. SALLY: I am the dog!? I...

[...]

In line 10 Harry asks her a direct question about whether she is seeing anyone, she does not answer his question and only replies with *Harry* in line 11, which prompts Harry to ask another question to understand why she ignores his question. In the following turn she tells him she does not want to answer his question, and when he asks for a reason, she repeats the same utterance violating conversational maxims. By being direct and refusing to engage in conversation with him, helps her express that her temper is rising. Although her behaviour is not necessarily impolite, her refusal to talk to Harry might be interpreted as an attack on his face, but it is clear that she is upset over the current state of their relationship. In line 16 Harry demonstrates that he wants the relationship to go back to its previous state of balance and harmony. In his turn he attempts to downplay the relevance of the two of them sleeping together and effectively permanently changing the nature of their relationship. He resorts to the use of *I mean* to soften his following utterance as he knows it might offend Sally since he implies that what happened between the two characters is something they should forget. Sally formulates Harry's statement in the form of a question in line 17 to imply she does not think that much time has passed and uses *just* to emphasise how differently she views things from him. In line 18 Harry avoids contradicting her directly, but implies that he thinks three weeks is a long time. He then attempts to make use humour to seemingly to eliminate the tension from the interaction, and he uses a comparison to explain how time might be perceived differently by different people in which it is insinuated that either him or Sally are a *dog*. Sally does not find his remark funny and asks for clarification on what he meant in his previous turn. In lines 20 to 25 the argument begins to escalate, Sally is noticeably offended by Harry's comments as demonstrated by how her questions are phrased in lines 21, 23, and 25. Harry, on the other hand, comes across as nonchalant and does not attempt to mitigate his previous comments which clearly had a negative impact on Sally, therefore his behaviour in this interaction is open to interpretation as impolite.

[Extract 3]

26. SALLY: I don't see that Harry, if anybody is dog, you are the dog. You want to act like what happened didn't mean anything.

27. HARRY: I'm not saying it didn't mean anything. What I am saying is why does it have to mean everything?

28. SALLY: Because it does! And you should know that better than anybody because the minute that it happened you walked right out the door.

29. HARRY: I didn't walk out.

30. SALLY: No, sprinted is more like it.

31. HARRY: We both agreed it was a mistake.

32. SALLY: The worst mistake I've ever made.

33. HARRY: What do you want from me?

34. SALLY: I don't want anything from you!

35. HARRY: Fine. Fine, but let's just get one thing straight. I did not go over there that night to make love to you, that is not why I went there. But you looked up at me with these big weepy eyes, don't go home tonight Harry, hold me a little longer Harry. What was I supposed to do?

36. SALLY: What are you saying, you took pity on me?

37. HARRY: No, I was...

38. SALLY: Fuck you!

The quarrel continues as Sally calls Harry *a dog* in line 26 and accuses him of trying to trivialise the importance of what that night together meant for the two characters. In the following turn Harry attempts to bring harmony to the interaction, the use of *I'm not saying* in line 27 helps him clarify what he was trying to convey and then continues to explain what he intended it to mean. In line 28 Sally does not give a direct answer to his question and simply responds with *because it does*. She also then adds that she expected him to know the answer to his own question and implies she was hurt by him leaving in her following utterance. He contradicts her comments in line 29 through the use of negation, which she uses an opportunity to insinuate that him leaving was interpreted as an attack on her face in line 30 – *sprinted is more like it*. In the following turn he does not contradict her, but instead reminds her that they both saw that night as a mistake. The use of first-person plural in *we both agreed* can be interpreted as a strategy to express a shared point of view and as an attempt to restore harmony by sharing common ground. Sally appears to evaluate his utterance negatively, and in line 32 she rephrases his comments but uses first-person singular to imply that for her it was certainly a mistake to sleep with him. Her utterance is open to impolite interpretation as it is an attack on Harry's positive face. In the following turn Harry appears to become more irritated when he asks *What do you want from me?* Suggesting he feels he has done everything he can to remedy the situation. In line 34 Sally uses negation in her answer which denotes another negative evaluation of Harry's remarks, but her comments are also open to be

interpreted as impolite as she does not attempt to mitigate the force of her utterance. As Harry realises she is not open to reconcile and return to their former friendship dynamic he concedes at first with the use of *fine* followed by the use of *but* which forewarns a contradiction. He then proceeds to defend himself and explains he was put in a position in which he could not have done anything differently and implies that it was Sally's actions which led them to the situation they are in. Sally sees this as an attack on her face as she interprets what he said to mean that the only reason he slept with her was *out of pity* and not because he had feelings for her. Before Harry has the chance to explain himself, Sally ends the interaction when she uses formulaic linguistic impoliteness in the form of the negative expressive *fuck you*.

The argument between the characters changes the facework expected of each character in this interaction. Until this point in the film their friendship and camaraderie meant that they did not feel the need to be extremely polite with one another and sarcastic comments and banter would not cause offence. Sally's discourse departs from the way she used to address Harry, she becomes colder and uses impoliteness strategies aimed at attacking Harry's face. The linguistic choices she makes are uncharacteristic in her, and contrast with traditional views of women's language, this helps her to express her anger towards Harry and his behaviour. While Harry's strategies are more confrontational as the conversation evolves, most of his discourse remains similar to what he displays throughout the film.

## *Epiphany*

After their fight at the wedding, time goes by without the two characters seeing each other and their friendship is seemingly over. Following many failed attempt to persuade Sally to forgive him he decides to try one last time to show her his feelings for her and unexpectedly shows up at her friend's New Year's Eve party. As the characters goals regarding the relationship shift, this will be reflected in the use of different strategies in this interaction.

[Extract 1]

1. HARRY: I've been doing a lot of thinking. And the thing is, I love you.

2. SALLY: What?

3. HARRY: I love you.

4. SALLY: How do you expect me to respond to this?

5. HARRY: How about you love me too?

6. SALLY: How about I'm leaving.

7. HARRY: Doesn't what I said mean anything to you?

8. SALLY: I'm sorry Harry, I know it's New Year's Eve, I know you're feeling lonely, but you just can't show up here, tell me you love me and expect that to make everything alright. It doesn't work this way.

9. HARRY: Well how does it work?

10. SALLY: I don't know but not this way.

11. HARRY: Well how about this way. I love that you get cold when it's seventy-one degrees out, I love that it takes you an hour and a half to order a sandwich, I love that you get a little crinkle above your nose when you're looking at me like I'm nuts, I love that after I spend a day with you I can still smell your perfume on my clothes, and I love that you are the last person I want to talk to before I go to sleep at night. And it's not because I'm lonely, and it's not because it's New Year's Eve. I came here tonight because when you realise you want to spend the rest of your life with somebody, you want the rest of the life to start as soon as possible.

12. SALLY: You see, that is just like you Harry. You say things like that, and you make it impossible for me to hate you. And I hate you Harry... I really hate you. I hate you.

In line 1 Harry uses a formulaic clause structure *the thing is* as a softener before he tells her he loves her; while in most cases it would not be necessary to soften a declaration of love, he is aware that she is irritated with him and so attempts to lessen the force of his utterance. Her reply in line 2 denotes confusion and surprise as his declaration is completely unexpected. In his turn he tells her he loves her again, and in most cases it expected that the listener will reciprocate those feelings. Sally in line 4, however, responds with a direct question with no tokens of politeness which hint that she is annoyed by his comments. Although it is true that Harry's behaviour in the past has caused tension between the two characters, her reaction to him attempting to make amends can be interpreted as impolite. In the next turn he makes a sarcastic remark in the form of a question, which prompts Sally to declare she is leaving the party. When he confronts her about her cold reaction, she is clear that she does not think his comments are sincere. She begins her utterance in line 8 with a conventionalised politeness phrase *I'm sorry*, although in this case its use appears to be as a ritualised answer rather than as an apology. She uses *I know* twice to show sympathy for Harry for feeling lonely during the holidays which helps her mitigate her next comments. The use of *but* in the next utterance is a sign that in spite of his situation, she does not think it is acceptable

for him to believe that their problems will be solved simply by telling Sally he loves her. She is firm and assertive when delivering her message, and bluntly tells him that things don't *work that way*. When Harry asks how he should have approached the situation, she replies she does not know, but certainly in a different way to what he did. While it is understandable that she is angry with him, it is also clear that she does not intend to cooperate or make an attempt to restore harmony to the relationship.

In line 11, Harry delivers a well-known line in the world of romantic comedies. He goes on to provide a very detailed list of things he loves about Sally, and while most of the things he names can be seen as negative attributes or habits, the fact that he says he *loves* them makes his declaration all the more appealing to Sally. He also adds that the reasons she believes Harry tells her he loves her are not accurate, and then effectively tells Sally he wants to spend the rest of his life with her. This confession is certainly intended as a compliment and helps him demonstrate that her positive face needs are and will be met by him, which in turn will help him achieve his goal of winning her affection back. In line 12 Sally retorts to Harry's declaration by telling him that she hates him *I really hate you*; while in most cases this would be considered a direct attack on Harry's face, it is clear that in this context she means that she hates the way he acted in the past, but in reality she loves him back as well. This is confirmed by the fact that the two characters kiss, and in a later scene it is revealed to the audience that they are happily married.

In the final scene the biggest contrast is seen in Harry's dialogue, the repeated use of positive politeness strategies is uncharacteristic in him. He departs from the stereotypical portrayal of men in the genre and is open about his feelings for Sally. Contrastingly, Sally uses linguistic devices to demonstrate that she is still angry with him and does not attempt to reciprocate meeting Harry's positive face needs. In the last line, her reaction to Harry's declaration of love is atypical for female characters in romantic comedies, but even though out of context her utterance might be interpreted as an attack on his face it is actually her way of accepting Harry's declaration. Throughout the film the face needs and wants of the characters vary and so does the facework they believe is appropriate, consequently the types of linguistic politeness markers also shift as the plot moves forward.

Overall, the male lead in this film is depicted in a conventional way and his actions and discourse are in line with what audience might expect of male roles. On the other hand, Sally's character departs in some ways from the stereotypes of female leads, and

although she uses politeness strategies when necessary, her speech cannot be described as canonically female based on the analysis of these scenes.

## 4.3.3 He's Just Not That Into You

*He's Just Not That Into You* is an ensemble romantic comedy released in 2009 directed by Ken Kwapis, and the screenplay was written by Abby Kohn and Marc Silverstein adapted from the book of the same title. The film follows the story of nine characters, but Gigi (Ginnifer Goodwin) is the common denominator among all the other characters and has a more central role. The majority of her story focuses on her friendship with Alex (Justin Long) who helps her navigate single life and provides dating advice. Not much is revealed about the character's professional life, Gigi works at a magazine and Alex is a bar manager. Gigi is characterised as a naïve, insecure, over-thinking young woman whose main concern is finding a romantic partner after many failed attempts. In contrast, Alex is portrayed in a common male role in romantic comedies, as a bachelor who has no intention of settling down until he realises he has fallen in love with the female lead. Although he has good intentions and is a caring character, he is frequently blunt and honest about his opinion regardless of how they might be interpreted.

Although it was well-received by audiences and its cast is composed by many well-known, talented actors, it is difficult to overlook the stereotypical way in which many of the characters are portrayed. Even though many of the female characters are colleagues, their conversations mainly centre around romantic relationships and rarely discuss their careers or goals outside their love lives.

### *Meet Cute*

Similarly to *When Harry Met Sally* (1989), in *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009) when the two main characters first meet their personalities are characterised as almost complete opposites. Gigi is at the bar Alex manages pretending to be waiting for a date, when in reality she is there hoping she will see him. She is portrayed as someone who desperately wants to be in love and in a relationship, while Alex is more realistic about his expectations and tries to get Gigi to realise that her romanticised version of dating is not accurate.

[Extract 1]

1. ALEX: What can I get you?

2. GIGI: Oh, I’m OK. I'm meeting someone.

3. ALEX: Oh, yeah? Got a hot date?

4. GIGI: I don't know if you'd call it hot -- I mean this guy Conor and I have only been out the one time so

5. ALEX: Wait - Conor Barry?

6. GIGI: Oh, uh, yeah --

7. ALEX: Conor's not coming in tonight. Did he forget he was supposed to meet you?

8. GIGI: See when I said "meeting someone" I guess that was kind of a broad term, kind of a wide interpretation of the word "meeting”…

9. ALEX: Because I could just call him --

10. GIGI: No! I mean, totally unnecessary. I mean, I actually was just - in the area -so I figured I'd just swing by and see if he was around - because - uhhh ---I uhh, had to return his -- Pen. I had to return this - pen. He left this. So, I thought I should really return it before he - you know --- freaks out.

11. ALEX: Dr. Frankel - Adult, Child and Geriatric Dentistry.

12. GIGI: Look, I'm not gonna judge about what may or may not be important to someone.

13. ALEX: That's not even his dentist.

14. GIGI: Oh, really? Then who's his dentist?

15. ALEX: My dad.

16. GIGI: I'm Gigi. Conor and I went out last week. And I just... I thought if I ran into him... I don't know. I'm gonna go.

17. ALEX: Hey. Just - hang out for a second. Lemme buy you a drink. Look, you seem like a cool girl, so I'm just gonna be honest - Conor is never going to call you.

18. GIGI: Oh really? How do you know?

19. ALEX: Because I'm a guy. It's how we do it.

20. GIGI: He said it was nice meeting me.

21. ALEX: I don't care if he said you were his favourite female since his mommy and Joanie Cunningham. Over a week went by - and he didn't call.

22. GIGI: But maybe he called me, and I didn't get the message. Or maybe he lost my number, or was out of town, or was hit by a cab, or his grandma died.

23. ALEX: Or maybe he just didn't call because he has no interest in seeing you again.

24. GIGI: Yeah but my friend Terri once went out with this guy who never called, and she totally wrote him off - then like a year later she ran into him --

25. ALEX: Your friend Terri's an idiot. And she's the exception.

26. GIGI: Ok. But what if I'm the exception?

27. ALEX: You're not. You're the rule. And the rule is - if a guy doesn't call you, he doesn't want to call you.

28. GIGI: Really? Always?

29. ALEX: Yeah. Always. I know what blowing off a woman looks like. I do it early and I do it often. Trust me - if a guy is treating you like he doesn't give a shit - he doesn't. No exceptions.

30. GIGI: Why are you telling me all of this? Aren't these man-secrets - like why men need to watch televised golf?

31. ALEX: I don't know. You looked like you could really use the help.

32. GIGI: Thank you. You've given me a lot to think about.

In the opening line of this interaction, Alex begins the interaction by asking Gigi if there is anything he can do for her – this scene takes place in a busy bar where Alex is the manager, therefore his direct question is perfectly acceptable in the context. In line 2, instead of directly declining the offer, she explains she is meeting someone so does not need a drink. In most scenarios, if a customer claims they are waiting on another party, bartenders move on to other customers. Alex, however, engages in conversation with Gigi about her date. In line 4, Gigi avoids committing to her statements with the use of hedging expressions such as *I don't know if you'd call it…* and *I mean*. A similar pattern is also found in line 8, when asked about her *date* she uses other hedging devices (*I guess*, *kind of*) to avoid directly saying that she was not entirely truthful before. When Alex offers to call his friend - who was supposed to meet Gigi - her first reaction is to reject the offer without any mitigating devices. To mitigate going on record baldly, she gives a long explanation as to why she declines the offer, and repeatedly hedges her utterances (*I mean*, *I actually was just…*, *I figured I'd just…*, *I thought I should…*). Alex, on the other hand, uses very different strategies in his lines of dialogue. Once he finds out she was lying about waiting for a date, he offers to buy her a drink but his gesture does not necessarily have any romantic implications, it appears to be a nice gesture

towards a customer. From line 18 onwards, Alex's bluntness is open to interpretation as impolite as it does not acknowledge Gigi's positive face wants to be liked. The use of *look* works as an appeal to Gigi to justify sharing his own views, coupled with a hedged compliment (*you seem like a cool girl*) and followed by a warning that he is going to be honest which is also hedged with the marker *just*. These strategies help mitigate his next remarks to an extent. The utterance *he's never going to call you* is open to interpretation as impolite as it can be inferred that he believes that Gigi is being naïve for thinking her date is interested in her, when this is actually not the case. When Gigi tries to challenge his reasoning in line 21, he is once again quite forthright and does not mitigate his utterance when he tells her once again his date is not interested in her. Gigi's *but* in line 22 effectively rejects his opinion, but it is coupled with more hedges to soften the effect of contradicting Alex. In the following turn, Alex reiterates that her date is not interested in her, but unlike in previous lines he hedges his statement with the use of *maybe* and *just*. In line 24, Gigi repeats the same pattern as in 22, where she pairs y*eah* with *but* which can be interpreted as supportive facework before contradicting what Alex has said. Alex proceeds to refer to Gigi's friend as an *idiot*, which is clearly open to interpretation as impolite, and while it is not a direct attack on Gigi's face, it is expected for her to feel offended on behalf of her friend. However, she does not react to his remarks and once again resorts to the strategy used in 22 and 24. Alex responds with a clear denial *No, you're not* to Gigi's question in the previous line, and unlike Gigi he does not mitigate his utterance when contradicting her views. Gigi does not seem offended by his bluntness, but instead appears to be surprised by his insights. In line 31, Alex somewhat changes his attitude when asked as to why he is sharing his thoughts with Gigi, and tells her that he felt she needed help. In spite of Alex's candidness, which would be open to interpretation, Gigi is thankful to him as she believes it helped her see her situation in a different light.

For the most part of this interaction, the use of hedging coupled with hesitation used by Gigi are good examples which illustrate that her behaviour is what Lakoff (1975) referred to as "women's language" and it is often associated with linguistic politeness. However, in this context her utterances are more open to interpretation as politic behaviour rather than polite. Even though a number of examples of linguistic politeness were observed in Gigi's utterances, it is not always the case that her remarks are perceived as polite. The repeated use of hedges, and avoidance of confrontation help characterise her personality more than used to express politeness in this interaction. Alex's discourse, on the other hand, is easier to interpret as impolite or likely to cause offence in the listener. The lack of mitigating elements paired with negative remarks and

markers of linguistic impoliteness are more readily interpretable as impolite behaviour. Nevertheless, it should be noted that it would seem that Gigi welcomes his forthrightness as she sees it as an eye-opening interaction.

## *Fun Together*

After meeting at the bar, Alex and Gigi's relationship evolves and they become friends, Gigi frequently turns to Alex for dating advice as she finds his insights helpful. The dynamic of the relationship has changed since they met, and therefore the facework they expect from each other has also varied. In the first encounter Alex's bluntness was not expected or requested by Gigi, as the dynamic changed Gigi expects Alex to share his honest opinion with her. After many failed attempts at dating, Gigi agrees to be set up on a date by Alex with one of his friends.

[Extract 1]

1. ALEX: Sorry I'm late.

2. GIGI: That's OK. I like a little time before a blind date - prepare myself mentally, remind myself not to tell the story about my molars –

3. ALEX: He's not coming. Can't wait to hear that story about the molars, though.

4. GIGI: How can he already not like me?

5. ALEX: I screwed up. I told Bill it was Thursday, but I meant Tuesday.

6. GIGI: Awesome. I'm stuck here with a guy who can't distinguish Tuesday from Thursday - and meanwhile this girl - - she's probably meeting her soul mate as we speak.

In line 1 Alex apologises for being late, the use of *sorry* here is a formulaic form of linguistic politeness, but in this case it is not necessarily interpreted as inherently polite but rather it is the type of utterance expected. Gigi reassures him being late did not cause offence with another ritualised linguistic politeness phrase in line 2. Alex tells Gigi her date is actually not coming to meet her, but makes light of the matter by adding he is interested in the story she was planning on telling him. In line 4, Gigi asks a rhetorical question and indirectly assigns the blame to herself for her date not showing up. Alex admits it was his own fault and explains there was some miscommunication between him and his friend. The use of *screwed* and first-person singular pronoun helps him express that he feels negatively about what he did. However, at no point does he actually apologise for his mistake or any inconvenience he might have caused, and this behaviour is open to interpretation as impolite. Gigi responds sarcastically with the use

of *awesome* and implies that she is not pleased about the position she is put in *I'm stuck here* and indirectly remarks on Alex's inability to complete a simple task. This can be interpreted as an attack on Alex's face, nevertheless considering the nature of their relationship and the way in which Alex behaved is it unlikely he will interpret her utterance as an attack on his face.

[Extract 2]

[...]

7. ALEX: See, you thrive on drama. You gotta be more like me - if a girl likes me great, if not, there are plenty more like her - probably with smaller pores and bigger implants.

8. GIGI: That's beautiful.

9. ALEX: Thanks.

10. GIGI: Why are you sharing all this inside dating information with me again?

11. ALEX: I dunno. I like you.

12. GIGI: You do?

13. ALEX: Don't start doodling my name on your binder. I just mean, I like you, like I like basset hounds. They're kinda pathetic - so you want to cheer them up.

14. GIGI: Again with the sensitivity.

Further ahead in the same scene, the characters discuss their approaches to dating and romance in general. Alex tells Gigi she enjoys *drama* in her relationships, although it may not appear as something offensive it is a word that seems to be more commonly associated with women stereotypes. He advices her to imitate his approach to dating which he implies is based on physical appearance. In line 7 his comments on how he selects partners can be interpreted as objectifying, but at the same time make him appear shallow and vain even though the latter might not be his intention. Gigi's sarcastic comments in line 8 seem to be interpreted as banter since Alex replies with a formulaic politeness marker and does not take offence to Gigi's utterance. In the following turn Gigi asks a direct question about why Alex is sharing what she considers important information with her. In line 11 Alex replies by saying that it is because she likes her, but to some extent *I dunno* lessens the impact of his utterance and therefore his commitment to the statement. When Gigi asks a follow-up question which in this context indicates she is somewhat surprised by his reply, he responds by indirectly referring to her as a teenage girl when he says *doodle my name on your binder*. This is followed by saying that he does like her but only because she takes pity on her. The use of *I just mean*

hedges his remarks, and avoids directly referring to her as *pathetic* by making a comparison. Although this helps him mitigate the attack on her face, his utterance is open to be interpreted as impolite. In line 14, the use of *again with* indicates a degree of annoyance and expresses that his comment does not take into consideration her positive face needs.

Overall, in this scene there is not an abundance of politeness strategies found in Gigi's lines. There are instances where politeness strategies are used by the character, but overall her discourse can be characterised as politic. The use of sarcasm in some her lines is not interpreted as an attack on Alex's face since their relationship has evolved and her comments are a result of the two characters becoming closer and therefore this type of speech is acceptable. In contrast, in Alex's lines of dialogue a higher number of strategies that are likely to damage the listener's face are observed. As in the previous scene, his discourse can be described as blunt and unmitigated, and while his intention might not be to cause offense it certainly has the potential to do so. Gigi's language is not as tentative and nonassertive as in the previous interaction, but appropriate for the context. The strategies used by Alex, on the other hand, are more characteristic of conventional male characters in the genre.

## *New Conflicts*

As they spend more time together, Alex and Gigi move from being acquaintances to being friends, and it would seem that both parties agree that that is the nature of their relationship. However, after Alex invites Gigi to a party he is organising, she misinterprets what he means and starts to think he wants the relationship to become a romantic one. During the party, Gigi once again misconstrues what Alex is trying to express and believes she was asked to co-host the party, which would confirm her belief that they are more than friends at this point. Once the party comes to an end and the two characters are left alone for the first time. When Gigi tells Alex that she thinks they are in a relationship, he becomes irritated and therefore causing friction between the two.

[Extract 1]

1. ALEX: Thanks for staying and helping clean up - but I really gotta get to bed.

2. GIGI: Is that an invitation?

3. ALEX: What?

4. GIGI: I'm sorry. That was cheesy. I'm not good at this. [*She kisses him*] Yes! I knew it. I knew it. The best relationships grow out of friendships.

5. ALEX: Wait - what?

6. GIGI: Uhmm...

7. ALEX: Now you and I are in a relationship?

[...]

In the first line of this interaction, Alex uses linguistic politeness to thank Gigi for her help, and implies he wants her to leave by saying he has to go to sleep. This utterance can be interpreted as politic behaviour, as in his view, she was simply a friend helping another friend and therefore his utterance is what is required for the situation. In line 2, Gigi believes he was trying to indirectly ask her to spend the night with him. This breakdown in communication leads Alex to reply simply with *What?* to show he is confused by Gigi's question. In line 4 she uses linguistic politeness to apologise for not conveying her message clearly, and takes responsibility for it when she says *I'm not good at this*. She then assumes the pair are in a relationship, this prompts Alex to reply with a direct question void of any politeness markers in line 7 which might have been caused by the element of surprise of Gigi unexpectedly kissing him.

[Extract 2]

8. GIGI: Well, I'd say if we're not at relationship station--ship, we're at least on the track.

9. ALEX: And why would you think that, exactly?

10. GIGI: Because there were - you know - signs.

11. ALEX: Really? Like what?

12. GIGI: Uhm - it was good to hear from me. You talked to me even when you were with a girl. I felt something...

13. ALEX: What are you talking about? What have I been saying since I met you? If a guy wants to date you he will make it happen. He will ask you out. Did I ask you out?

14. GIGI: No.

15. ALEX: Why would you do this? Oh shit... Why do women do this? Why do they build this stuff up in their minds, take each little thing a guy does and twist it into something else –

16. GIGI: I'd rather be like that - than like you.

17. ALEX: Excuse me?

18. GIGI: Maybe I dissect each little thing, and put myself out there too much, and maybe I even thrive on the drama of it all-- but at least that means I still care. You think you've won because women are expendable to you? Sure, you don't get hurt or make an ass of yourself that way, but you don't fall in love that way, either. You haven't won, Alex. You're alone. I may do a lot of stupid shit - but I know I'm a lot closer to finding someone than you are.

Gigi realises that Alex is taken aback by her actions, and when asked directly is she thought they were in a relationship she uses *well* to avoid making a firm statement as she is beginning to realise Alex does not feel the same way she does. She also uses conditional forms to distance herself from the statement and appear to be more indirect and minimises the force of her utterance. Alex replies with another direct question in line 9 with no mitigating elements, in fact, the use of *exactly* at the end of his utterance denotes some irritation on his part. In the following turn Gigi uses *you know* as an appeal to a common understanding that there were in fact *signs* which led her to believe that the two were in a relationship. After Gigi explains what she believes to have been signs of Alex being interested in a romantic relationship with her, he replies in line 13 with various direct questions and not attempt to mitigate his utterance. His reaction can be seen as one of disgust, and therefore open to interpretation as impolite as in a way it is an attack on Gigi's face and her desire to be liked and valued by him. In line 15 he continues to criticise her for thinking that he was interested in her, the use of a curse word in this utterance is used to express irritation and possibly anger, but it is not directed to Gigi as an insult. Although in his following utterance he does not direct his criticisms directly at her, by saying *Why do women do this?* clearly implies that he is referring to Gigi while at the same time suggesting that all women behave in the same way. His comments in this line are open to interpretation as impolite as they are strong candidates to have caused offence and no effort was made to mitigate the attack on the listener's face. For the first time in this interaction, in line 16, Gigi openly attacks Alex's face by contradicting what he has said. In line 18 she opens with a string of hedges to concede that some of the points he made might not be wrong, and uses *but* to forewarn that her following statements contradicts his claim. She continues using a similar strategy by which she grants that he is right in some respects, but then makes remarks that are an attack on his face as in *you haven't won* or *you're alone*. The use curse words in this line is not directed at Alex, but helps her express her anger and irritation regarding the situation. As her comments were clearly intended to hurt Alex, her utterance is also a strong candidate to be interpreted as impolite.

The tension created by Gigi misinterpreting Alex's intentions leads to the use of strategies that are likely to damage the listener's face. Alex becomes angry and this is

reflected in his linguistic choices, the use of swearing in one occasion and the repeated use of direct questions cause Gigi to feel hurt. Oppositely, Gigi's lines at the beginning of the interaction are more demure and the use of linguistic politeness markers help her express that. When Alex repeatedly reproaches her behaviour, her speech becomes less friendly and confronts him on his accusations. A number of mitigating devices are observed in the way in which she expresses her discontent, the use of these markers in her speech help characterise her as less confident in her assertions. The different linguistic choices for the male and female characters when arguing uphold, to a certain degree, conventionalised views of male and female speech, with Alex being more forward and slightly aggressive and Gigi expressing her anger in a more composed way.

## *Epiphany*

Following their fight after the party, Gigi decides to cut ties with Alex and move of from their friendship. Alex, on the other hand, seems to have come to the realisation that he does have feelings for Gigi and wants to pursue a relationship with her. In this scene he goes to Gigi's house under the pretence that he wanted to return the pen she gave him when they first met. In the same way as in the two previous *epiphany* scenes, the goals of the characters change and so do the kind of politeness strategies they use to help them achieve their goals.

[Extract 1]

1. GIGI: You came all the way here - at 11 at night - to give me back a promotional pen?

2. ALEX: I thought I better come up with some excuse to get over here. Isn't that how it's done?

3. GIGI: Sometimes.

4. ALEX: Look, I can't stop thinking about you. I drive by your place. I call and hang up. I'm turning into -

5. GIGI: Me

6. ALEX: Yeah.

7. GIGI: Well, a wise person once told me that if a guy wants to be with a girl, he will make it happen. No matter what.

8. ALEX: True.

9. GIGI: Hmmm. Because when I was hurling my body onto yours - you did not seem to want to "make it happen."

10. ALEX: Here's the thing about that. You were right. I've gotten so used to keeping myself at a safe distance from these women, having the power - that I didn't know what it felt like when I actually ...fell for one of them.

11. GIGI: Look, I've just been out with your friend Bill. And it just might be exactly what I need. No drama. He calls. He does what he says.

12. ALEX: I could do that stuff too.

13. GIGI: But you didn't. And that same wise person told me that I am the rule. That I have to stop thinking that every guy will change - stop thinking that I will be the - that I will be the exception.

14. ALEX: You are my exception.

In the first line she asks him a direct question and the way in which she phrases it shows that she is sceptical of his intentions. In line 2 he admits he used that as an excuse to see her, and asks her *Isn't that how it's done?* which implies that there is some common ground between the participants. Alex comments on this as he knows Gigi has done things like this in the past which he has criticised but is now doing it himself. In line 4 Alex beings his utterance with *look* to help him establish balance before his following statement in which he indirectly declares he has feelings for her. This statement appeals to her positive face as it meets her desire to be liked by him and can help him achieve his aim of starting a relationship. In line 7 Gigi opens with *well*, as a softener referencing a piece of advice Alex gave her at the beginning of their friendship, which hints that she is reluctant to start a relationship with him. She indirectly refers to him as *a wise person*, this positive evaluation of Alex helps mitigate her intention to reject him; Alex indicates agreement in the next turn with *true*. She then reminds him that when it was her that tried to start a relationship he rejected her. Her intention in this line can be interpreted as criticism of his past behaviour, the use of *seem*, however, mitigates the force of her utterance. In line 10, Alex beings with *here's the thing* and is used as a ritualised phrase to help the speaker be less forward and signal that they are going to openly give their point of view. He then acknowledges that she was right about many of the points she raised when they argued and then indirectly states he has fallen in love with her. He uses a third-person plural pronoun which makes his declaration less direct and minimises its force. In line 11 Gigi opens with *look* to bring harmony to the interaction before explaining why she is not convinced by his remarks. In the following utterance the use *just might be* which shows that she is not entirely committed to the proposition, allowing Alex to indirectly promise that he can be what she needs. The use of this positive politeness strategy in line 12 can help Alex demonstrate that his intentions are noble and that he wants to meet her positive face needs. In the next turn, she reminds him of what he previously told her about relationships, which contradicted most of her

beliefs about love at the time, and that she was not *the exception to the rule*. The scene ends when the two characters kiss after he says she is the exception to his rule, the use of the first-person pronoun in this context helps him express how important she is to him. While in this interaction there is not a large number of salient politeness markers, Alex's utterances show appreciation for Gigi's positive face and therefore helps him accomplish his goal of beginning a relationship with Gigi.

In general, in this film, both the female and male characters perpetuate certain traditional gender expectations. There are clear differences in the way in which Alex and Gigi address one another, and the linguistic politeness markers used contribute to this contrast. A shift can be observed in Alex's discourse towards the end of the film when he is aware that in order to achieve his goal, different strategies are needed to do so. Although it would not be entirely accurate to say that Gigi is more polite than Alex, it is true that she is more likely to lessen the force of her utterances and avoid causing offence in her listener, and that her linguistic choices adhere to a more stereotypical and traditional view of women's language.

## 4.4 Evaluation of Computational Tools for Politeness Analysis

This section evaluates the extent to which NLP tools can be used to analyse linguistic politeness in film discourse. A key issue to address when using this approach to analysing this type of text is agreement between human classification compared to the potential classification of the *politeness()* package. The classification yielded by the NLP tool is based on the aggregation of features manually selected after a thorough exploration of the way in which the package detected and counted politeness tokens in the corpus. A detailed explanation of the approach to the evaluation of the NLP tool is presented in Chapter 3, Section 3.8.1. Tables 4.13 and 4.14 present an overview of the main findings in relation to the classification of politeness.

| POLITE | Manual Classification | | Package Classification | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Polite | | Polite | Impolite | Neutral | |
| *LxContent* | 38 | | 31 | 5 | 2 | 38 |
| *LxContentContextualised* | 6 | | 3 | 3 | 0 | 6 |
| *ParaLx* | 0 | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | | |
| Total | 44 | | | | | 44 |

**Table 4.13:** Summary comparison of manual and package classification of *polite* dialogue according to deciding categories. Agreement between manual and package classification is highlighted in blue, while disagreement is highlighted in orange.

| IMPOLITE | Manual Classification | | Package Classification | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Impolite | | Polite | Impolite | Neutral | |
| *LxContent* | 21 | | 8 | 10 | 3 | 21 |
| *LxContentContextualised* | 40 | | 17 | 15 | 8 | 40 |
| *ParaLx* | 26 | | 9 | 15 | 2 | 26 |
| | | | | | | |
| Total | 87 | | | | | 87 |

**Table 4.14:** Summary comparison of manual and package classification of *impolite* dialogue according to deciding categories. Agreement between manual and package classification is highlighted in blue, while disagreement is highlighted in orange.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the lines of dialogue under close inspection here are those which were classified by the researcher as polite or impolite. In total 281 lines of dialogue from the scenes analysed in Section 4.3 were classified within three categories: polite, impolite, and neutral. 150 of those lines were manually classified as neutral, given that there were no indicators of politeness or impoliteness present in the dialogue for those lines. Instances where the dialogue was classified as *neutral* are not compared with the classification of the package since the politeness features included in the NLP tool were included to detect polite or impolite text. A total of 44 lines of dialogue were manually classified as *polite* and 87 lines were classified as *impolite*. The qualitative analysis in Section 4.3 informed the decisions in categorising each line within those three labels. This meant that a clear understanding of variables outside of the text influenced the

manual classification of the 281 lines of dialogue, which created this smaller sample being analysed[4].

Moreover, three other labels were used to categorise what aspect of each line of dialogue made the biggest contribution, or 'heavy-lifting', when deciding to classify each line as polite or impolite. In cases where the dialogue was labelled *neutral* no category was assigned, as there were no markers or contextualised cues which made the dialogue be open to interpretation as polite or impolite.

The label *LxContent* was assigned to cases in which the presence of linguistic expressions were the deciding factor in classifying a given line as polite or impolite. This label was assigned to 38 out of the 44 lines of dialogue manually classified as polite (see row three, column two in Table 4.13). For this sub-category, the package correctly classified 31 lines as polite, and incorrectly classified 5 as impolite, and 2 as neutral (see row three, columns three to five in Table 4.13). With regard to manually classified impolite dialogue, 21 of the 87 lines of dialogue were labelled under *LxContent* (see row three, column two in Table 4.14). For these lines, the package classified 10 lines correctly as impolite, and incorrectly classified 8 as polite and 3 as neutral (see row three, columns three to five in Table 4.14).

*LxContentContextualised* was used in in cases where the decision was made based on the use of certain linguistic expression combined with contextual information. This label was used for 6 lines of manually classified polite dialogue (see row four, column two in Table 4.13). The package correctly classified 3 lines as polite, and incorrectly classified 3 lines as impolite (see row four, columns three and four in Table 4.13). For the manual classification of impolite dialogue, 40 lines were assigned this label (see row four, column two in Table 4.14). For these lines, the package classified 15 lines correctly as impolite, and incorrectly classified 17 as polite and 8 as neutral (see row four, columns three to five in Table 4.14).

And finally, *ParaLx* labels were allocated to instances in which the most salient feature when classifying the line of dialogue was due to paralinguistic content. No lines of manually classified polite dialogue were assigned this label (see row five, column two in Table 4.13). For dialogue manually classified as impolite, on the other hand, 26 lines were given the *ParaLx* label (see row five, column two in Table 4.14). Within this group,

[4] The classification for all lines of dialogue, together with the category assigned as informing that decision, the NLP tool classification, and the features detected in each case can be found in https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kXGs4yl5xA9Own6R0svXv4PfALmN9vAE?usp=sharing

the package classified 15 lines as impolite, and incorrectly classified 9 as polite and 2 as neutral (see row five, columns three to five in Table 4.14).

### 4.4.1 Politeness Classification

Informed by the qualitative analysis of the 12 scenes in Sections 4.3.1 to 4.3.3, 44 lines of dialogue were classified as polite. Within that subset, linguistic content (*LxContent*) supplied to most informative data in manually classifying 38 instances, while contextualisation of linguistic content (*LxContentContextualised*) motivated the manual classification of 6 lines of dialogue as polite. In this sub-corpus, no paralinguistic indicators contributed to classifying an instance as polite. As illustrated by Table 4.13, the hypothesis of the assembly of package features, which was developed based on a close examination of how those features worked in the corpus, is quite successful at capturing politeness, particularly in cases where linguistic content was the deciding factor in the classification.

1. Oh God this is one of those key moments in life, when it's **possible** you can be **really**, genuinely **cool** -- and I'm going to *fail* a hundred percent. I absolutely and totally and *utterly* **adore** you and **I think** you're the most **beautiful** woman in the world and more importantly **I** genuinely **believe** and have believed for some time now that we can be **best** friends. What do you think?

Line 1 exemplifies an instance where the line was manually classified as polite, and based on the theory of how the computational features work, were also classified as polite by the NLP tool. By examining the output of the package, those tokens marked in bold contribute to the line being considered polite, and the ones underlined and in italics contribute to impoliteness. Although some tokens do not function in the way the package has classified them under, overall features which contribute to politeness outweigh those which contribute to impoliteness.

2. **Yes** -- **I'm *sorry*** -- I had to leave... I *didn't* want to *disturb* you.

Example 2 represents an instance where the manual classification was polite, but labelled as impolite by the NLP tool. Some of the pitfalls of the package are illustrated by this example. To begin with, the token *yes* is marked as an intensifier even though it does not have that function here. The reason this happens is because within the 'Intensifiers' category, *yes* was grouped under this label along other words which do function as such. Another issue to note from this example, is that the expression *I'm sorry* is counted as an 'Apology' token but the word *sorry* is also marked as 'Negative

Emotion'. Furthermore, *didn't* and *disturb* in isolation contribute to the line of dialogue being incorrectly classified as impolite. In spite of these caveats, the theory constructed from the package features is able to recognise politeness when the deciding factor is found in the linguistic content of the text.

3. *Look*, I *can't* stop thinking about you. I drive by your place. I call and *hang* up. I'm turning into -

Extract 3 is one of the cases which was evaluated as polite after analysing it qualitatively and the defining feature required contextualisation. However, the package detected a number of features which would normally contribute to impoliteness, and therefore classified it as such. Some of the issues include *look* being counted as a command, rather than as a way for the speaker to establish balance before his next statement. Negation, as in *can't* in this example, can contribute to impoliteness in some cases, but as established in Section 4.2.7 (*Negation*) this is highly sensitive to context. And finally, *hang* is counted as a token in 'Negative Emotion', and while it is true that in some contexts that word might have negative connotations, in this instance it does not and therefore the package mistakenly assigns it as impolite.

4. **Yes**. This one though is... very **good**. **I think** the *man* who wrote it has **actually** been to Turkey, which helps. There's also a very **amusing** incident with a kebab.

In line 4 there is agreement between the qualitative analysis and the classification derived from the features included in the package. No tokens which would contribute to the text being classified as impolite were observed. Although it would be extremely difficult for the package to detect the slight note of humour in the dialogue, it does count markers which inform the decision to classify this line as polite. Furthermore, it should be noted that the word *man* is counted under the 'Informal Title' category. Although this feature was not included within those features which would contribute to text being classified as polite, it is important to highlight that the counts for this category should be approached with extreme caution (see Section 4.2.8 for a detailed justification).

Overall, when considering the aggregation of selected features from the package to hypothesise on a classification from the package, the agreement between the 'gold standard' and the predicted classification is generally satisfactory. As illustrated in Table 4.13, in cases where the most informative feature is supplied by linguistic content it is clear that the NLP tool is helpful in detecting politeness. On the other hand, when context and linguistic content are the deciding factors, in this dataset, the package correctly assigned politeness in half of the cases, and incorrectly assigned impoliteness for the

other half. With this in mind, relying solely on this particular NLP tool for texts which are highly context sensitive should be done with caution, or perhaps as a method of exploration before embarking on a more in-depth analysis.

## 4.4.2 Impoliteness Classification

On the basis of the qualitative analysis of the selected scenes in Section 4.3, 87 lines of dialogue were labelled impolite. Within that subgroup, linguistic content (*LxContent*) supplied to most informative data in classifying 21 of those instances, while contextualisation of linguistic content (*LxContentContextualised*) motivated the classification of 40 lines of dialogue as impolite. Finally, 26 lines of dialogue were classified as impolite where the most contributing factor were paralinguistic elements (*ParaLx*). As shown in Table 4.14, the theory of the assembly of package features, performs worst with respect to impoliteness, particularly in cases where contextualised linguistic content was the deciding factor in the classification.

In contrast with the figures observed for the classification of polite dialogue, it is not clear from the values of in Table 4.14 whether there is significant interaction in the impoliteness classifications depending on the category of the most informative data. A chi-square test was conducted by using a matrix populated by the values in rows three to five, columns three to five in Table 4.14. The test results are provided in Table 4.15. Based on the result of the test, it cannot be concluded that there is a significant interaction between the two variables. In spite of the lack if significance, it is clear that this tool does not work as effectively when identifying impolite dialogue as it does polite.

| Pearson's Chi-squared test | | |
|---|---|---|
| data: t(matrix(d.impolite, nrow = 3)) | | |
| X-squared = 4.063 | df = 4 | p-value = 0.3976 |

**Table 4.15:** Chi-square test output for interaction between impolite classification and informative feature category.

A second hypothesis of the features' contribution within the *politeness()* package was tested to account for the fact that in some cases 'swearing' tokens are aggregated in 'negative emotion' as well. The classification in this cases focused on the cases where

the package-based classifier labelled an instance as polite and the ‘swearing’ count was zero. If this condition is met, then the text was labelled remained ‘polite’; if the condition is not met, it is labelled as ‘impolite’. This approach only changed the classification of one label, and therefore no further test to establish significance were conducted.

1. *Don't* start doodling my name on your binder. I **just** mean, I **like** you, **like** I **like** basset hounds. They're kinda *pathetic* - so you want to **cheer** them up.

Example 1 was labelled impolite in the qualitative analysis but classified as polite by the NLP tool. The two features that would contribute to the text being labelled as impolite are ‘Negation’ and ‘Negative Emotion’. Worthy of note in this example is that the token ‘like’ is counted three time. While in two of those occasions *like* is used as a verb and it is difficult to argue the reason for belonging to the ‘Positive Emotion’ group of words, in one of those instances is used to make a comparison. However, had that specific case of *like* not had been counted towards politeness, the presence of other tokens associated with polite text would have still outweighed the features which contribute to impoliteness.

2. You're **right**: of course, you're **right**. It's **just** that I've dealt with this *garbage* for ten years now -- you've had it for ten minutes. Our perspectives are different.

Case number 2 illustrates an instance where the dialogue was classified as impolite (see Section 4.3.1 for a more detailed account of the motivation) but the NLP tool classified it as polite. The token *right* was assigned to ‘Positive Emotion’ and *just* to ‘Hedges’, both these features are included in the theory of politeness which hinges on the rationale for the construction of the package. Given that the defining element was the context in which these linguistic expressions were used (*LxContentContextualised*), these elements which are beyond the presence of a marker are difficult for the package to detect. Out of the three categories, in this sub-corpus, the package’s poorest performance is with relation to this category.

3. Forever? It **just** happened!

Paralinguistic features (*ParaLx*) were the deciding factor when manually labelling example number 3 as impolite (see Section 4.3.2), however, the package constructed theory labels it as polite. The presence of *just* contributes to features associated with politeness, and the lack of any other tokens in the text contributing to impoliteness mislead the NLP tool. It is important to note that it was not expected for the tool to perform

well in these cases as it was created as the information used to make its classification is text-based.

### 4.4.3 Discussion of Findings

Overall, the results show that using this computational tool to analyse politeness can be effective in certain situations. When using a hypothesis of the most informative features (*Positive Emotion, Reassurance, Gratitude, Hedging, Intensifiers, Please, and Apology*), the tool performs well when analysing polite texts, more specifically in cases where the deciding factor is the presence of linguistic politeness markers. For this sub-corpus, text classified as polite based on the contextualisation of linguistic politeness markers, the outcome is evenly split between correct and incorrect classification. In relation to impolite text, this tool yields mixed results when compared to human classification. When compared to polite classification of text, it is noticeable that there are considerably more cases for impolite text where the deciding element is not dictated by the presence of impolite linguistic tokens. Rather, it was the contextualisation of certain elements or features beyond the text which contributed to classifying those instances as impolite. It should also be highlighted that in the design of this package, more categories often associated with politeness than with impoliteness were included. Furthermore, categories such as Informal Title and Yes.No Questions presented some issues with regards to the detection of tokens truly belonging to these categories (see Sections 4.2.8 and 4.2.11). Another aspect to take into consideration when using this tool concerns with the double count of certain features. Some cases were observed where one token was counted in more than one of the pre-designed categories. This is not necessarily an issue with the design of the package, as it is possible for one word to be a part of more than one linguistic category. However, it is something to consider when not analysing these features individually.

In conclusion, this tool can be helpful in identifying candidate text extracts from large datasets to further analyse manually and have a better understanding of which politeness strategies are at work. Moreover, the package allows for each feature to be examined individually, as seen in Section 4.2. This can be extremely useful in cases where the research focus is on the use of certain aspects of language which can be quantified with respect to different aspects of language. From there, finding differences or similarities between different demographics such as gender, or texts with certain characteristics can lead to interesting findings.

# Chapter 5

# Conclusions

## 5.1 Thesis Summary

This research provides a different approach assisted by the use of NLP tools into analysing politeness in film discourse, specifically in romantic comedies. Scripts from 56 romantic comedies from 1977 to 2018 were analysed. Markers of linguistic politeness were examined to establish whether there were differences in their use between male and female characters. Interacting factors, such as screenwriter and addresee were also taken into consideration to explore their influence in the presence of these markers. Selected scenes were analysed qualitatively to help better understand the strengths and limitations of studying politeness using computational methods.

There were two primary objectives in this research. The first one was to explore whether there were differences in the language used by male and female characters, particularly in relation to politeness. Given that male and female roles in romantic comedies have a tendency to be stereotyped, it is important to investigate whether the language used in these films reflects more traditional views of language and gender. In spite of romantic comedies being described as formulaic or too predictable, it is also true that their storylines resonate with audiences, as they can identify with the problems and relate to characters' struggles. Furthermore, narratives in the genre often promote conventional messages regarding marriage, gender roles, sexuality (Kaklamanidou, 2013). Thus far, the vast majority of studies on gender portrayals in films and other mass media focus almost exclusively on elements beyond linguistic research (e.g.: Jeffers McDonald, 2007; Mortimer, 2010; Alberti, 2013; Hefner, 2019). This research has addressed that gap. The second objective was to test a different methodological approach to studying politeness in texts. The aim here was to contribute to the methods currently being used by researchers investigating politeness and gender.

One of the main aspects this research focused on was investigating differences, if any, between male and female characters regarding use of politeness markers. To accomplish this, a corpus of film scripts was assembled, all of which were in English and mainly aimed at Anglo-American audiences . The corpus was manually annotated to provide information regarding the gender of the speaker, addresee, and the film's screenwriter. With the assistance of computational tools, a statistical analysis was conducted to establish whether significant differences could be observed for certain politeness markers.

Another aspect which was central to this thesis was the evaluation of NLP tools in the study of formal linguistic politeness in text. Scenes were selected from three films, written by different screenwriters, to be analysed qualitatively. The analysis of politeness in these scenes was based on theories put forward by previous researchers in the field (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Watts, 2003; Culpeper, 2001, 2011). In order to evaluate the extent to which the NLP tool captured politeness in text, each line was manually categorised as *polite*, *impolite*, or *neutral*. For polite and impolite cases three categories were assigned to illustrate which aspect of that text extract influenced the decision the most. Then, each dialogue entry of this subset was manually inspected to have a full understanding of the way the NLP tool counted politeness tokens. Based on the findings of the qualitative analysis and the categorisation of text into the predetermined features provided by the 'politeness' package (Yeomans et al., 2018), a hypothesis of features which most contribute to the detection of politeness was proposed. This process allowed for comparisons to be made regarding the classification of politeness and the areas in which the computational tool worked efficiently and in which areas it did not.

Politeness features identified by the package in which significant statistical differences were found were analysed in context to determine whether they contributed to politeness in the dialogue or not. Strengths and weaknesses of the package were also investigated by closely inspecting its output in comparison to a qualitative approach. The following sections summarise the findings of this research.

### 5.1.1 Gender Differences in Formal Linguistic Politeness

The research findings indicate that significant differences in a number of categories related to formal linguistic politeness are present in this dataset. For the intensifiers, reassurance, and positive emotion categories male and female characters consistently display higher proportions of these tokens when addressing members of the opposite gender. Within these two types of interactions (i.e. male to female and female to male),

female characters tend to display higher frequency of use of polite markers than their male counterparts; with the exception of positive emotion where the opposite is true. It could be hypothesised that if same-sex romantic comedies were analysed, a higher proportion of these markers would be observed in interactions between characters of the same gender. A possible explanation for this is that characters would be more likely to use indicators of politeness more frequently when interacting with their romantic interest. However, it should also be noted that studies have analysed the language of homosexual men and observed that in many cases it tends to mirror that of women (Suire et al., 2020; Cartei and Rebi, 2012). Taking this into consideration, more data and further analysis is needed to formulate a stronger hypothesis. Regarding the use of hedges and *please*, significant differences were also observed. The gender of the screenwriter and the listener did not have an impact on their proportion in the dialogue. Female characters used these markers more often than male characters. Swearing was the category where most significant differences were found. Male characters displayed a much higher proportion of this marker, particularly in interactions with other male characters written by male screenwriters.

Although scholarship on language and gender is divided with regards to what characterises women's or men's language, it is still true that stereotypical views exist. From these findings, it can be theorised that in romantic comedies some aspects of more traditional views (see Section 2.3.1) are perpetuated. Female characters displayed a higher proportion of intensifiers in their dialogue, a feature of language commonly associated with women's language and politeness (see Section 2.3.1). The use of tentative language and a higher likelihood of the use of devices to avoid imposition was also found in the data (see Sections 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4), which aligns with traditional views of language as well (see Section 2.3.2). Moreover, female characters were far less likely to use swear than male characters which conforms with the perception that swearing is more commonly associated with male behaviour (see Section 2.3.5). Other characteristics frequently associated with women's language, such as apologies and commands (see Sections 2.3.3 and 2.3.6) were not perpetuated in the data used in this research. It is also interesting to note that, from the aspects of language analysed in this research, swearing yielded the most significant differences. A possible explanation for this might be the correlation with swearing and notions of masculinity and the traditional stance that it is not appropriate in 'ladylike' behaviour. Moreover, it is important to consider that these differences were explored within a heteronormative framework where all of the romantic relationships involving main characters were heterosexual. A potential hypothesis could be related to the fact that the language choices, particularly

those related to politeness, help the characters advance their relationship with their love interest. With this goal in mind, a more frequent use of polite markers and a less frequent use of markers which might cause offense, could be attributed to their contribution to the advancement of a romantic relationship.

The following is a summary of the findings with regards to the research questions:

**Research Question 1:** What differences in formal linguistic politeness are there between male and female characters in romantic comedies?

**a)** Is there a statistical difference in the use of politeness markers between male and female characters?

Yes, statistically significant differences were found in the use of intensifiers, reassurance, hedges, *please*, positive emotion, and swearing.

**b)** To what extent do interacting factors, such as screenwriter and addressee gender, affect the presence of these tokens of politeness?

The gender of the listener impacts the proportion of the use of intensifiers, reassurance, and positive emotion. For swearing, its proportion in interactions is impacted by the gender of the listener and the screenwriter.

### *Intensifiers*

This research showed that there are significant differences in the use of intensifiers between men and women. Both male and female characters use these markers when addressing members of the opposite gender, with women showing the highest proportion of intensifiers out of all the interactions , particularly in interactions with male characters. The gender of the screenwriter did not have a significant effect in the proportion of this marker.

Overall, the presence of this feature increases significantly in interactions between male and female characters. In this research intensifiers are seen as words which boost meaning in an utterance. Given that tokens included in this category were not selected by the researcher, within the selected words, membership to this group is not as clear for some tokens as it is for others. Therefore, theories regarding this feature and politeness should be approached with some caution. Nevertheless, the analysis of these markers in context revealed that they were often found in compliments or praise, as a means of enhancing the listener's positive face, or to strengthen the force of positive evaluations.

As with most features of language explored in this thesis, the presence of intensifiers does not necessarily equate to polite text. However, as illustrated by the analysis carried out in this research, they often found in strategies which aim to build or maintain a positive relationship with the listener. In the context of romantic comedies, and in light of the distribution of how these markers are used, it can be speculated that characters use them to advance their personal goals with members of the opposite sex. Moreover, the findings are in line with previous research on intensifiers which proposes that women use more intensifiers than men (Holmes, 1995; Tagliamonte and Roberts, 2005; Fuchs, 2017).

### *Reassurance*

The analysis demonstrated that there is a strong correlation between expressions of reassurance and politeness in this dataset; this is consistent with the findings of Voigt et al. (2017). Although limited significance was observed regarding differences between male and female characters in general, when taking into consideration the gender of the listener considerable differences were observed. The gender of the screenwriter was not a contributing factor to the estimated proportion of these expressions.

From the examples of the corpus, the use of expressions of reassurance help the speaker minimise any sense of obligation, debt, or imposition from the listener and therefore are generally open to interpretation as polite. Female characters addressing male characters show the highest ratio of these kind of expressions. The results demonstrate that even though male characters use this feature more frequently when addressing women, the proportion is higher for women addressing men. Not a lot of research has been done on this particular type of formulaic politeness expressions. However, they are frequently found following speech acts such as thanking and apologies (Watts, 2003). Bearing this in mind, these findings are consistent with theories of gender and politeness (Tannen, 1991; Engel, 2002; Schumann and Ross, 2010).

### *Hedges*

Differences were observed regarding the use of hedging devices between male and female characters, with female characters displaying a higher proportion in their lines of dialogue. Unlike most of the features which were analysed, the gender of the screenwriter or the listener did not have an effect on the proportion of hedges in the dialogue. When analysed in context, examples were found both male and female characters using hedging devices to minimise the threat of imposing on the listener, to

avoid committing to statements or making direct request, and to overall attenuate the force of illocutionary acts.

Although hedges can have a number of linguistic functions, they can contribute to the speaker demonstrating their intention to minimise imposition and express themselves in a less direct way. For these reasons is that the use of hedges is often associated with politeness, and also with women's language (Lakoff, 1975; Mulac et al., 2000; Coates, 2013). The findings with regards to this feature are aligned with these studies.

### *Please*

In this corpus, significant differences were found regarding the use of *please*, a higher proportion of this token was found in female characters' dialogue. Frequently, this marker is found in request as part of negative politeness strategies. From the examples, cases were found in which the presence of please meant the dialogue was open to interpretation as polite, particularly when the characters were using commands in their lines. However, elements such as modality combined with *please* contributed to the politeness strategy.

Research on the use of *please* highlights that although its presence does not make an utterance polite, its use is expected in many everyday interactions and its absence would likely be noticed by the listener. Considering that it is believed that women are more polite, and that romantic comedies often follow traditional expectations of gender roles, it is not surprising to see that there is a tendency for female characters to make use of this marker more often than their male counterparts.

### *Positive Emotion*

Tokens from the package within the positive emotion category were observed in higher proportions when characters interact with members of the opposite gender. Unlike most of the features analysed in this study, male characters showed a higher proportion when talking to female characters than female characters addressing men. These findings are not in line with previous research which proposes that women use these markers more often than men (Mehl and Pennebaker, 2003; Busso and Vignozzi, 2017). While differences between speakers approaches significance, the interaction between speaker and listener showed clear significant differences. The gender of the screenwriter did not contribute to higher or lower proportions of positive emotion tokens in dialogue.

Some cases where tokens of positive emotion were found in lines of dialogue were analysed in context. These markers were often found in compliments or attempts made by the speaker to enhance the listener's positive face generally helping them advance their relationship and build positive rapport. In light of this, it can be theorised that the presence of positively evaluated tokens signals attempts to tend to the listeners positive face by way of expressing a positive evaluation of certain aspects of the addressee. Nevertheless, it should be noted that it is very plausible that, in some instances, these tokens are used to refer to emotion rather than expressing it. Conclusions should thus be made with caution when analysing positive emotion words use in film discourse.

### *Swearing*

Swearing was one of the features where most significant differences were observed. The gender of the speaker, listener, and screenwriter all contributed to impacting the proportion of swearing. Male characters used significantly more swear words in interactions with men than when addressing women. A parallel can be drawn here with female characters, who were estimated to consistently swear more when talking to other female characters than with male characters. Interactions between male characters with other male characters displayed a much higher proportion than when addressing female characters. For female character speakers, on the other hand, the contrasts were not as significant as for male speakers. Finally, this is the only feature in which the gender of the screenwriter significantly impacted the presence of this feature. Regardless of the gender of the speaker or the listener, male screenwriters displayed higher proportions of swearing, female screenwriters displayed the lowest, and teams of male-female writers were between the two.

The findings in this research regarding swearing are in accordance with previous research on language and gender (Lakoff, 1975; Holmes, 1995; Murphy, 2009) where they conclude that men swear more than women. Contradicting findings were observed in other studies (Baruch and Jenkins, 2007; Thelwall, 2008; Baker, 2014; Gauthier and Guille, 2017), in which they found that it is not always the case that women do not use as many swearwords or as much taboo language as men. Romantic comedies are a mass medium in which traditional social norms and stereotypical gender roles are perpetuated. Moreover, swearing is so frequently associated with male speech, not a feature found in 'ladylike' language, and easily identified by audiences as rude or

impolite. With this in mind, it is not surprising to find that more conservative ideologies of language and gender are adopted in these films.

### *Linguistic Negation, Second-Person Pronouns, and First-Person Singular Pronouns.*

For linguistic negation, second-person, and first-person singular pronouns significance was observed between male and female characters, as well as in the interaction with the gender of the listener. The gender of the screenwriter did not contribute to a higher proportion of any of these three features in dialogue. These linguistic markers were included in the package based on the findings of prior research (Danescu-Niculescu Mizil et al., 2013; Voigt et al., 2017), which suggested that the presence of linguistic negation was associated to impolite interpretations of dialogue and the use of first-person singular and second-person pronouns had a tendency to be found in polite requests.

After analysing the context in which these three features were found in dialogue, it was discovered that it was the combination of these markers along with other elements of the text which contributed to polite or impolite interpretations. Examples were observed where linguistic negation without any mitigating elements were stronger candidates of impolite text. On the other hand, illocutionary acts such as requests or offers where linguistic negation was found alongside modality or conditional structures, for example, were open to interpretation as polite. Similarly, the interpretation of extracts where second-person and first-person singular pronouns were present, was highly dependent on other elements of formal linguistic politeness. The reading of these cases with relation to politeness hinged on the presence of other linguistic markers combined with these pronouns. While these findings are informative with regards to differences between language and gender, based on the analysis of the data in this research it would be imprudent to draw conclusions regarding their contribution to politeness and gender. In order to do so, a more in-depth analysis would have to be conducted to have a better understanding of any differences in their use by male and female characters.

### *Informal Title and Yes/No Questions*

Informal title and yes/no questions were two features in which significant differences were observed between male and female characters. It can be hypothesised that the use of informal title denotes familiarity between speakers, or that it can be used to

express in-group membership. Questions, on the other hand, can be seen as part of conversational strategies or as a sign of one of the participants having more control over the direction of an interaction. With this in mind, different theories could be put forward in relation to politeness and gender. However, in this research it was not possible to formulate a hypothesis even when significance was observed between the characters' genders.

Extracts from the corpus were closely examined to determine whether the presence of these markers indicated politeness or impoliteness in the dialogue. The design of informal title feature in the package was inspected to better understand which tokens were counted towards this marker. This led to the discovery that thirteen tokens were included in this category, but only one of them would normally be used to address women while the other twelve are almost exclusively used when addressing men. Not surprisingly, male-to-male interactions displayed, by far, the highest proportion of this feature in their dialogue. An analysis of this features might be informative if inspecting address terms in conversations among men. However, conclusions cannot be reliably drawn in terms of the contribution of informal address terms to the study of politeness and gender considering the markers that comprise this category in the NLP tool.

Yes/No questions posed a similar issue. Examination of extracts identified by the package as containing this kind of question, revealed that open-ended questions were also counted towards this category. A pattern was sought to establish which cases led to incorrect classification, but it was difficult to pinpoint the exact issue as the outputs were not always consistent for this feature. In order to be able to theorise on the contribution of questions to politeness and gender analysis a more thorough exploration of the use of questions is needed. The package is also able to detect open-ended questions, thus, an exploration of how male and female characters use questions for different purposes can potentially be conducted. Nevertheless, this should be done alongside a qualitative analysis to avoid relying solely on the NLP tool's classification of question types. Bearing in mind these caveats, in this research, it is not possible to reach reliable conclusions about yes/no questions and their relation to politeness and gender.

To summarise, significant differences were observed in the use of intensifiers, reassurance, positive emotion, hedges, and *please* with female characters displaying a higher frequency of use and therefore aligning with traditional views of women's language and politeness (see Section 2.3). Swearing was far more likely to be found in male characters' dialogue, reinforcing the notion that these markers are not characteristic of female speakers. For other markers derived from the *politeness()*

package (i.e.: linguistic negation, second person plural pronouns, first person singular pronouns, informal title, and questions), significant differences were observed between male and female characters. However, a clear connection between the presence of these markers and politeness was difficult to establish as evidenced by the examples analysed in Sections 4.2.7 to 4.2.11.

### 5.1.2 Analysing Politeness Using NLP Tools

The findings in this research indicate that there are a number of limitations to reliably detecting politeness using the politeness() package (Yeomans et al., 2018) and statistical analysis of markers of politeness. A key aspect of text classification has to do with extracting the most informative features in relation to the goals of the research (Subasi, 2020).

**Research question 1(c):** To what extent can politeness detection be reliably automated by using the *politeness()* text classification package and statistical analysis?

In the analysis of gender and politeness pre-designed features derived from the NLP tool used in this research in which significant differences between male and female characters were analysed in context. Analysing those features in context was a valuable exercise as it provided a better insight into how those markers worked in context and what their contribution to politeness was in the text. In future studies in politeness this can be a valuable tool which can help researchers focusing on specific areas of formal linguistic politeness to identify their presence and distribution in larger datasets. Given that politeness is a complex aspect of language, these cases should be qualitatively analysed to determine their role in politeness strategies. Although this research only focused on features of interest for this study, there is a wide variety of categories other researchers may want to explore more extensively.

With regards to politeness classification aided by the *politeness()* package mixed findings emerged. In order to obtain a classification of text in terms of politeness, a hypothesis of the most informative features available in the package was put forward. The results showed that the tool used in this research was quite effective at capturing politeness, particularly in the cases where the most informative elements was linguistic content. With regards to the classification of impolite text, the tool yielded inconsistent results. In many cases the reason extracts from the corpus were classified in relation to politeness was related to the way linguistic elements were used in context or paralinguistic factors. These are components of natural language which can be extremely difficult to capture through computational methods. With these caveats in

mind, this NLP tool can be used to identify candidate examples for further analysis. Moreover, it can be applied to larger data sets to generate a general idea of overall patterns of politeness which can lead to interesting findings when combining it with a closer reading of the results. In cases when the focus of the study is in relation to impoliteness, researchers should exercise caution when making claims if solely based on the output of this NLP tool.

# 5.2 Contribution to Research

## 5.2.1 Methodological Contribution

This thesis elaborates on the extent to which NLP tools can be used to analyse politeness in film discourse and how statistical differences in politeness markers use can be identified between male and female characters in romantic comedies. This approach allowed for larger datasets to be processed and identified areas in which male and female characters differ, taking into consideration interacting factors such as gender of the character being addressed and the gender of the screenwriter.

This research used NLP techniques to contribute to research promoting computational methods in the study of gender and politeness as well as the caveats to take into consideration when using such methods. This was achieved by exploring which formal linguistic politeness indicators showed significant differences, and identifying which ones contributed to text being interpreted as part of a politeness strategy within a theoretical framework. Key methodological decisions that need to be taken into consideration when adopting a computational approach to politeness analysis in larger datasets are outlined, and the most informative politeness markers are discussed.

Furthermore, this research also developed a wide range of data pre-processing techniques which can be easily implemented in other studies to process similar types of text for further analysis in film discourse. The corpus created and annotated for this research can also contribute to other studies wishing to explore film discourse as its design means it can be easily manipulated. This allows a similar overarching methods approach to be utilised to investigate hypothesis and explore emerging patters from the data which were not the focus of this research.

### 5.2.2 Theoretical Contribution

As previously stated, much of the current research in film, and particularly in romantic comedies has dealt with elements outside of discourse. Romantic comedies continue to be a genre popular with audiences, and their dialogue attempts to imitate contemporary discourse. This research investigates whether male and female characters use markers of politeness differently while also accounting for the fact that the genre has a tendency to represent men and women in a stereotypical way.

Differences were observed between male and female characters which align with more traditional views of language and gender. This research highlights the aspects where more significant contrast were identified and how that affects the interpretation of text within a politeness framework. The representation of men and women in film and the way they express themselves can have an important role in the construction of gender. It also influences societal expectations of what constructs feminine or masculine behaviour (Cameron, 2006). Uncovering the differences between male and female characters with relation to politeness therefore contributes to the body of research on gender portrayal in films.

## 5.3 Limitations of the Research

A limitation of this research is in relation to generalisability of the results. When compiling the corpus of romantic comedy scripts, 56 scripts were freely available to the researcher. Considering the amount of romantic comedies released from 1977 to 2019 compared to the number of films used in this research, the results found cannot be generalised to reliably establish that there are significant differences in the use of politeness between male and female in all romantic comedies. The lack of access to more scripts as well as the time required to pre-process each script contributed to the scope of this study being limited to a smaller sample.

The use of pre-designed NLP tools applied to texts can lead to some errors in labelling instances of natural language. While some issues (e.g.: incorrect labelling in certain markers of politeness) were identified when analysing a smaller sample of the corpus, it is possible that other categories not closely examined also contain labelling inaccuracies which were not identified by the researcher.

Finally, when analysing extracts from the dataset in relation to politeness in a qualitative manner researcher bias may influence the findings. Decisions made

regarding analysis of text in relation to politeness relied on interpretation of the dialogue in a given context. Taking into consideration the aspect of language being studied, complete objectivity is extremely difficult to achieve and therefore that classification is open to different interpretation by other researchers. Much effort was devoted to ensuring that the rationale and elements of the text which contributed to the interpretation of the data were as transparent and clear as possible.

## 5.4 Future Research

There are a number of possibilities for future research presented by this study. Part of these emerge from findings in this research while others stem from its limitations.

With regards to studies of gender representation and film, this study's approach to analysis of politeness in film discourse presents different possibilities for future research. It grants the possibility of exploring politeness differences between male and female leading roles and secondary roles, considering their centrality in the film and therefore differences in their use of politeness. The findings presented in this research are specific to romantic comedies. It would be interesting to recreate a similar analysis to television, other genres, or perhaps films which claim to have strong female leads to examine whether the language used by the characters mirrors their intended portrayal.

At present, there appears to be issues with capturing certain elements of sociological or natural language phenomena in computational social sciences or computational linguistics. Some of the gaps between linguistic theories and their application in computational approaches were highlighted in this research. This highlights the promise of greater interdisciplinary collaboration between the two fields to create more sophisticated techniques which are better able to capture more nuanced aspects of natural language. It is true that other studies have used more advanced tools such as deep learning or neural networks to analyse politeness (Aubakirova and Bansal, 2016; Aljanaideh et al., 2020; Madaan et al., 2020). However, their research relies on an understanding of politeness which does not take into consideration more complex aspects of politeness theory. Collaboration between different fields can accelerate the advancement of more reliable techniques to be used in corpus-based studies to analyse politeness and gender.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A - Filmography

| Film | Year | Screenwriter | Director |
|---|---|---|---|
| Annie Hall | 1977 | Woody Allen, Marshall Brickman | Woody Allen |
| Manhattan | 1979 | Woody Allen, Marshall Brickman | Woody Allen |
| Broadcast News | 1987 | James L. Brooks | James L. Brooks |
| Moonstruck | 1987 | John Patrick Shanley | Norman Jewison |
| Bull Durham | 1988 | Ron Shelton | Ron Shelton |
| Working Girl | 1988 | Kevin Wade | Mike Nichols |
| Say Anything | 1989 | Cameron Crowe | Cameron Crowe |
| When Harry Met Sally | 1989 | Nora Ephron | Rob Reiner |
| Pretty Woman | 1990 | J.F. Lawton | Gary Marshall |
| Sleepless in Seattle | 1993 | Nora Ephron | Nora Ephron |
| Only You | 1994 | Diane Drake | Norman Jewison |
| Clueless | 1995 | Amy Heckerling | Amy Heckerling |
| Jerry Maguire | 1996 | Cameron Crowe | Cameron Crowe |
| One Fine Day | 1996 | Terrel Seltzer, Ellen Simon | Michael Hoffman |
| Tincup | 1996 | John Norville, Ron Shelton | Ron Shelton |
| As Good As it Gets | 1997 | Mark Andrus, James L. Brooks | James L. Brooks |
| Charing Amy | 1997 | Kevin Smith | Kevin Smith |
| My Best Friend's Wedding | 1997 | Ronald Bass | PJ Hogan |
| The Wedding Singer | 1998 | Tim Herlihy | Frank Coraci |
| There's Something About Mary | 1998 | John J. Strauss, Ed Decter, Peter Farrelly, Bobby Farrelly | Peter & Bobby Farrelly |
| You've Got Mail | 1998 | Nora Ephron, Delia Ephron | Nora Ephron |

| Film | Year | Screenwriter | Director |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10 Things I Hate About You | 1999 | Karen McCullah, Kirsten Smith | Gil Junger |
| Never Been Kissed | 1999 | Abby Kohn, Marc Silverstein | Raja Gosnell |
| Notting Hill | 1999 | Richard Curtis | Roger Michell |
| Runaway Bride | 1999 | Josann McGibbon, Sara Parriott | Gary Marshall |
| Return To Me | 2000 | Bonnie Hunt, Don Lake | Bonnie Hunt |
| What Women Want | 2000 | Josh Goldsmith, Cathy Yuspa | Nancy Meyers |
| Bridget Jones's Diary | 2001 | Helen Fielding, Andrew Davies, Richard Curtis | Sharon Maguire |
| Kate and Leopold | 2001 | James Mangold, Steven Rogers | James Mangold |
| Intolerable Cruelty | 2003 | Robert Ramsey, Matthew Stone, Ethan Coen, Joel Coen | Joel & Ethan Cohen |
| Love Actually | 2003 | Richard Curtis | Richard Curtis |
| Something's Gotta Give | 2003 | Nancy Meyers | Nancy Meyers |
| The Holiday | 2006 | Nancy Meyers | Nancy Meyers |
| Knocked Up | 2007 | Judd Apatow | Judd Apatow |
| 500 Days of Summer | 2008 | Scott Neustadter, Michael H. Weber | Marc Webb |
| Forgetting Sarah Marshall | 2008 | Jason Segel | Nicholas Stoller |
| How to Lose Friends… | 2008 | Peter Straughan | Robert B. Weide |
| He's Just Not That Into you | 2009 | Abby Kohn, Marc Silverstein | Ken Kwapis |
| It's Complicated | 2009 | Nancy Meyers | Nancy Meyers |
| The Proposal | 2009 | Peter Chiarelli | Anne Fletcher |
| The Ugly Truth | 2009 | Nicole Eastman, Karen McCullah, Kirsten Smith | Robert Luketic |
| Letters to Juliet | 2010 | Jose Rivera, Tim Sullivan | Gary Winick |
| She's Out of My League | 2010 | Sean Anders, John Morris | Jim Field Smith |
| The Back-up Plan | 2010 | Kate Angelo | Alan Poul |
| The Bounty Hunter | 2010 | Sarah Thorp | Andy Tennant |
| Valentine's Day | 2010 | Katherine Fugate | Gary Marshall |
| Crazy Stupid Love | 2011 | Dan Fogelman | Glenn Ficarra, John Requa |
| Larry Crowne | 2011 | Tom Hanks, Nia Vardalos | Tom Hanks |
| Celeste and Jesse Forever | 2012 | Rashida Jones, Will McCormack | Lee Toland Krieger |

| Film | Year | Screenwriter | Director |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ruby Sparks | 2012 | Zoe Kazan | Jonathan Dayton, Valerie Faris |
| Silver Linings Playbook | 2012 | David O. Russell | David O. Russell |
| Man Up | 2015 | Tess Morris | Ben Palmer |
| Mr. Right | 2015 | Max Landis | Paco Cabezas |
| Bridget Jones's Baby | 2016 | Helen Fielding, Dan Mazer, Emma Thompson | Sharon Maguire |
| The Big Sick | 2017 | Emily V. Gordon, Kumail Nanjiani | Michael Showalter |
| Crazy Rich Asians | 2018 | Peter Chiarelli, Adele Lim | Jon M. Chu |

# Appendix B – Romantic Comedies Sampling List

| Film | Year | Source | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Annie Hall** | 1977 | http://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/annie_hall.html | |
| **Manhattan** | 1979 | http://yanko.lib.ru/books/cinema/ScreenplayManhattanbyWoodyAllen_sl.htm | |
| Arthur | 1981 | N/A | |
| Tootsie | 1982 | N/A | |
| Romancing The Stone | 1984 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=romancing-the-stone | No character names |
| Splash | 1984 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=splash | No character names |
| Better Off Dead | 1985 | https://www.scripts.com/script-pdf/3960 | No character names |
| Mischief | 1985 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=mischief | No character names |
| The Purple Rose of Cairo | 1985 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=purple-rose-of-cairo-the | No character names |
| The Jewel of the Nile | 1985 | https://www.scripts.com/script-pdf/11272 | No character names |
| Under The Cherry Tree | 1986 | https://www.scripts.com/script-pdf/22526 | No character names |
| One Crazy Summer | 1986 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/o/one-crazy-summer-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Pretty in Pink | 1986 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=pretty-in-pink | No character names |
| Baby Boom | 1987 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=baby-boom | No character names |
| **Broadcast News** | 1987 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Broadcast-News.html | |
| Can't Buy Me Love | 1987 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=cant-buy-me-love | No character names |
| Mannequin | 1987 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/m/mannequin-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| **Moonstruck** | 1987 | https://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/Moonstruck.txt | |
| Overboard | 1987 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=overboard | No character names |
| Crossing Delancey | 1988 | N/A | |
| Earth Girls Are Easy | 1988 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=earth-girls-are-easy | No character names |
| **Working Girl** | 1988 | https://www.awesomefilm.com/script/workinggirl.txt | |
| **Say Anything** | 1989 | http://www.moviescriptsandscreenplays.com/johncusack/scripts/sayanything.txt | |

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|---|---|---|---|
| **When Harry Met Sally** | 1989 | https://sfy.ru/transcript/when_harry_met_sally_1989_ts | |
| Green Card | 1990 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/g/green-card-script-transcript-andie.html | No character names |
| **Pretty Woman** | 1990 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Pretty-Woman-(final-script).html | |
| Doc Hollywood | 1991 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=doc-hollywood | No character names |
| Boomerang | 1992 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=boomerang | No character names |
| The Cutting Edge | 1992 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=the-cutting-edge | No character names |
| Strictly Ballroom | 1992 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=strictly-ballroom | No character names |
| Born Yesterday | 1993 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=born-yesterday-1993 | No character names |
| **Sleepless in Seattle** | 1993 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Sleepless-in-Seattle.html | |
| Four Weddings and a Funeral | 1994 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/f/four-weddings-and-a-funeral-script.html | No character names |
| **Only You** | 1994 | https://sfy.ru/?script=only_you | |
| **Clueless** | 1995 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Clueless.html | |
| French Kiss | 1995 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/f/french-kiss-script-transcript-meg.html | No character names |
| Mighty Aphrodite | 1995 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=mighty-aphrodite | No character names |
| Nine Months | 1995 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/n/nine-months-script-transcript-9.html | No character names |
| Sabrina | 1995 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=sabrina-1995 | No character names |
| While You Were Sleeping | 1995 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/w/while-you-were-sleeping-script.html | No character names |
| **One Fine Day** | 1996 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/o/one-fine-day-script-transcript.html | |
| The Pallbearer | 1996 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=the-pallbearer | No character names |
| **Tin Cup** | 1996 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Tin-Cup.html | |
| The Truth About Cats & Dogs | 1996 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=truth-about-cats-dogs-the | No character names |
| **As Good as It Gets** | 1997 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/As-Good-As-It-Gets.html | |
| **Chasing Amy** | 1997 | http://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/chasing_amy.html | |
| Fools Rush In | 1997 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/f/fools-rush-in-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| **My Best Friend's Wedding** | 1997 | http://nldslab.soe.ucsc.edu/charactercreator/film_corpus/film_20100519/all_imsdb_05_19_10/My-Best-Friend's-Wedding.html | |
| Out to Sea | 1997 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/o/out-to-sea-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Picture Perfect | 1997 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=picture-perfect | No character names |

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|---|---|---|---|
| How Stella Got Her Groove Back | 1998 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=how-stella-got-her-groove-back | No character names |
| **There's Something About Mary** | 1998 | http://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/aboutmary.html | |
| **The Wedding Singer** | 1998 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=wedding-singer-the | No character names |
| **You've Got Mail** | 1998 | http://nldslab.soe.ucsc.edu/charactercreator/film_corpus/film_2012xxxx/imsdb.com/You've-Got-Mail.html | |
| **10 Things I Hate About You** | 1999 | https://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/10Things.html | |
| The Bachelor | 1999 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=the-bachelor | No character names |
| Forces of Nature | 1999 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/f/forces-of-nature-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| **Never Been Kissed** | 1999 | http://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/neverbeenkissed.html | |
| **Notting Hill** | 1999 | https://sfy.ru/?script=notting_hill | |
| **Runaway Bride** | 1999 | http://nldslab.soe.ucsc.edu/charactercreator/film_corpus/film_2012xxxx/imsdb.com/Runaway-Bride.html | |
| She's All That | 1999 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/s/shes-all-that-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Three to Tango | 1999 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/t/three-to-tango-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Coyote Ugly | 2000 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=coyote-ugly | No character names |
| Keeping the Faith | 2000 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=keeping-the-faith | No character names |
| **Return to Me** | 2000 | https://sfy.ru/?script=return_to_me | |
| **What Women Want** | 2000 | https://www.awesomefilm.com/script/whatwomenwant.html | |
| America's Sweethearts | 2001 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/a/americas-sweethearts-script-transcript-julia.html | No character names |
| **Bridget Jones's Diary** | 2001 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/b/bridget-jones-diary-script-transcript.html | |
| Head over Heels | 2001 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=head-over-heels | No character names |
| **Kate & Leopold** | 2001 | https://sfy.ru/?script=kate_and_leopold_2001 | |
| Serendipity | 2001 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/s/serendipity-script-transcript-kate-beckinsale.htm | No character names |
| Shallow Hal | 2001 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/s/shallow-hal-script-transcript-paltrow.html | No character names |
| Someone Like You | 2001 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=someone-like-you | No character names |
| Two Can Play That Game | 2001 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/t/two-can-play-that-game-script.html | No character names |
| The Wedding Planner | 2001 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/w/wedding-planner-script-transcript-lopez.html | No character names |
| Maid in Manhattan | 2002 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/m/maid-in-manhattan-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| My Big Fat Greek Wedding | 2002 | https://thescriptsavant.com/pdf/MyBigFatGreekWedding2.pdf | No character names |

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|---|---|---|---|
| Sweet Home Alabama | 2002 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/s/sweet-home-alabama-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| The Sweetest Thing | 2002 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=sweetest-thing-the | No character names |
| Two Weeks Notice | 2002 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/t/two-weeks-notice-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Deliver Us from Eva | 2003 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/d/deliver-us-from-eva-script.html | No character names |
| Down with Love | 2003 | http://www.veryabc.cn/movie/uploads/script/DownwithLove.txt | No character names |
| How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days | 2003 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/h/how-to-lose-a-guy-in-10-days-script.html | No character names |
| Just Married | 2003 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=just-married | No character names |
| **Love Actually** | 2003 | http://www.bridge-online.cz/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/love_actually_script.doc | |
| **Something's Gotta Give** | 2003 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Something's-Gotta-Give.html | |
| **Intolerable Cruelty** | 2003 | http://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/Intolerable%20Cruelty.txt | |
| Under the Tuscan Sun | 2003 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/u/under-the-tuscan-sun-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| 50 First Dates | 2004 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/f/50-first-dates-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Along Came Polly | 2004 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/a/along-came-polly-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Laws of Attraction | 2004 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=laws-of-attraction | No character names |
| The Prince and Me | 2004 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/p/prince-and-me-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Surviving Christmas | 2004 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/s/surviving-christmas-script-transcript-affleck.html | No character names |
| Wimbledon | 2004 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/w/wimbledon-script-transcript-kirsten-dunst.html | No character names |
| Win a Date with Tad Hamilton! | 2004 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/w/win-a-date-tad-hamilton-script.html | No character names |
| Fever Pitch | 2005 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=fever-pitch-1997 | No character names |
| Hitch | 2005 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/h/hitch-script-transcript-will-smith.html | No character names |
| Just Friends | 2005 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/j/just-friends-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Just like Heaven | 2005 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/j/just-like-heaven-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| A Lot like Love | 2005 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/l/lot-like-love-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Must Love Dogs | 2005 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=must-love-dogs | No character names |
| Rumor Has It | 2005 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=rumor-has-it | No character names |
| The Wedding Date | 2005 | http://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/The_Wedding_Date.pdf | No charactter names |
| Failure to Launch | 2006 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=failure-to-launch | No character names |
| **The Holiday** | 2006 | https://www.scriptslug.com/script/the-holiday-2006 | |

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|---|---|---|---|
| Just My Luck | 2006 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/j/just-my-luck-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Love and Other Disasters | 2006 | http://www.veryabc.cn/movie/uploads/script/loveandotherdisasters.txt | No character names |
| Because I Said So | 2006 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/b/because-i-said-so-script.html | No character names |
| Good Luck Chuck | 2007 | https://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/Good-Luck-Chuck.pdf | File broken |
| The Heartbreak Kid | 2007 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/a1/the-heartbreak-kid-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| I Think I Love My Wife | 2007 | N/A | |
| **Knocked Up** | 2007 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Knocked-Up.html | |
| Music and Lyrics | 2007 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/m/music-and-lyrics-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Sydney White | 2007 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=sydney-white | No character names |
| 27 Dresses | 2007 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=27-dresses | No character names |
| The Accidental Husband | 2008 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=the-accidental-husband | No character names |
| Definitely, Maybe | 2008 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/d/definitely-maybe-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Fool's Gold | 2008 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=fools-gold | No character names |
| **Forgetting Sarah Marshall** | 2008 | https://indiegroundfilms.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/forgetting-sarah-marshall-dec18-06.pdf | |
| **How to Lose Friends & Alienate People** | 2008 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/How-to-Lose-Friends-&-Alienate-People.html | |
| Made of Honor | 2008 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/a1/made-of-honor-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Management | 2008 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/a3/management-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| My Best Friend's Girl | 2008 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=my-best-friends-girl | No character names |
| Nick & Norah's Infinite Playlist | 2008 | N/A | |
| The Other End of the Line | 2008 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=other-end-of-the-line-the | No character names |
| Over Her Dead Body | 2008 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=over-her-dead-body | No character names |
| Picture This | 2008 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=picture-this | No character names |
| What Happens in Vegas | 2008 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=what-happens-in-vegas | No character names |
| Zack and Miri Make a Porno | 2008 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/z/zack-and-miri-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| **500 Days of Summer** | 2008 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/500-Days-of-Summer.html | |
| Bride Wars | 2009 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=bride-wars | No character names |
| Confessions of a Shopaholic | 2009 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/a1/confessions-of-a-shopaholic-script.html | No character names |

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|---|---|---|---|
| Couples Retreat | 2009 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/c/couples-retreat-script-transcript.html | No character names |
| Did You Hear About the Morgans? | 2009 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=did-you-hear-about-the-morgans | No character names |
| Ghosts of Girlfriends Past | 2009 | https://www.scribd.com/doc/42935058/Ghosts-of-Girlfriends-Past-Script | Requires paid subscription |
| **He's Just Not That into You** | 2009 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/He's-Just-Not-That-Into-You.html | |
| I Hate Valentine's Day | 2009 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/a3/i-hate-valentines-day-script.html | No character names |
| I Love You Beth Cooper | 2009 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/a2/i-love-you-beth-cooper-script.html | No character names |
| **It's Complicated** | 2009 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/It's-Complicated.html | |
| My Life in Ruins | 2009 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/a2/my-life-in-ruins-script.html | No character names |
| **The Proposal** | 2009 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Proposal,-The.html | |
| The Rebound | 2009 | http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/r/rebound-script-transcript-martin-lawrence.html | No character names |
| **The Ugly Truth** | 2009 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Ugly-Truth,-The.html | |
| **The Back-up Plan** | 2010 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Back-up-Plan,-The.html | |
| **The Bounty Hunter** | 2010 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Bounty-Hunter,-The.html | |
| Going the Distance | 2010 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=going-the-distance | No character names |
| How Do You Know | 2010 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=how-do-you-know | No character names |
| Just Wright | 2010 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=just-wright | No character names |
| Killers | 2010 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=killers | No character names |
| Leap Year | 2010 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=leap-year | No character names |
| **Letters to Juliet** | 2010 | https://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/LetterstoJuliet.pdf | |
| Life as We Know It | 2010 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=life-as-we-know-it | No character names |
| **She's Out of My League** | 2010 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/She's-Out-of-My-League.html | |
| The Switch | 2010 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=switch-the | No character names |
| **Valentine's Day** | 2010 | http://nldslab.soe.ucsc.edu/charactercreator/film_corpus/film_20100519/all_imsdb_05_19_10/Valentine's-Day.html | |
| When in Rome | 2010 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=when-in-rome | No character names |
| **Crazy, Stupid, Love** | 2011 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Crazy,-Stupid,-Love.html | |
| From Prada to Nada | 2011 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=from-prada-to-nada | No character names |

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|---|---|---|---|
| **Larry Crowne** | 2011 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Larry-Crowne.html | |
| Midnight In Paris | 2011 | https://indiegroundfilms.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/midnight-in-paris-numbered.pdf | Scanned PDF - Cannot convert |
| New Year's Eve | 2011 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=new-years-eve | No character names |
| Something Borrowed | 2011 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=something-borrowed | No character names |
| Take Me Home Tonight | 2011 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=take-me-home-tonight | No character names |
| What's Your Number? | 2011 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=whats-your-number | No character names |
| Exit Strategy | 2012 | N/A | |
| The Five-Year Engagement | 2012 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=five-year-engagement-the | No character names |
| **Celeste and Jesse Forever** | 2012 | https://www.sonyclassics.com/awards-information/celesteandjesseforever_screenplay.pdf | |
| Playing for Keeps | 2012 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=playing-for-keeps | No character names |
| **Ruby Sparks** | 2012 | https://thescriptsavant.com/pdf/Ruby-Sparks-2012.pdf | |
| **Silver Linings Playbook** | 2012 | https://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Silver-Linings-Playbook.html | |
| Thanks for Sharing | 2012 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=thanks-for-sharing | No character names |
| Think Like a Man | 2012 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=think-like-a-man | No character names |
| This Means War | 2012 | https://www.scripts.com/script/this_means_war_21806 | No character names |
| About Time | 2013 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=about-time | No character names |
| Admission | 2013 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=admission | No character names |
| Love Story | 2013 | N/A | |
| Lust for Love | 2014 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=lust-for-love | No character names |
| Magic in the Moonlight | 2014 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=magic-in-the-moonlight | No character names |
| Playing It Cool | 2014 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=playing-it-cool | No character names |
| That Awkward Moment | 2014 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=that-awkward-moment | No character names |
| Man Up | 2015 | http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/writersroom/scripts/MAN-UP-by-Tess-Morris.pdf | |
| **Mr. Right** | 2015 | https://www.scriptslug.com/assets/uploads/scripts/mr-right-2015.pdf | |
| Sleeping with Other People | 2015 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=sleeping-with-other-people | No character names |
| The Late Bloomer | 2016 | http://rickgarman.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Late-Bloomer-Production-Draft-11-04-15.pdf | Scanned PDF - Cannot convert |
| **Bridget Jones's Baby** | 2016 | http://bridgetarchive.altervista.org/bjb_script.htm | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **The Big Sick** | 2017 | https://www.amazonstudiosguilds.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/BIG-SICK_final-script_for-academy.pdf | |
| Girls Trip | 2017 | https://www.scriptslug.com/assets/uploads/scripts/girls-trip-2017.pdf | No character names |
| **Crazy Rich Asians** | 2018 | https://d2bu9v0mnky9ur.cloudfront.net/academy2018/cra/screenplay/cra_wbfomat.pdf | |
| Juliet, Naked | 2018 | N/A | |
| Nobody's Fool | 2018 | N/A | |
| Set It Up | 2018 | N/A | |
| Love, Simon | 2018 | https://www.scriptslug.com/assets/uploads/scripts/love-simon-2015.pdf | Scanned PDF - Cannot convert |
| Long Shot | 2019 | https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=long-shot | No character names |

# Appendix C – List of Features

## Hedges

almost
apparent
apparently
appear
appeared
appears
approximately
around
assume
assumed
claim
claimed
doubt
doubtful
essentially
estimate
estimated
frequently
generally
guess
indicate
indicated
largely
likely
mainly
may
maybe
might
mostly
often
ought
perhaps
plausible
plausibly
possible
possibly
postulate
postulated
presumable
probable
probably
relatively
roughly
seems
should
sometimes
somewhat
suggest
suggested
suppose
typical
typically
uncertain
uncertainly
unclear
unclearly
unlikely
usually
broadly
presumably
suggests
fairly
quite
rather
argue
argues
argued
claims
indicates
supposed
supposes
postulates
by the way
for me
for you
adverb ‘just’
sigh
hm*
uh
uh*
um
um*
let me know
conjunction start
believe, I
think, I
suspect, I
thought, I
felt, I
presume, I
reckon, I
feel, I
perspective, my
belief, my
view, my
knowledge, my
opinion, my
think, we
believe, we
suspect, we
thought, we
felt, we
presume, we
reckon, we
feel, we
perspective, our
belief, our
view, our
knowledge, our
opinion, our

## Impersonal Pronouns

anybod*
anyone*
anything
everybod*
everyone*
everything*
it
it'd
it'll
it's
itd
itll
its
itself
nobod*
other
others
somebod*
someone*
something*
somewhere
stuff
that
that'd
that'll
that's
thatd
thatll

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| thats | what | whichever | wholl |
| these | what's | who | whom |
| thing* | whatever | who'd | whose |
| this | whats | who'll | |
| those | which | whod | |

# Negation

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ain't | doesnt | mustn't | nor | uhuh |
| aint | don't | mustnt | not | wasn't |
| aren't | dont | need'nt | nothing | wasnt |
| arent | hadn't | needn't | nowhere | weren't |
| can't | hadnt | neednt | ought'nt | without |
| cannot | hasn't | negat* | oughtn't | won't |
| cant | hasnt | neither | oughtnt | wont |
| couldn't | haven't | never | shan't | wouldn't |
| couldnt | havent | no | shant | wouldnt |
| didn't | isn't | nobod* | should'nt | |
| didnt | isnt | none | shouldn't | |
| doesn't | must'nt | nope | shouldnt | |

# Negative Emotion

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2-faced | absence | accursed | acridly | adulterate | aggression | ailment | altercation |
| 2-faces | absent-minded | accusation | acridness | adulterated | aggressive | aimless | ambiguity |
| abnormal | absentee | accusations | acrimonious | adulteration | aggressiveness | alarm | ambiguous |
| abolish | absurd | accuse | acrimoniously | adulterier | aggressor | alarmed | ambivalence |
| abominable | absurdity | accuses | acrimony | adversarial | aggrieve | alarming | ambivalent |
| abominably | absurdly | accusing | adamant | adversary | aggrieved | alarmingly | ambush |
| abominate | absurdness | accusingly | adamantly | adverse | aggrivation | alienate | amiss |
| abomination | abuse | acerbate | addict | adversity | aghast | alienated | amputate |
| abort | abused | acerbic | addicted | afflict | agonies | alienation | anarchism |
| aborted | abuses | acerbically | addicting | affliction | agonize | allegation | anarchist |
| aborts | abusive | ache | addicts | afflictive | agonizing | allegations | anarchistic |
| abrade | abysmal | ached | admonish | affront | agonizingly | allege | anarchy |
| abrasive | abysmally | aches | admonisher | afraid | agony | allergic | anemic |
| abrupt | abyss | achey | admonishingly | aggravate | aground | allergies | anger |
| abruptly | accidental | aching | admonishment | aggravating | ail | allergy | angrily |
| abscond | accost | acrid | admonition | aggravation | ailing | aloof | angriness |

angry
anguish
animosity
annihilate
annihilation
annoy
annoyance
annoyances
annoyed
annoying
annoyingly
annoys
anomalous
anomaly
antagonism
antagonist
antagonistic
antagonize
anti-
anti-american
anti-israeli
anti-occupation
anti-proliferation
anti-semites
anti-social
anti-us
anti-white
antipathy
antiquated
antithetical
anxieties
anxiety
anxious
anxiously
anxiousness
apathetic
apathetically
apathy
apocalypse
apocalyptic
apologist
apologists
appal
appall
appalled
appalling
appallingly
apprehension
apprehensions
apprehensive
apprehensively
arbitrary
arcane
archaic
arduous
arduously
argumentative
arrogance
arrogant
arrogantly
ashamed
asinine
asininely
asinininity
askance
asperse
aspersion
aspersions
assail
assassin
assassinate
assault
assult
astray
asunder
atrocious
atrocities
atrocity
atrophy
attack
attacks
audacious
audaciously
audaciousness
audacity
audiciously
austere
authoritarian
autocrat
autocratic
avalanche
avarice
avaricious
avariciously
avenge
averse
aversion
aweful
awful
awfully
awfulness
awkward
awkwardness
ax
babble
back-logged
back-wood
back-woods
backache
backaches
backaching
backbite
backbiting
backward
backwardness
backwood
backwoods
bad
badly
baffle
baffled
bafflement
baffling
bait
balk
banal
banalize
bane
banish
banishment
bankrupt
barbarian
barbaric
barbarically
barbarity
barbarous
barbarously
barren
baseless
bash
bashed
bashful
bashing
bastard
bastards
battered
battering
batty
bearish
beastly
bedlam
bedlamite
befoul
beg
beggar
beggarly
begging
beguile
belabor
belated
beleaguer
belie
belittle
belittled
belittling
bellicose
belligerence
belligerent
belligerently
bemoan
bemoaning
bemused
bent
berate
bereave
bereavement
bereft
berserk
beseech
beset
besiege
besmirch
bestial
betray
betrayal
betrayals
betrayer
betraying
betrays
bewail
beware
bewilder
bewildered
bewildering
bewilderingly
bewilderment
bewitch
bias
biased
biases
bicker
bickering
bid-rigging
bigotries
bigotry
bitch
bitchy
biting
bitingly
bitter
bitterly
bitterness
bizarre
blab
blabber
blackmail
blah
blame
blameworthy
bland
blandish
blaspheme
blasphemous
blasphemy
blasted
blatant
blatantly
blather
bleak
bleakly
bleakness
bleed
bleeding
bleeds
blemish
blind
blinding
blindingly
blindside
blister
blistering
bloated
blockage
blockhead
bloodshed
bloodthirsty
bloody
blotchy
blow
blunder
blundering
blunders
blunt
blur
bluring
blurred
blurring
blurry
blurs
blurt
boastful
boggle
bogus
boil
boiling
boisterous
bomb
bombard
bombardment
bombastic
bondage
bonkers
bore
bored
boredom
bores
boring
botch
bother
bothered
bothering
bothers
bothersome
bowdlerize
boycott
braggart
bragger
brainless
brainwash
brash
brashly
brashness
brat
bravado
brazen
brazenly
brazenness
breach
break
break-up
break-ups
breakdown
breaking
breaks
breakup
breakups
bribery
brimstone
bristle
brittle
broke
broken
broken-hearted
brood
browbeat
bruise
bruised
bruises
bruising
brusque
brutal
brutalising
brutalities
brutality
brutalize
brutalizing
brutally
brute
brutish
bs
buckle
bug
bugging
buggy
bugs
bulkier
bulkiness
bulky
bulkyness
bull****
bull----
bullies
bullshit
bullshyt
bully
bullying
bullyingly
bum
bump
bumped
bumping
bumpping
bumps
bumpy
bungle
bungler
bungling
bunk
burden
burdensome
burdensomely
burn
burned
burning
burns
bust
busts
busybody
butcher
butchery
buzzing
byzantine
cackle
calamities
calamitous
calamitously

calamity
callous
calumniate
calumniation
calumnies
calumnious
calumniously
calumny
cancer
cancerous
cannibal
cannibalize
capitulate
capricious
capriciously
capriciousness
capsize
careless
carelessness
caricature
carnage
carp
cartoonish
cash-strapped
castigate
castrated
casualty
cataclysm
cataclysmal
cataclysmic
cataclysmically
catastrophe
catastrophes
catastrophic
catastrophically
catastrophies
caustic
caustically
cautionary
cave
censure
chafe
chaff
chagrin
challenging
chaos
chaotic
chasten
chastise
chastisement
chatter
chatterbox
cheap
cheapen
cheaply
cheat
cheated
cheater
cheating
cheats
checkered
cheerless
cheesy
chide
childish
chill
chilly
chintzy
choke
choleric
choppy
chore
chronic
chunky
clamor
clamorous
clash
cliche
cliched
clique
clog
clogged
clogs
cloud
clouding
cloudy
clueless
clumsy
clunky
coarse
cocky
coerce
coercion
coercive
cold
coldly
collapse
collude
collusion
combative
combust
comical
commiserate
commonplace
commotion
commotions
complacent
complain
complained
complaining
complains
complaint
complaints
complex
complicated
complication
complicit
compulsion
compulsive
concede
conceded
conceit
conceited
concern
concerns
concern
concerned
concerns
concession
concessions
condemn
condemnable
condemnation
condemned
condemns
condescend
condescending
condescendingly
condescension
confess
confession
confessions
confined
conflict
conflicted
conflicting
conflicts
confound
confounded
confounding
confront
confrontation
confrontational
confuse
confused
confuses
confusing
confusion
confusions
congested
congestion
cons
conscons
conservative
conspicuous
conspicuously
conspiracies
conspiracy
conspirator
conspiratorial
conspire
consternation
contagious
contaminate
contaminated
contaminates
contaminating
contamination
contempt
contemptible
contemptuous
contemptuously
contend
contention
contentious
contort
contortions
contradict
contradiction
contradictory
contrariness
contravene
contrive
contrived
controversial
controversy
convoluted
corrode
corrosion
corrosions
corrosive
corrupt
corrupted
corrupting
corruption
corrupts
corruptted
costlier
costly
counter-productive
counterproductive
coupists
covetous
coward
cowardly
crabby
crack
cracked
cracks
craftily
craftly
crafty
cramp
cramped
cramping
cranky
crap
crappy
craps
crash
crashed
crashes
crashing
crass
craven
cravenly
craze
crazily
craziness
crazy
creak
creaking
creaks
credulous
creep
creeping
creeps
creepy
crept
crime
criminal
cringe
cringed
cringes
cripple
crippled
cripples
crippling
crisis
critic
critical
criticism
criticisms
criticize
criticized
criticizing
critics
cronyism
crook
crooked
crooks
crowded
crowdedness
crude
cruel
crueler
cruelest
cruelly
cruelness
cruelties
cruelty
crumble
crumbling
crummy
crumple
crumpled
crumples
crush
crushed
crushing
cry
culpable
culprit
cumbersome
cunt
cunts
cuplrit
curse
cursed
curses
curt
cuss
cussed
cutthroat
cynical
cynicism
d*mn
damage
damaged
damages
damaging
damn
damnable
damnably
damnation
damned
damning
damper
danger
dangerous
dangerousness
dark
darken
darkened
darker
darkness
dastard
dastardly
daunt
daunting
dauntingly
dawdle
daze
dazed
dead
deadbeat
deadlock
deadly
deadweight
deaf
dearth
death
debacle
debase
debasement
debaser
debatable
debauch
debaucher
debauchery
debilitate
debilitating
debility
debt
debts
decadence
decadent
decay
decayed
deceit
deceitful
deceitfully
deceitfulness
deceive
deceiver
deceivers
deceiving
deception
deceptive
deceptively
declaim
decline
declines
declining
decrement

decrepit
decrepitude
decry
defamation
defamations
defamatory
defame
defect
defective
defects
defensive
defiance
defiant
defiantly
deficiencies
deficiency
deficient
defile
defiler
deform
deformed
defrauding
defunct
defy
degenerate
degenerately
degeneration
degradation
degrade
degrading
degradingly
dehumanization
dehumanize
deign
deject
dejected
dejectedly
dejection
delay
delayed
delaying
delays
delinquency
delinquent
delirious
delirium
delude
deluded
deluge
delusion
delusional
delusions
demean
demeaning
demise
demolish
demolisher
demon
demonic
demonize
demonized
demonizes
demonizing
demoralize
demoralizing
demoralizingly
denial
denied
denies
denigrate
denounce
dense
dent
dented
dents
denunciate
denunciation
denunciations
deny
denying
deplete
deplorable
deplorably
deplore
deploring
deploringly
deprave
depraved
depravedly
deprecate
depress
depressed
depressing
depressingly
depression
depressions
deprive
deprived
deride
derision
derisive
derisively
derisiveness
derogatory
desecrate
desert
desertion
desiccate
desiccated
desititute
desolate
desolately
desolation
despair
despairing
despairingly
desperate
desperately
desperation
despicable
despicably
despise
despised
despoil
despoiler
despondence
despondency
despondent
despondently
despot
despotic
despotism
destabilisation
destains
destitute
destitution
destroy
destroyer
destruction
destructive
desultory
deter
deteriorate
deteriorating
deterioration
deterrent
detest
detestable
detestably
detested
detesting
detests
detract
detracted
detracting
detraction
detracts
detriment
detrimental
devastate
devastated
devastates
devastating
devastatingly
devastation
deviate
deviation
devil
devilish
devilishly
devilment
devilry
devious
deviously
deviousness
devoid
diabolic
diabolical
diabolically
diametrically
diappointed
diatribe
diatribes
dick
dictator
dictatorial
die
die-hard
died
dies
difficult
difficulties
difficulty
diffidence
dilapidated
dilemma
dilly-dally
dim
dimmer
din
ding
dings
dinky
dire
direly
direness
dirt
dirtbag
dirtbags
dirts
dirty
disable
disabled
disaccord
disadvantage
disadvantaged
disadvantageous
disadvantages
disaffect
disaffected
disaffirm
disagree
disagreeable
disagreeably
disagreed
disagreeing
disagreement
disagrees
disallow
disapointed
disapointing
disapointment
disappoint
disappointed
disappointing
disappointingly
disappointment
disappointments
disappoints
disapprobation
disapproval
disapprove
disapproving
disarm
disarray
disaster
disasterous
disastrous
disastrously
disavow
disavowal
disbelief
disbelieve
disbeliever
disclaim
discombobulate
discomfit
discomfititure
discomfort
discompose
disconcert
disconcerted
disconcerting
disconcertingly
disconsolate
disconsolately
disconsolation
discontent
discontented
discontentedly
discontinued
discontinuity
discontinuous
discord
discordance
discordant
discountenance
discourage
discouragement
discouraging
discouragingly
discourteous
discourteously
discoutinous
discredit
discrepant
discriminate
discrimination
discriminatory
disdain
disdained
disdainful
disdainfully
disfavor
disgrace
disgraced
disgraceful
disgracefully
disgruntle
disgruntled
disgust
disgusted
disgustedly
disgustful
disgustfully
disgusting
disgustingly
dishearten
disheartening
dishearteningly
dishonest
dishonestly
dishonesty
dishonor
dishonorable
dishonorablely
disillusion
disillusioned
disillusionment
disillusions
disinclination
disinclined
disingenuous
disingenuously
disintegrate
disintegrated
disintegrates
disintegration
disinterest
disinterested
dislike
disliked
dislikes
disliking
dislocated
disloyal
disloyalty
dismal
dismally
dismalness
dismay
dismayed
dismaying
dismayingly
dismissive
dismissively
disobedience
disobedient
disobey
disoobedient
disorder
disordered
disorderly
disorganized
disorient
disoriented
disown
disparage
disparaging
disparagingly
dispensable
dispirit
dispirited
dispiritedly
dispiriting
displace
displaced
displease
displeased
displeasing
displeasure
disproportionate
disprove
disputable
dispute

disputed
disquiet
disquieting
disquietingly
disquietude
disregard
disregardful
disreputable
disrepute
disrespect
disrespectable
disrespectablity
disrespectful
disrespectfully
disrespectfulness
disrespecting
disrupt
disruption
disruptive
diss
dissapointed
dissappointed
dissappointing
dissatisfaction
dissatisfactory
dissatisfied
dissatisfies
dissatisfy
dissatisfying
dissed
dissemble
dissembler
dissension
dissent
dissenter
dissention
disservice
disses
dissidence
dissident
dissidents
dissing
dissocial
dissolute
dissolution
dissonance
dissonant
dissonantly
dissuade
dissuasive
distains
distaste
distasteful
distastefully
distort
distorted
distortion
distorts
distract
distracting
distraction
distraught
distraughtly
distraughtness
distress
distressed
distressing
distressingly
distrust
distrustful
distrusting
disturb
disturbance
disturbed
disturbing
disturbingly
disunity
disvalue
divergent
divisive
divisively
divisiveness
dizzing
dizzingly
dizzy
doddering
dodgey
dogged
doggedly
dogmatic
doldrums
domineer
domineering
donside
doom
doomed
doomsday
dope
doubt
doubtful
doubtfully
doubts
douchbag
douchebag
douchebags
downbeat
downcast
downer
downfall
downfallen
downgrade
downhearted
downheartedly
downhill
downside
downsides
downturn
downturns
drab
draconian
draconic
drag
dragged
dragging
dragoon
drags
drain
drained
draining
drains
drastic
drastically
drawback
drawbacks
dread
dreadful
dreadfully
dreadfulness
dreary
dripped
dripping
drippy
drips
drones
droop
droops
drop-out
drop-outs
dropout
dropouts
drought
drowning
drunk
drunkard
drunken
dubious
dubiously
dubitable
dud
dull
dullard
dumb
dumbfound
dump
dumped
dumping
dumps
dunce
dungeon
dungeons
dupe
dust
dusty
dwindling
dying
earsplitting
eccentric
eccentricity
effigy
effrontery
egocentric
egomania
egotism
egotistical
egotistically
egregious
egregiously
election-rigger
elimination
emaciated
emasculate
embarrass
embarrassing
embarrassingly
embarrassment
embattled
embroil
embroiled
embroilment
emergency
emphatic
emphatically
emptiness
encroach
encroachment
endanger
enemies
enemy
enervate
enfeeble
enflame
engulf
enjoin
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pauper
paupers
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plotters
ploy
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plunderer
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polemize
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poorly
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prisoner
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profane
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qualm
qualms
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queer
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racist
racists
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radical
radicalization
radically
radicals
rage
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rail
raked
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ramshackle
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randomly
rankle
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ravage
raving
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recant
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reckless
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recklessness
recoil
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regression
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renunciation
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revulsive
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ridicule
ridicules
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rife
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rifts
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rigidity
rigidness
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rip
rip-off
ripoff
ripped
risk
risks
risky
rival
rivalry
roadblocks
rocky
rogue
rollercoaster
rot
rotten
rough
rremediable
rubbish
rude
rue
ruffian
ruffle
ruin
ruined
ruining
ruinous
ruins
rumbling
rumor
rumors
rumours
rumple
run-down
runaway
rupture
rust
rusts
rusty
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ruthlessly
ruthlessness
ruts
sabotage
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sacrificed
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savages
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scuffs
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second-tier
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self-criticism
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self-destructive
self-humiliation
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selfishness
semi-retarded
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sensationalize
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senselessly
seriousness
sermonize
servitude
set-up
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setbacks
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severity
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shambles
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ugliness
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vexation
vexing

vexingly
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vileness
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water-down
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weakness
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wearisome
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wedge
weed
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weirdly
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whore
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wicked
wickedly
wickedness
wild
wildly
wiles
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wily
wimpy
wince
wobble
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wobbles
woe
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woeful
woefully
womanizer
womanizing
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worried
worriedly
worrier
worries
worrisome
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worst
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worthlessness
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wounds
wrangle
wrath
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wretchedness
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wrinkles
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wripped
wripping
writhe
wrong
wrongful
wrongly
wrought
yawn
zap
zapped
zaps
zealot
zealous
zealously
zombie

# Positive Emotion

a+
abound
abounds
abundance
abundant
accessable
accessible
acclaim
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acclamation
accolade
accolades
accommodative
accomodative
accomplish
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accomplishment
accomplishments
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accurately
achievable
achievement
achievements
achievible
acumen
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adaptive
adequate
adjustable
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admirably
admiration
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admirer
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admiringly
adorable
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adroit
adroitly
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adulation
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advantage
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advantageously
advantages
adventuresome
adventurous
advocate
advocated
advocates
affability
affable
affably
affectation
affection
affectionate
affinity
affirm
affirmation
affirmative
affluence
affluent
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affordable
affordably

afordable
agile
agilely
agility
agreeable
agreeableness
agreeably
all-around
alluring
alluringly
altruistic
altruistically
amaze
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amazement
amazes
amazing
amazingly
ambitious
ambitiously
ameliorate
amenable
amenity
amiability
amiabily
amiable
amicability
amicable
amicably
amity
ample
amply
amuse
amusing
amusingly
angel
angelic
apotheosis
appeal
appealing
applaud
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appreciates
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appropriate
approval
approve
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ardently
ardor
articulate
aspiration
aspirations
aspire
assurance
assurances
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assuredly
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astonishingly
astonishment
astound
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attune
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audibly
auspicious
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authoritative
autonomous
available
aver
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avidly
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awards
awe
awed
awesome
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awesomeness
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awsome
backbone
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bargain
beauteous
beautiful
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beautifully
beautify
beauty
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beckoning
beckons
believable
believeable
beloved
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beneficent
beneficial
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benefit
benefits
benevolence
benevolent
benifits
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best-selling
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better-known
better-than-expected
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blameless
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blessing
bliss
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blockbuster
bloom
blossom
bolster
bonny
bonus
bonuses
boom
booming
boost
boundless
bountiful
brainiest
brainy
brand-new
brave
bravery
bravo
breakthrough
breakthroughs
breathlessness
breathtaking
breathtakingly
breeze
bright
brighten
brighter
brightest
brilliance
brilliances
brilliant
brilliantly
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brotherly
bullish
buoyant
cajole
calm
calming
calmness
capability
capable
capably
captivate
captivating
carefree
cashback
cashbacks
catchy
celebrate
celebrated
celebration
celebratory
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champion
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charitable
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charming
charmingly
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cheer
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cheery
cherish
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cherub
chic
chivalrous
chivalry
civility
civilize
clarity
classic
classy
clean
cleaner
cleanest
cleanliness
cleanly
clear
clear-cut
cleared
clearer
clearly
clears
clever
cleverly
cohere
coherence
coherent
cohesive
colorful
comely
comfort
comfortable
comfortably
comforting
comfy
commend
commendable
commendably
commitment
commodious
compact
compactly
compassion
compassionate
compatible
competitive
complement
complementary
complemented
complements
compliant
compliment
complimentary

comprehensive
conciliate
conciliatory
concise
confidence
confident
congenial
congratulate
congratulation
congratulations
congratulatory
conscientious
considerate
consistent
consistently
constructive
consummate
contentment
continuity
contrasty
contribution
convenience
convenient
conveniently
convience
convienient
convient
convincing
convincingly
cool
coolest
cooperative
cooperatively
cornerstone
correct
correctly
cost-effective
cost-saving
counter-attack
counter-attacks
courage
courageous
courageously
courageousness
courteous
courtly
covenant
cozy
creative
credence
credible
crisp
crisper
cure
cure-all
cushy
cute
cuteness
danke
danken
daring
daringly
darling
dashing
dauntless
dawn
dazzle
dazzled
dazzling
dead-cheap
dead-on
decency
decent
decisive
decisiveness
dedicated
defeat
defeated
defeating
defeats
defender
deference
deft
deginified
delectable
delicacy
delicate
delicious
delight
delighted
delightful
delightfully
delightfulness
dependable
dependably
deservedly
deserving
desirable
desiring
desirous
destiny
detachable
devout
dexterous
dexterously
dextrous
dignified
dignify
dignity
diligence
diligent
diligently
diplomatic
dirt-cheap
distinction
distinctive
distinguished
diversified
divine
divinely
dominate
dominated
dominates
dote
dotingly
doubtless
dreamland
dumbfounded
dumbfounding
dummy-proof
durable
dynamic
eager
eagerly
eagerness
earnest
earnestly
earnestness
ease
eased
eases
easier
easiest
easiness
easing
easy
easy-to-use
easygoing
ebullience
ebullient
ebulliently
ecenomical
economical
ecstasies
ecstasy
ecstatic
ecstatically
edify
educated
effective
effectively
effectiveness
effectual
efficacious
efficient
efficiently
effortless
effortlessly
effusion
effusive
effusively
effusiveness
elan
elate
elated
elatedly
elation
electrify
elegance
elegant
elegantly
elevate
elite
eloquence
eloquent
eloquently
embolden
eminence
eminent
empathize
empathy
empower
empowerment
enchant
enchanted
enchanting
enchantingly
encourage
encouragement
encouraging
encouragingly
endear
endearing
endorse
endorsed
endorsement
endorses
endorsing
energetic
energize
energy-efficient
energy-saving
engaging
engrossing
enhance
enhanced
enhancement
enhances
enjoy
enjoyable
enjoyably
enjoyed
enjoying
enjoyment
enjoys
enlighten
enlightenment
enliven
ennoble
enough
enrapt
enrapture
enraptured
enrich
enrichment
enterprising
entertain
entertaining
entertains
enthral
enthrall
enthralled
enthuse
enthusiasm
enthusiast
enthusiastic
enthusiastically
entice
enticed
enticing
enticingly
entranced
entrancing
entrust
enviable
enviably
envious
enviously

enviousness
envy
equitable
ergonomical
err-free
erudite
ethical
eulogize
euphoria
euphoric
euphorically
evaluative
evenly
eventful
everlasting
evocative
exalt
exaltation
exalted
exaltedly
exalting
exaltingly
examplar
examplary
excallent
exceed
exceeded
exceeding
exceedingly
exceeds
excel
exceled
excelent
excellant
excelled
excellence
excellency
excellent
excellently
excels
exceptional
exceptionally
excite
excited
excitedly
excitedness
excitement
excites
exciting
excitingly
exellent
exemplar
exemplary
exhilarate
exhilarating
exhilaratingly
exhilaration
exonerate
expansive
expeditiously
expertly
exquisite
exquisitely
extol
extoll
extraordinarily
extraordinary
exuberance
exuberant
exuberantly
exult
exultant
exultation
exultingly
eye-catch
eye-catching
eyecatch
eyecatching
fabulous
fabulously
facilitate
fair
fairly
fairness
faith
faithful
faithfully
faithfulness
fame
famed
famous
famously
fancier
fancinating
fancy
fanfare
fans
fantastic
fantastically
fascinate
fascinating
fascinatingly
fascination
fashionable
fashionably
fast
fast-growing
fast-paced
faster
fastest
fastest-growing
faultless
fav
fave
favor
favorable
favored
favorite
favorited
favour
fearless
fearlessly
feasible
feasibly
feat
feature-rich
fecilitous
feisty
felicitate
felicitous
felicity
fertile
fervent
fervently
fervid
fervidly
fervor
festive
fidelity
fiery
fine
fine-looking
finely
finer
finest
firmer
first-class
first-in-class
first-rate
flashy
flatter
flattering
flatteringly
flawless
flawlessly
flexibility
flexible
flourish
flourishing
fluent
flutter
fond
fondly
fondness
foolproof
foremost
foresight
formidable
fortitude
fortuitous
fortuitously
fortunate
fortunately
fortune
fragrant
free
freed
freedom
freedoms
fresh
fresher
freshest
friendliness
friendly
frolic
frugal
fruitful
ftw
fulfillment
fun
futurestic
futuristic
gaiety
gaily
gain
gained
gainful
gainfully
gaining
gains
gallant
gallantly
galore
geekier
geeky
gem
gems
generosity
generous
generously
genial
genius
gentle
gentlest
genuine
gifted
glad
gladden
gladly
gladness
glamorous
glee
gleeful
gleefully
glimmer
glimmering
glisten
glistening
glitter
glitz
glorify
glorious
gloriously
glory
glow
glowing
glowingly
god-given
god-send
godlike
godsend
gold
golden
good
goodly
goodness
goodwill
goood
gooood
gorgeous
gorgeously
grace
graceful
gracefully
gracious
graciously
graciousness
grand

grandeur
grateful
gratefully
gratification
gratified
gratifies
gratify
gratifying
gratifyingly
gratitude
great
greatest
greatness
grin
groundbreaking
guarantee
guidance
guiltless
gumption
gush
gusto
gutsy
hail
halcyon
hale
hallmark
hallmarks
hallowed
handier
handily
hands-down
handsome
handsomely
handy
happier
happily
happiness
happy
hard-working
hardier
hardy
harmless
harmonious
harmoniously
harmonize
harmony
headway
heal
healthful
healthy
hearten
heartening
heartfelt
heartily
heartwarming
heaven
heavenly
helped
helpful
helping
hero
heroic
heroically
heroine
heroize
heros
high-quality
high-spirited
hilarious
holy
homage
honest
honesty
honor
honorable
honored
honoring
hooray
hopeful
hospitable
hot
hotcake
hotcakes
hottest
hug
humane
humble
humility
humor
humorous
humorously
humour
humourous
ideal
idealize
ideally
idol
idolize
idolized
idyllic
illuminate
illuminati
illuminating
illumine
illustrious
ilu
imaculate
imaginative
immaculate
immaculately
immense
impartial
impartiality
impartially
impassioned
impeccable
impeccably
important
impress
impressed
impresses
impressive
impressively
impressiveness
improve
improved
improvement
improvements
improves
improving
incredible
incredibly
indebted
individualized
indulgence
indulgent
industrious
inestimable
inestimably
inexpensive
infallibility
infallible
infallibly
influential
ingenious
ingeniously
ingenuity
ingenuous
ingenuously
innocuous
innovation
innovative
inpressed
insightful
insightfully
inspiration
inspirational
inspire
inspiring
instantly
instructive
instrumental
integral
integrated
intelligence
intelligent
intelligible
interesting
interests
intimacy
intimate
intricate
intrigue
intriguing
intriguingly
intuitive
invaluable
invaluablely
inventive
invigorate
invigorating
invincibility
invincible
inviolable
inviolate
invulnerable
irreplaceable
irreproachable
irresistible
irresistibly
issue-free
jaw-droping
jaw-dropping
jollify
jolly
jovial
joy
joyful
joyfully
joyous
joyously
jubilant
jubilantly
jubilate
jubilation
jubiliant
judicious
justly
keen
keenly
keenness
kid-friendly
kindliness
kindly
kindness
knowledgeable
kudos
large-capacity
laud
laudable
laudably
lavish
lavishly
law-abiding
lawful
lawfully
lead
leading
leads
lean
led
legendary
leverage
levity
liberate
liberation
liberty
lifesaver
light-hearted
lighter
likable
like
liked
likes
liking
lionhearted
lively
logical
long-lasting
lovable
lovably
love
loved
loveliness
lovely
lover
loves
loving

low-cost
low-price
low-priced
low-risk
lower-priced
loyal
loyalty
lucid
lucidly
luck
luckier
luckiest
luckiness
lucky
lucrative
luminous
lush
luster
lustrous
luxuriant
luxuriate
luxurious
luxuriously
luxury
lyrical
magic
magical
magnanimous
magnanimously
magnificence
magnificent
magnificently
majestic
majesty
manageable
maneuverable
marvel
marveled
marvelled
marvellous
marvelous
marvelously
marvelousness
marvels
master
masterful
masterfully
masterpiece
masterpieces
masters
mastery
matchless
mature
maturely
maturity
meaningful
memorable
merciful
mercifully
mercy
merit
meritorious
merrily
merriment
merriness
merry
mesmerize
mesmerized
mesmerizes
mesmerizing
mesmerizingly
meticulous
meticulously
mightily
mighty
mind-blowing
miracle
miracles
miraculous
miraculously
miraculousness
modern
modest
modesty
momentous
monumental
monumentally
morality
motivated
multi-purpose
navigable
neat
neatest
neatly
nice
nicely
nicer
nicest
nifty
nimble
noble
nobly
noiseless
non-violence
non-violent
notably
noteworthy
nourish
nourishing
nourishment
novelty
nurturing
oasis
obsession
obsessions
obtainable
openly
openness
optimal
optimism
optimistic
opulent
orderly
originality
outdo
outdone
outperform
outperformed
outperforming
outperforms
outshine
outshone
outsmart
outstanding
outstandingly
outstrip
outwit
ovation
overjoyed
overtake
overtaken
overtakes
overtaking
overtook
overture
pain-free
painless
painlessly
palatial
pamper
pampered
pamperedly
pamperedness
pampers
panoramic
paradise
paramount
pardon
passion
passionate
passionately
patience
patient
patiently
patriot
patriotic
peace
peaceable
peaceful
peacefully
peacekeepers
peach
peerless
pep
pepped
pepping
peppy
peps
perfect
perfection
perfectly
permissible
perseverance
persevere
personages
personalized
phenomenal
phenomenally
picturesque
piety
pinnacle
playful
playfully
pleasant
pleasantly
pleased
pleases
pleasing
pleasingly
pleasurable
pleasurably
pleasure
plentiful
pluses
plush
plusses
poetic
poeticize
poignant
poise
poised
polished
polite
politeness
popular
portable
posh
positive
positively
positives
powerful
powerfully
praise
praiseworthy
praising
pre-eminent
precious
precise
precisely
preeminent
prefer
preferable
preferably
prefered
preferes
preferring
prefers
premier
prestige
prestigious
prettily
pretty
priceless
pride
principled
privilege
privileged
prize
proactive
problem-free
problem-solver
prodigious
prodigiously
prodigy
productive
productively
proficient
proficiently

profound
profoundly
profuse
profusion
progress
progressive
prolific
prominence
prominent
promise
promised
promises
promising
promoter
prompt
promptly
proper
properly
propitious
propitiously
pros
prosper
prosperity
prosperous
prospros
protect
protection
protective
proud
proven
proves
providence
proving
prowess
prudence
prudent
prudently
punctual
pure
purify
purposeful
quaint
qualified

qualify
quicker
quiet
quieter
radiance
radiant
rapid
rapport
rapt
rapture
raptureous
raptureously
rapturous
rapturously
rational
razor-sharp
reachable
readable
readily
ready
reaffirm
reaffirmation
realistic
realizable
reasonable
reasonably
reasoned
reassurance
reassure
receptive
reclaim
recomend
recommend
recommendation
recommendations
recommended
reconcile
reconciliation
record-setting
recover
recovery
rectification
rectify

rectifying
redeem
redeeming
redemption
refine
refined
refinement
reform
reformed
reforming
reforms
refresh
refreshed
refreshing
refund
refunded
regal
regally
regard
rejoice
rejoicing
rejoicingly
rejuvenate
rejuvenated
rejuvenating
relaxed
relent
reliable
reliably
relief
relish
remarkable
remarkably
remedy
remission
remunerate
renaissance
renewed
renown
renowned
replaceable
reputable
reputation

resilient
resolute
resound
resounding
resourceful
resourcefulness
respect
respectable
respectful
respectfully
respite
resplendent
responsibly
responsive
restful
restored
restructure
restructured
restructuring
retractable
revel
revelation
revere
reverence
reverent
reverently
revitalize
revival
revive
revives
revolutionary
revolutionize
revolutionized
revolutionizes
reward
rewarding
rewardingly
rich
richer
richly
richness
right
righten

righteous
righteously
righteousness
rightful
rightfully
rightly
rightness
risk-free
robust
rock-star
rock-stars
rockstar
rockstars
romantic
romantically
romanticize
roomier
roomy
rosy
safe
safely
sagacity
sagely
saint
saintliness
saintly
salutary
salute
sane
satisfactorily
satisfactory
satisfied
satisfies
satisfy
satisfying
satisified
saver
savings
savior
savvy
scenic
seamless
seasoned

secure
securely
selective
self-determination
self-respect
self-satisfaction
self-sufficiency
self-sufficient
sensation
sensational
sensationally
sensations
sensible
sensibly
sensitive
serene
serenity
sexy
sharp
sharper
sharpest
shimmering
shimmeringly
shine
shiny
significant
silent
simpler
simplest
simplified
simplifies
simplify
simplifying
sincere
sincerely
sincerity
skill
skilled
skillful
skillfully
slammin
sleek
slick

smart
smarter
smartest
smartly
smile
smiles
smiling
smilingly
smitten
smooth
smoother
smoothes
smoothest
smoothly
snappy
snazzy
sociable
soft
softer
solace
solicitous
solicitously
solid
solidarity
soothe
soothingly
sophisticated
soulful
soundly
soundness
spacious
sparkle
sparkling
spectacular
spectacularly
speedily
speedy
spellbind
spellbinding
spellbindingly
spellbound
spirited
spiritual
splendid
splendidly
splendor
spontaneous
sporty
spotless
sprightly
stability
stabilize
stable
stainless
standout
state-of-the-art
stately
statuesque
staunch
staunchly
staunchness
steadfast
steadfastly
steadfastness
steadiest
steadiness
steady
stellar
stellarly
stimulate
stimulates
stimulating
stimulative
stirringly
straighten
straightforward
streamlined
striking
strikingly
striving
strong
stronger
strongest
stunned
stunning
stunningly
stupendous
stupendously
sturdier
sturdy
stylish
stylishly
stylized
suave
suavely
sublime
subsidize
subsidized
subsidizes
subsidizing
substantive
succeed
succeeded
succeeding
succeeds
succes
success
successes
successful
successfully
suffice
sufficed
suffices
sufficient
sufficiently
suitable
sumptuous
sumptuously
sumptuousness
super
superb
superbly
superior
superiority
supple
support
supported
supporter
supporting
supportive
supports
supremacy
supreme
supremely
supurb
supurbly
surmount
surpass
surreal
survival
survivor
sustainability
sustainable
swank
swankier
swankiest
swanky
sweeping
sweet
sweeten
sweetheart
sweetly
sweetness
swift
swiftness
talent
talented
talents
tantalize
tantalizing
tantalizingly
tempt
tempting
temptingly
tenacious
tenaciously
tenacity
tender
tenderly
terrific
terrifically
thank
thankful
thinner
thoughtful
thoughtfully
thoughtfulness
thrift
thrifty
thrill
thrilled
thrilling
thrillingly
thrills
thrive
thriving
thumb-up
thumbs-up
tickle
tidy
time-honored
timely
tingle
titillate
titillating
titillatingly
togetherness
tolerable
toll-free
top
top-notch
top-quality
topnotch
tops
tough
tougher
toughest
traction
tranquil
tranquility
transparent
treasure
tremendously
trendy
triumph
triumphal
triumphant
triumphantly
trivially
trophy
trouble-free
trump
trumpet
trust
trusted
trusting
trustingly
trustworthiness
trustworthy
trusty
truthful
truthfully
truthfulness
twinkly
ultra-crisp
unabashed
unabashedly
unaffected
unassailable
unbeatable
unbiased
unbound
uncomplicated
unconditional
undamaged
undaunted
understandable
undisputable
undisputably
undisputed
unencumbered
unequivocal
unequivocally
unfazed
unfettered
unforgettable
unity
unlimited

unmatched
unparalleled
unquestionable
unquestionably
unreal
unrestricted
unrivaled
unselfish
unwavering
upbeat
upgradable
upgradeable
upgraded
upheld
uphold
uplift
uplifting
upliftingly
upliftment
upscale
usable
useable
useful
user-friendly
user-replaceable
valiant
valiantly
valor
valuable
variety
venerate
verifiable
veritable
versatile
versatility
vibrant
vibrantly
victorious
victory
viewable
vigilance
vigilant
virtue
virtuous
virtuously
visionary
vivacious
vivid
vouch
vouchsafe
warm
warmer
warmhearted
warmly
warmth
wealthy
welcome
well
well-backlit
well-balanced
well-behaved
well-being
well-bred
well-connected
well-educated
well-established
well-informed
well-intentioned
well-known
well-made
well-managed
well-mannered
well-positioned
well-received
well-regarded
well-rounded
well-run
well-wishers
wellbeing
whoa
wholeheartedly
wholesome
whooa
whoooa
wieldy
willing
willingly
willingness
win
windfall
winnable
winner
winners
winning
wins
wisdom
wise
wisely
witty
won
wonder
wonderful
wonderfully
wonderous
wonderously
wonders
wondrous
woo
work
workable
worked
works
world-famous
worth
worth-while
worthiness
worthwhile
worthy
wow
wowed
wowing
wows
yay
youthful
zeal
zenith
zest
zippy

# Appendix D – Model Outputs (not significant)

| 'Hello' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -5.89918 | 0.07547 | -78.169 | <2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.12615 | 0.08665 | 1.456 | 0.1454 |
| listener_gender_F | 0.01965 | 0.04614 | 0.426 | 0.6702 |
| screenwr_gender_F | -0.17220 | 0.10277 | -1.676 | 0.0938. |
| screenwr_gender_MG | 0.13283 | 0.10955 | 1.212 | 0.2253 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

| 'Goodbye' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -9.4880 | 0.3060 | -31.007 | <2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.7969 | 0.2409 | 3.308 | 0.000939. |
| listener_gender_F | 0.1124 | 0.1144 | 0.903 | 0.366397 |
| screenwr_gender_F | -0.4177 | 0.2960 | -1.411 | 0.158199 |
| screenwr_gender_MG | 0.3438 | 0.2924 | 1.176 | 0.239731 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

| 'Formal Title' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -6.60482 | 0.13453 | -49.096 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | -0.14374 | 0.16025 | -0.897 | 0.369717 |
| listener_gender_F | -0.28440 | 0.08523 | -3.337 | 0.000847. |
| screenwr_gender_F | -0.57422 | 0.17881 | -3.211 | 0.001321. |
| screenwr_gender_MG | -0.32550 | 0.19371 | -1.680 | 0.092902 |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | 0.27460 | 0.13330 | 2.060 | 0.039392 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

| 'Bare Command' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | 4.67565 | 0.04125 | 113.343 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.21626 | 0.05716 | -3.783 | 0.00155 * |
| listener_gender_F | 0.09266 | 0.03873 | 2.393 | 0.016731 |
| screenwr_gender_F | -0.17194 | 0.05877 | 2.926 | 0.003438 |
| screenwr_gender_MG | 0.05577 | 0.06355 | 0.878 | 0.380146 |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | 0.15689 | 0.06060 | 2.589 | 0.009628 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

| 'Negative Emotion' GLMM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
| (Intercept) | -3.46411 | 0.02428 | 142.651 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.03418 | 0.03298 | -1.036 | 0.29999 |
| listener_gender_F | -0.06794 | 0.02189 | 3.104 | 0.00191. |
| screenwr_gender_F | -0.16625 | 0.03425 | -4.854 | 4.19e-07 *** |
| screenwr_gender_MG | 0.19638 | 0.03881 | -5.060 | 1.21e-06 *** |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | 0.05468 | 0.03329 | 1.642 | 0.10052 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**'Gratitude' GLMM**

| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -6.56571 | 0.09153 | -71.734 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.28517 | 0.10794 | 2.642 | 0.00824 |
| listener_gender_F | 0.03574 | 0.07983 | 0.448 | 0.65438 |
| screenwr_gender_F | -0.21337 | 0.11466 | -1.861 | 0.06276 |
| screenwr_gender_MG | 0.21926 | 0.12010 | 1.826 | 0.06789 |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.22186 | 0.11532 | -1.924 | 0.05436 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**'Apologies' GLMM**

| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -6.47363 | 0.07373 | -87.806 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.27093 | 0.10030 | 2.701 | 0.00691 |
| listener_gender_F | 0.21625 | 0.07715 | 2.803 | 0.00506 |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.26181 | 0.11284 | -2.320 | 0.02033 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**'Agreement' GLMM**

| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -8.4670 | 0.1457 | -58.108 | < 2e-16 *** |
| listener_gender_F | 0.2536 | 0.1340 | 1.892 | 0.0585 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**'Give Agency' GLMM – NULL MODEL**

| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -6.40129 | 0.04129 | -155 | <2e-16 *** |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**'Acknowledgement' GLMM**

| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -6.49319 | 0.05564 | -116.692 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | -0.16181 | 0.08075 | -2.004 | 0.0451 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**'Could You' GLMM**

| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -7.36241 | 0.08589 | -85.716 | < 2e-16 *** |
| listener_gender_F | -0.05838 | 0.09788 | -0.596 | 0.551 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**'Gratitude' GLMM**

| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -7.65495 | 0.14436 | -53.027 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | -0.06559 | 0.20894 | -0.314 | 0.7536 |
| listener_gender_F | 0.34320 | 0.14305 | 2.399 | 0.0164 |
| screenwr_gender_F | -0.32853 | 0.21404 | -1.535 | 0.1248 |
| screenwr_gender_MG | -0.69650 | 0.28576 | -2.437 | 0.0148 |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.39951 | 0.21610 | -1.849 | 0.0645 |
| sp_gender_F:scr_gender_F | 0.66188 | 0.30972 | 2.137 | 0.0326 |
| sp_gender_F:scr_gender_MG | 0.48768 | 0.40320 | 1.210 | 0.2265 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**'Ask Agency' GLMM**

| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -6.57945 | 0.05604 | -117.415 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | -0.16004 | 0.08756 | -1.828 | 0.0676 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**'WH. Questions' GLMM**

| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -5.39077 | 0.04272 | -126.201 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.14076 | 0.05618 | 2.505 | 0.01224 |
| listener_gender_F | 0.04890 | 0.04902 | 0.998 | 0.31848 |
| screenwr_gender_F | 0.20595 | 0.05157 | 3.994 | 6.5e-05 *** |
| screenwr_gender_MG | -0.07480 | 0.06350 | -1.178 | 0.23884 |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.21446 | 0.07393 | -2.901 | 0.00372 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**'First Person Plural Pronouns' GLMM**

| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -4.48391 | 0.03472 | -129.131 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | -0.09013 | 0.05225 | -1.725 | 0.0845 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

**'Impersonal Pronouns' GLMM**

| | Estimate | Std. Error | z value | Pr(>\|z\|) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -2.68970 | 0.01514 | -177.634 | < 2e-16 *** |
| speaker_gender_F | 0.05239 | 0.02000 | 2.619 | 0.008806 |
| listener_gender_F | 0.03225 | 0.01426 | 2.262 | 0.023706 |
| screenwr_gender_F | 0.03176 | 0.02008 | 1.582 | 0.113692 |
| screenwr_gender_MG | -0.03074 | 0.02290 | -1.342 | 0.179487 |
| sp_gender_F:list_gender_F | -0.08151 | 0.02172 | -3.753 | 0.009175 |

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.0001 '**' 0.001 '*' 0.01 '.' 0.05 ' '

# Appendix E – Analysis of Features in Context

## E.1 - Intensifiers Examples Analysis

***Male Dialogue***

(1) JULIAN: Way to go. How's Erica?

HARRY: Erica?

JULIAN: I know you must know her name by now.

HARRY: Yes, I do. Erica, as it turns out is an **amazing** woman. Does whatever she can to make me happy. **Really**. Turns out she's very giving. [Film: "Something's Gotta Give" (2003). Screenwriter: Nancy Meyers. In this scene, the two characters are talking about the main female character who, unbeknownst to them, has been involved romantically with both Julian and Harry]

In this interaction (1), Harry and Julian (Harry's doctor) are talking about Erica who they both know and with whom they are both trying to pursue a romantic a relationship, even though neither of them knows about it. When describing Erica, Harry uses intensifiers to describe her, and by doing so he strengthens his commitment to the compliment he is paying her and emphasises his positive evaluation of her. Even though she is not present while the conversation takes place, both characters know her well and describing her in such a positive manner can be interpreted as Harry enhancing Erica's positive face.

(2) RONNIE: Welcome back, man.

PAT: **Yeah**, I'm out.

RONNIE: **Yeah?** You're out out?

PAT: Uh-huh.

RONNIE: **Cool**, man. **Wow**, you lost a lot of weight. I almost didn't recognize you.

PAT: Thank you.

[Film: "Silver Linings Playbook" (2012). Screenwriter: David O. Russell. Pat, recently out of hospital, runs into a friend, Ronnie, whom he has not seen in a while]

In extract (2), Ronnie exhibits a number of positive politeness features, but the focus here is on his use of intensifiers. When he finds out that Pat is out of the hospital, he reacts positively to his good news; this is followed by him showing admiration and complimenting his appearance. From scenes after this interaction, the audience learns that the two friends have not seen each other for quite some time, and that Ronnie did not visit Pat in the hospital. It could be inferred that Ronnie feels the need to address Pat's positive face and uses intensifying devices to enhance it. Furthermore, it should be noted that, in many contexts, remarks on someone's weight can be interpreted as inappropriate and/or offensive behaviour. However, earlier in the film viewers learn that Pat is proud of his weight loss and sees it as a form of self-improvement, therefore Ronnie's comments are received as a compliment.

(3) SAMMY: Daddy! Are you staying for the whole game? Are you?

EDDIE: You bet I am.

SAMMY: **Cool**. I'll play my best. You watch me. My **really** best.

EDDIE: That's **great**. Go get 'em, tiger.

[Film: "One Fine Day" (1996). Screenwriter: Terrel Seltzer, Ellen Simon. Sammy's dad, Eddie, has just arrived at one of his games to watch his son play.]

In interaction (3), Sammy is clearly excited about his dad being at his game and this is reflected in his language. He demonstrates that he is pleased Eddie promises to say until his game is over, and some devices can be found in his lines which reflect this and how it enhances Eddie's positive face. From the storyline, the audience knows that Sammy's dad is mostly absent from his life, and therefore his presence at the match means a great deal to their relationship. By boosting his language, he reflects how important his father's positive assessment of his performance is to him, and therefore it can be said that the power relationship between the participants influences the devices being used. The want to be liked is closely linked with positive face concerns, and by using positive politeness this is what Sammy is trying to achieve.

(4)
TONY: Maybe if you're on the Coast, we'll get together and...and we'll meet there.

ANNIE: Oh.

TONY: It was a wonderful set.

ANNIE: Oh, gosh.

TONY: I **really** enjoyed it. **Nice** to have metcha. Good night.

ANNIE: **Nice** to see you...bye. **Yeah**. Bye.

[Film: "Annie Hall" (1977). Screenwriter: Woody Allen, Marshall Brickman. Music producer, Tony Lacey, approaches Annie after one of her gigs]

In extract (4), there are a number of strategies used by Tony when talking to Annie, with whom later in the film he has a romantic relationship. After Annie and Alvy (Annie's boyfriend at the time) were invited by Tony to go for drinks, and Alvy indirectly declines his invitation, Tony suggests meeting some other time. In the first line of this extract, he uses a negative politeness strategy to express that the possibility is hypothetical and avoid making a direct request. The focus here, however, is on the use of boosters in the subsequent lines when he speaks directly to Annie. He first compliments her set, which coming from a music producer is quite important to Annie who is pursuing a career in music. The intensifier 'wonderful', however, is not included as one of the tokens recognised by the 'politeness' package. Nevertheless, other intensification and positive face enhancing devices were observed in Tony's following line, when he once again expresses, not only how much he liked her music, but that he also liked meeting her. It could be argued that Tony's compliments could serve as a way of attracting Annie and, being aware of the power dynamics between a music producer and an aspiring singer, he takes the opportunity to satisfy her face wants through positive politeness to potentially gain her affection. By inspecting Annie's reaction to receiving compliments from Tony, it would seem that she finds it flattering, and towards the end of the film they do become a couple.

(5) SAM: Hey, Josie, hold on. You've been hiding something from me.

JOSIE: Oh, I don't think so.

SAM: Your writing. It's **amazing**, Josie. You're **really** talented. And far less depressing than Dorothy Parker.

JOSIE: Thank you.

[Film: "Never Been Kissed" (1999). Screenwriter: Abby Kohn, Marc Silverstein. On Josie's way out of the classroom her teacher, Sam, stops her to discuss one of her assignments.]

In interaction (5), there are a number of politeness markers displayed by both participants. Sam uses different devices to intensify his compliments towards Josie on both her assignment and her talent as a writer. Similarly to the previous extract, the power relations are not balanced in this interaction. Sam is Josie's teacher and therefore compliments on her work and abilities are presumably desired by her, it can also be argued that a teacher's praise also aims at encouraging similar behaviour in the future. From previous scenes in the film the audience is aware that Josie is not a secondary school student, but a reporter doing research for a story. Sam has no knowledge of this situation, and as the film evolves their relationship has a romantic undertone which can be seen as problematic. However, this extract is from earlier stages of the film and a teacher complimenting his student on outstanding work would not be interpreted as inappropriate.

***Female Dialogue***

(6) ARTHUR: You watching the movies I recommended?

IRIS: **Yes**. Love them. Irene Dunne is **fantastic**!

ARTHUR: Gumption

IRIS: **Yes!** Tons of it.

[Film: "The Holiday" (2006). Screenwriter: Nancy Meyers. Neighbours Arthur and Iris are discussing their opinions on film Arthur recommended.]

From the plot of the film, the audience knows that Iris admires her elderly neighbour, Arthur. In extract (6), the pair briefly discuss one of the films Arthur previously recommended. When Arthur enquires about the films he recommended, she replies enthusiastically and uses boosters to demonstrate that she also positively values the films Arthur suggested she watched. Iris's response can be interpreted as a form of positive politeness, given that she is using lexical devices to enhance her positive opinion on something she knows Arthur thinks highly of. The use of boosting devices helps her establish shared common interests and therefore attending to Arthur's positive face needs. Moreover, in Locher and Watt's (2008) terms, her choice of words can be seen as relational work, by which she is trying to maintain their interpersonal relationship and demonstrate 'politic' appreciation towards Arthur.

(7) JESSE: I don't know how to tell you this but... I have a date tonight. I'm gonna start dating. People.

CELESTE: A date? **Really**? That is *so* **great**.

JESSE: It is? You don't...

CELESTE: **Yeah!** Don't cry. **Good** for you, Jess.

[Film: "Celeste and Jesse Forever" (2012). Screenwriter: Rashida Jones, Will McCormack. Celeste and Jesse have recently ended a long-term relationship and in this scene, they are talking about dating other people.]

In extract (7), Jesse brings up a potentially awkward topic of conversation, and from previous scenes the audience knows that Jesse seems to be struggling with the recent break-up. Celeste knows he is going through a difficult time, so she reacts positively to the news that he has decided to move on from their relationship, and this is reflected in her linguistic choices and strategies. Celeste uses boosters to strengthen her positive evaluation of what Jesse has just told her in an attempt to enhance his positive face and demonstrate understanding of his situation. Furthermore, from context, the audience also knows that Celeste is not, in fact, glad to hear the news that Jesse is going on a date. Nevertheless, she is aware that Jesse has not been handling the ending of their relationship well, and that her encouragement and approval would help him move on. With this in mind, Celeste is putting his needs ahead of hers and uses positive politeness and boosting devices to enhance her assessment to fulfil his needs.

(8) NEENAH: Rachel, welcome, welcome.

RACHEL: **Wow**! Oh, my gosh! Your house is **amazing**, Mrs. Goh.

NEENAH: You're such a sweet talker. Call me Auntie. Auntie Neenah.

[Film: "Crazy Rich Asians" (2018). Screenwriter: Peter Chiarelli, Adele Lim. In this extract, Rachel is visiting her best friend's parents' house for the first time.]

In example (8), Rachel uses positive politeness by complimenting Neenah's house and the presence of different boosting devices maximise her commitment to acknowledging Neenah's positive face needs. From the formal terms used by Rachel to address Neenah initially, it can be assumed that she perceives her friend's mother as someone to be respected. In this interaction, the relationship between the participants in not one of balance, with Neenah seemingly being in a position of more power. It has been theorised that when the status of the interactants is unbalanced it is the person with higher status that is more likely to pay compliments, while compliments from lower status participants are at risk of being received as inappropriate (Wolfson, 1983; Holmes, 1995). However, in this case Rachel's remarks are not perceived as being presumptuous or out of place to the listener. In fact, it attends to Neenah's positive face needs by showing admiration of one of her possessions. Initially, Neenah evades reacting to Rachel's compliment, but immediately asks her to use more informal, in-group form of address ('*auntie*'), which demonstrates that Rachel's positive politeness strategy was not out of place and was received well by the listener.

(9) TORY: You're dating a guy?

ALYSSA: He's not like a typical man. He's **really** sweet to me, and we relate *so* well. You guys'd love him, **really**.

[Film: "Chasing Amy" (1997). Screenwriter: Kevin Smith. Alyssa is talking to her friends about the man she is currently dating.]

In extract (9), Alyssa is telling her friends she recently started dating someone. From the storyline of the film, the audience knows that, in the past, Alyssa normally prefers to date women. In the previous scene, she seems reluctant to tell her friends she is dating a man as she is worried they might disapprove of him. In order to get her friends to have a favourable opinion of him, she uses positive politeness together with intensifying devices to reinforce flattering characteristics. It is

clear that her friends having a positive opinion of her new boyfriend is of importance to Alyssa. In order to achieve this, she protects his positive face by remarking on aspects about him and the relationship which will help her fulfil her aim. Moreover, she asserts that her friends would also share her view, and uses another intensifier to strengthen her claim.

(10) ANNIE: I want you to have it.

MARGARET: No, no, no. I can't. **Really**.

ANNIE: I don't want to hear it. It's yours. Grandmothers like to give their stuff away to their grandchildren. Makes us feel like we'll always be a part of your life, even after we're gone. Take it.

[Film: "The Proposal" (2009). Screenwriter: Peter Chiarelli. In this extract, Annie is giving Margaret a wedding present.]

In extract (10), Annie wants to give Margaret a family heirloom as a wedding present, but Margaret is reluctant to accept it as the reasons for her marrying Annie's grandson are somewhat questionable at that stage of the film. Unlike the previous examples, Margaret uses an intensifier to reinforce a negative politeness strategy. While refusals may cause damage to the listener's face, as their hopes of offering something to the listener may not be met, in this instance Margaret ostensibly seems that accepting a present from Annie would be dishonest. By directly rejecting Annie's present combined with intensifying devices to maximise her statement, she risks committing an FTA and offending Annie. However, taking into consideration the sentimental value of the present, and the fact that Margaret is unsure about marrying Annie's grandson, implementing this strategy reflects how highly she views Annie and that she values Annie's needs.

## E.2 – Reassurance Examples Analysis

### *Male Dialogue*

(1) BOBBY: I wish it were you giving the story.

TOM: **That's okay.**

BOBBY: What if we just don't tell them anything anymore unless they let you do the story?

TOM: No.  Really... **don't worry** about it.

[Film: "Broadcast News" (1987). Screenwriter: James L. Brooks. In this scene, Tom and Bobby are talking about a story that aired thanks to Tom for which he did not get credit.]

In previous scenes it is revealed that Tom was able to find an important news story which exposes mismanagement of funds by the government, but he decided to allow a more senior reporter take credit for it. Bobby – Tom's colleague – is one of the few people who knows that it was Tom who discovered the story – is expressing his discontent of how the situation was handled, even though he is not in a position to make such decisions. He also suggests ways in which the situation can be rectified in the future. In example (1) by reassuring Bobby that he does not take issue with the situation, Tom tries to minimise any sense of debt from Bobby towards him. In Watt's terms, Tom's actions can be interpreted as politic behaviour, given that his utterance helps him maintain

his relationship with Bobby. However, from the following line it would seem that Bobby still feels indebted in some way to Tom and suggests other alternatives to correct the situation. Tom responds by, once again, reassuring Bobby that there is no obligation on his part to help him. From previous scenes in the film, it is known that Tom does not have many friendships in his workplace and thus attending to Bobby's positive face needs is important to continue developing their relationship.

(2) MORGAN: Hey, I heard. I can't believe this.

NICK: Now for my next headache.

MORGAN: **Don't worry**, we'll get through it.

[Film: "What Women Want" (2000). Screenwriter: Josh Goldsmith, Cathy Yuspa, Diane Drake. Nick has just found out that he did not receive the promotion he was hoping he would get.]

In extract (2), Morgan is trying to comfort Nick after he finds out the job position he wanted for a long time has been given to someone else. Morgan uses linguistic devices to show solidarity towards Nick and reassures him the problems he is facing can be solved. Furthermore, he combines the use of an expression of reassurance with first person plural to convey that their problems are shared and together a solution can be found. In doing so, Morgan appeals to Nick's positive face wants by comforting him in a difficult situation by showing camaraderie. From earlier scenes, it is clear that Nick and Morgan are more than colleagues and that they have developed a friendship over time. Morgan expresses high solidarity by reassuring Nick his problems will resolved, which can be interpreted as the use of a positive politeness strategy (Holmes, 1995). Although in cases in which the participants have a very close relationship the overuse of politeness can cause offense (Wolfson, 1986), the severity of the situation and what it means to Nick, Morgan's linguistic choices are appropriate for their context.

(3) CAL: That was uncalled for. Sorry for being a dick.

JACOB: Ah, **it's okay**, I deserved it.

[Film: "Crazy Stupid Love" (2011). Screenwriter: Dan Fogelman. Cal and Jacob meet for the first time after having a serious argument.]

In extract (3), Jacob and Cal see each other for the first time since getting into a fight which started when Cal finds out Jacob is dating his daughter. When he first sees Jacob, Cal does not want to talk to Jacob and acts in a childish manner by repeating everything Jacob says. He apologies to Jacob for acting in that way, to which Jacob replies by dismissing his apology and reassuring him that he did not take offence to his comments. For this example it is important to consider the way in which their relationship developed throughout the film. When they first meet and start their relationship Jacob helps Cal get through his divorce by helping him meet other women. Later in the film, Jacob starts dating a girl who, unbeknownst to him, is Cal's daughter which results in him not spending any time with Cal. When this twist is revealed to the two characters, Cal feels betrayed by Jacob which explains his reluctance to talk to him, leading him to commit an FTA and later apologise for it. Jacob uses a reassuring expression to curtail Cal's feeling of being obliged to apologise, and also uses negative politeness to take partial responsibility for provoking Cal's behaviour. As observed in this interaction, Watts (2003) notes

that some formulaic politeness expressions of reassurance are typically preceded by speech acts such as thanking or apologising.

(4) ANNIE: Oh, no-I mean, I'm just a-auditioning sort of at club. I don't- - it's my first time.

ALVY: **That's okay**, 'cause I know exactly what that's like. Listen-

ANNIE: Yeah?

ALVY: -you're gonna like night clubs, they're really a lotta fun.

[Film: "Annie Hall" (1977). Screenplay: Woody Allen; Marshall Brickman. Annie and Alvy are trying to make plans to go on a date, but Annie realises she already has plans for that night.]

In the dialogue leading up to example (4), Alvy asks Annie out on a date but she quickly realises she has an audition to be a singer at a club. Alvy then asks her if he can attend and is enthusiastic about joining her. Annie, however, appears reluctant to him being there since it is the first auditioning for a club and is noticeably nervous at the idea of her first gig. Alvy then uses reassurance to show solidarity with her to help her worry less about her current situation. Furthermore, he uses positive politeness to try to find common ground with her be showing he has knowledge about what she is about to face and therefore he knows she will enjoy the experience. Since Alvy is trying to begin a romantic relationship with Annie at this stage of the film, the use of reassurance and trying to find common ground are useful strategies to appeal to Annie's positive face and help him develop a relationship with her.

(5) MARGARET: We need to call his authors and explain what happened. And get Frank's publicity schedule figured out pronto.

ANDREW: **No problem**. I'll just cancel my trip this weekend.

MARGARET: I gave you the weekend off?

ANDREW: It was my Grandma's ninetieth birthday. But **no big deal**. You were right before, I need to stay focused. Professional.

[Film: "The Proposal" (2009). Screenwriter: Peter Chiarelli. In this scene, Andrew finds out Margaret, his boss, expects him to work over the weekend.]

From previous scenes, the audience knows that Margaret's personality is rather unpleasant and because of this her colleagues, particularly her assistant Andrew, dislike her. Even though Andrew is extremely unhappy at this job, he continues to work for Margaret since, thanks to her extremely successful career, she could help him with his aspirations to become an editor himself. In interaction (5), Andrew learns he is expected to work over the weekend even though he had important plans with his family. Even though Margaret is rather unpleasant towards him, her FTA might not be interpreted as severe due to the power imbalance between the participants. It is clear that her imposition affects Andrew negatively and that he is probably irritated by her request. In spite of this, Andrew minimises the burden placed on him by reassuring Margaret that her demand can be does not impose on him. Even though it is known that Andrew does think of her request as an imposition, he uses reassurance to appeal to her positive face as it is of great importance for his career to comply with her demands and meet her needs.

### *Female Dialogue*

(6) GIGI: Hey, Conor. It's Gigi. I just thought, I hadn't heard from you and, I mean how stupid is it that a gal has got to wait for a guy's call anyway, right? I mean, we're all equal, right? More than equal -- more women are accepted into law school now than men, and we do better in those police simulations where you can mistakenly shoot innocent people - - I mean I don't know if you saw that Dateline - but women practically have penises now, right? Well, call me. This is Gigi. Call me.

JANINE: **Don't worry**. He's totally gonna call.

[Film: "He's Just Not That Into You" (2009). Screenwriter: Abby Kohn, Marc Silverstein. Gigi is leaving a voice message to a man she has gone on a date with, after talking to Janine and deciding whether to call him or not.]

Gigi has been hapless in previous relationships, as she consistently misinterprets her dates' intentions and repeatedly attempts to establish relationships with men who do not reciprocate her feelings. As demonstrated in extract (6), her long-winded and slightly incoherent message she is concerned that, once again, she finds herself in another failed relationship. To demonstrate solidarity and support for her friend, Janine uses reassuring phrases and positive politeness to help Gigi feel better. Her choice of words clearly reflects camaraderie and a positive relationship between the two participants, other listeners who do not know Gigi would probably have reacted to her actions in a less reassuring and more pragmatic manner. Taking into consideration the nature of their relationship, had Janine not expressed reassurance that Gigi's problems would be solved, her behaviour might have been perceived as unfriendly and possibly rude by Gigi.

(7) JULIA: So everyone responded "no"?

KARA: No. There's still a bunch of people who've looked at it but haven't responded.

JULIA: Well then I'm sure **it's fine**. You know how bad people are about RSVPing. And it's not like they don't know the drill. We've been doing it for years - Anarkali at 8. People will come.

[Film: "Valentine's Day" (2010). Screenwriter: Katherine Fugate. Kara tells her friend Julia she is concerned none of her invitees has accepted her party invitation.]

In extract (7), Kara is talking to her friend Julia about her disappointment in none of her guests replying to her invitation to a party she is hosting. With the intention of minimising Kara's concerns she uses formulaic expressions of reassurance accompanied by possible reasons for her guests not replying. Moreover, she uses positive politeness and assures Kara that things will work out by showing optimism about people attending her friend's party. Expressions of reassurance, combined with possible explanations for Kara's guests apparent lack of interest, help Julia express solidarity and address her friend's positive face needs. A parallel can be drawn between extract (6) and (7), where both Julia and Janine use expressions of reassurance at a time where their friends need it, and the absence of those lexical items, and politeness strategies could potentially have negative effects on their friendships.

(8) ZOE: Wow. This is... really big news.

NANA: You don't seem happy...Zoe.

ZOE: **Don't worry**. I'm **fine**. I'm really happy for you.

[Film: "The Back-Up Plan" (2010). Screenwriter: Kate Angelo. Zoe's grandmother tells Zoe she is getting married]

In interaction (8), Zoe's grandmother gives her the news that she is getting married soon, from previous scenes the audience knows that Zoe is going through a complicated time in her life as she is soon to become a single mother of twins. When she first hears the news, Zoe reacts with some hesitation and appears surprised by it. However, when her grandmother points out that she might not be taking the news as well as she expected, Zoe uses certain lexical devices to rectify the situation. Zoe's somewhat apathetic reaction could have been interpreted as an FTA by her grandmother who might feel her positive face needs are not being acknowledged. Taking into consideration the nature of their relationship, it is clear that Zoe did not intend to offend her grandmother who, in turn, expresses concern for her. Zoe uses reassuring lexical expressions to signal that her feelings were not hurt and that her grandmother is not indebted to her. To reinforce this sentiment, she appeals to her grandmother's positive face by expressing her happiness for her. Although the news probably affects Zoe, as she learns about it at a complex moment in her life, she uses linguistic devices to indicate that her grandmother's needs at this time, are more important than hers.

(9) TOM: Does Mom know you're here? It's gotta be past 10.

RACHEL: **Don't worry** about it. Start from the beginning. Tell us what happened ...

[Film: "500 Days of Summer" (2008). Screenwriter: Scott Neustadter, Michael H. Weber. Tom's sister, Rachel, is over at Tom's house to talk about his recent break-up.]

In extract (9), Tom is telling his little sister about his recent break-up that has left him devastated. When he notices the time, and realises his sister should be back in her house, she expresses some concern for her being there. She uses an expression of reassurance to show solidarity and communicate that Tom's problems are of more importance than her being home at a certain time. From previous scenes, it is known that Tom is heartbroken and depressed after breaking up with his girlfriend. His sister, with whom he is very close, arrives at his house to help him through it. The expression of reassurance she uses helps her minimise her own potential problems and maximise interest in Tom's positive face, by demonstrating his needs and his concerns are of importance to her as well. In later scenes, it is revealed that Tom has gone through other failed relationships and that her sister has helped him overcome those difficult times. Rachel shows solidarity towards Tom by patiently listening to his problems and showing concern for his wellbeing and this is reflected in her linguistic choices.

(10) JERRY: I know. Sorry I threw a scare into our lives there –

AVERY: **Don't worry** about it -- I never told you what I thought of that memo either –

[Film: "Jerry Maguire" (1996). Screenwriter: Cameron Crowe. Jerry apologises to his future wife for making an important decision it could affect their lives negatively.]

Previous to this scene, Jerry made some decisions at work which got him fired, and thus putting his and Avery's future somewhat at risk. However, he is able to start his own business and get his own clients, before this interaction he tells Avery the good news. In example (10), he

apologises for disrupting their lives temporarily, and Avery responds by using a formulaic expression of reassurance. As in previous examples and as Watts (2003) notes, it is not uncommon to find speech acts such as apologies followed by formulaic expressions of reassurance to communicate to the listener that there is no sense of debt. In this case, Jerry's actions could have had serious consequences for Avery, therefore by using markers that can be interpreted as polite she is demonstrating empathy and solidarity towards Jerry at a complicated time in his life. It could be said that she is being understating and attempts to lessen the burden of his problems by demonstrating he is not imposing or indebted to her at this time.

## E.3 – Hedges Examples Analysis

***Male Dialogue***

(1) JOSH: I didn't like him.

MEL: What's to like?

JOSH: **I think** I **should** go to the party.

MEL: If you **feel** like you **should** go...

JOSH: You don't need me, do ya?

MEL: No, no, no.

JOSH: I mean, unless you want me to…

MEL: Josh! Go to the party. Go, go, go, go.

[Film: "Clueless" (1995). Screenwriter: Amy Heckerling. Josh and Mel are working late, but Josh wants to go to a party that his potential love interest will be at.]

In interaction (1), Josh uses hedges to avoid going on record and stating that he wants to stop working and go to the party, which might be perceived as an FTA by his boss, Mel. Hedging his utterance helps Josh avoid committing to his wish to attend the party, and works as a way of indirectly asking for Mel's permission to go. Even though he has a good relationship with Mel, it can be argued that Josh feels that directly asking to leave work would be inappropriate. Using hedges to weaken the force of his utterance helps him distance himself from the statement, decreases the possibility of disagreements, and shows Mel that ultimately the decision is his to be made.

(2) ARTHUR: **So, maybe** one day while you're here, I'll take you for a drive and show you the old Hollywood. The one I knew.

IRIS: Would you really? What about now? Are you too tired?

[Film: "The Holiday" (2006). Screenwriter: Nancy Meyers. Arthur invites Iris to a tour of his favourite parts of Hollywood.]

In example (2), Arthur invites Iris, who is temporarily based in Los Angeles, on a tour of Hollywood. Their relationship is by no means a romantic one, and at this point in the film the two characters are at the beginning of developing a friendship. Arthur hedges his invitation through the use of modality to avoid making a direct invitation and potentially imposing on Iris. Modal verbs help the speaker weaken the level of commitment to a proposition (Simpson, 1993), and in

this case help Arthur make his invitation tentative and minimise any sense of obligation on Iris to accept.

***Female Dialogue***

(3) AMANDA: **Maybe** we should realize that what we've had these past few weeks is perfect and **maybe** it won't get any better than this... **and maybe** you liking me is really **only because** you know it can't work. **And maybe** I can fantasize about how perfect you are because I can't ever really be with you ...and **maybe, maybe... Maybe** we're trying to figure this out because it makes us feel good to feel this way...'Cause we both know, if you lived in L.A., we'd take months to get to this point so **maybe** the fact that I'm leaving in eight hours makes this far more exciting than it **might** really be. **Maybe.**

[Film: "The Holiday" (2006). Screenwriter: Nancy Meyers. Amanda is telling Graham that she thinks their relationship is over.]

In example (3), Amanda and Graham are discussing the future of their relationship and considering starting a long-distance relationship, but Amanda does not think it would be a good idea. Even though she does not state it directly, she is trying to express that she wants to end the relationship, with can be interpreted as an attack on Graham's positive face. By repeatedly expressing uncertainty about her statements, Amanda tries to minimise the negative impact her utterances will have on Graham. A more blunt delivery of her message might be interpreted by him as indifference towards his feelings and could cause more harm. Using this politeness strategy help Amanda demonstrate that, in spite of the circumstances, her intention is not to attack his face needs.

(4) HEALY: Yeah, it's fun for them, but it's heaven for me. Those goofy bastards are just about the best thing I have in this crazy old world. Ooh, hey, I gotta run.

MARY: Look, **uh, I was thinking maybe we should** go have dinner sometime.

[Film: "There's Something About Mary" (1998). Screenwriter: Farrelly Brothers. Mary asks Healy on a date.]

In interaction (4), Mary hedges her utterance when asking Healy to go on a date with her. Hedging her offer serves the purpose of minimising imposition on Healy, while at the same time helps her protect her own positive face in the event of a rejection. As in previous examples, using modality combined with other politeness markers allow the speakers to distance themselves from the proposition and avoids making assumptions about the listeners wants. Even though Grice's maxim of quantity is infringed by including these politeness markers, a direct offer might be perceived as overly forward and not appropriate for the type of relationship between the participants.

## E.4 – Please Examples Analysis

### *Male Dialogue*

(1) VON: Look, I'm fine, Charlie, and I'm sorry about the numbers, but would you **please** do your best, okay?

[Film: "Mr. Right". Screenwriter: Max Landis]

In example (1), the use of *please* following a modal verb in interrogatives commonly functions as a way of making polite requests. Previous to his request, Von apologises for a mistake he has made, it can be argued his attempt to make his request more polite knowing his previous actions might have angered Charlie. The use of *please* help Von express a sense of urgency in his plea, and demonstrate to his friend the importance of the request. In many cases the use of *please* in interrogatives preceded by modals such as *could* or *would* illustrate frustration or irritation on the part of the speaker (Sato, 2008). However, in this case the speaker's actions might have caused annoyance on the listener, and therefore when making his request he uses *please* as a mark of politeness to compensate for his own mistakes.

(2) KIRK: Okay, listen, I brought a date tonight. I really like her. **Please** don't embarrass me in front of her. I'll do anything you want.

[Film: "She's Out of My League". Screenwriter: Sean Anders, John Morris. Kirk is asking his brother Eric to behave well in front of the girl he has just started dating]

The use of *please* in extract (2) is seen here followed by demand or directive towards Kirk's friend. The use of this politeness marker in this example, helps the speaker express a strong sense of emotion and desperation for his request to be accepted. Following his request, Kirk offers to return the favour which further illustrates his need for his brother to comply with the request. From previous scenes in the film, it is known that his brother tends to display inappropriate behaviour frequently, and Kirk fears this might affect the outcome of his date negatively. The use of *please* serves to make his command more polite and also convey its urgency. Kirk's goals are at risk if his brother behaves inappropriately, and therefore he uses these politeness strategies to increase the possibility of a positive outcome.

### *Female Dialogue*

(3) KATHLEEN: **Please** leave. I beg you.

[Film: "You've Got Mail". Screenwriter: Nora Ephron, Delia Ephron. Kathleen is waiting on a blind date at a restaurant, but Joe tries to join her.]

In extract (3), Kathleen uses *please* to mitigate the force of her directive towards Joe, which is followed by her reinforcing her desire for him to leave. As in previous examples, the use of *please* before commands can help the speaker express the importance or urgency of the directive. At this point in the film, Kathleen and Joe's relationship is estranged by the rivalry between their respective business, and therefore interactions between these two characters tend to be cold and somewhat distant. In this scene, Joe knows Kathleen is waiting for her blind date and tries to embarrass her. Kathleen would not be faulted for going on the record baldly and demanding Joe

leave, however, she chooses to use this politeness marker to express the importance of his compliance and mitigate the force of her request and ultimately achieve her goal.

(4) GERTRUDE: Upstairs; dining room; that's my study, **please** don't go in, I'm re-alphabetizing- And this is where you'll be sleeping!

[Film: "Ruby Sparks" Screenwriter: Zoe Kazan. Gertrude is giving Ruby a tour of her house.]

In example (4), *please* is followed by an instruction from Gertrude to Ruby not to go into a certain room of the house. The directive is followed by an explanation to justify her request, and failure to comply to the instructions would have negative consequences for Gertrude. Using *please* before a command help the speaker demonstrate a strategic approach to giving commands to her guest and expresses a less face-threatening message had the command been imparted with no mitigating devices. The level of imposition of Gertrude's request is low and compliance with her request is highly likely, given that Gertrude is the host, and that Ruby is her son's girlfriend. With this power relations in mind, the use of *please* here can be interpreted as a politeness strategy on Gertrude's part, as its absence would probably have had the same level of compliance and would not have affected her own face needs.

## E.5 - Positive Emotion Examples Analysis

### *Male Dialogue*

(1) ANNIE: Living together hasn't been so bad, has it?

ALVY: It's all **right** for me, it's been **terrific**, you know? **Better** than either one of my marriages. See, 'cause … 'cause there's just something different about you. I don't know what it is, but it's **great**.

[Film: "Annie Hall" (1977). Screenwriter: Woody Allen, Marshall Brickman. After reconciliating Annie and Alvy move back in together.]

In interaction (1), Alvy uses a number of tokens to express his content with their living situation. These markers help him express agreement with Annie and reassure her that he is happy with her. Positive emotion words help Alvy demonstrate his feelings towards Annie and meet her positive face needs, and contribute to keeping their romantic relationship smooth. In this extract, not only does Alvy speak highly of Annie as a person but also expresses his happiness with the current state of their relationship. As his romantic partner, it is likely that Annie is pleased by his positive evaluation and sees her face wants met.

(2) HOLDEN: I **love** you.

ALYSSA: You love me.

HOLDEN: I **love** you. And not in a **friendly** way, although I think we're **great** friends. And not in a misplaced **affection**, puppy-dog way, although I'm sure that's what you'll call it. And it's not because you're unattainable. I **love** you. Very simple, very truly. You're the epitome of every attribute and quality I've ever looked for in another person. […] But I can't do this any longer. I can't stand next to you without wanting to hold you. I can't look into your eyes without feeling that longing you only read about in trashy romance novels. I can't talk to you without wanting to express my **love** for everything you are.

[Film: "Chasing Amy" (1997). Screenwriter: Kevin Smith. Holden tells his true feelings to Amy in an attempt to become more than friends.]

In interaction (2) Holden proclaim his love for Alyssa and appeals to her positive face to achieve his goal of developing a romantic relationship with her. By openly displaying his emotions and making himself vulnerable he attempt to obtain a positive reaction from Alyssa. His declaration of love, however, can be interpreted as an imposition on Alyssa, who might not reciprocate his feeling and would therefore find herself in an uncomfortable position. The use of positive emotion words to highlight positive qualities he perceives can help him avoid a negative reaction from Alyssa. The strategic display of emotions in this interaction can sometimes allow the speaker to achieve his interpersonal goals.

***Female Dialogue***

(3)ROBBIE: So how did you know this Glen guy was the one?

JULIA: The one? Well I guess I always thought the **right** one was the one I could vision myself growing old with. Glen is so **smart** and **good-looking**, and I was **amazed** that a guy like that would be **interested** in someone like me, you know, just a waitress.

[Film: "The Wedding Singer" (1998). Screenwriter: Tim Herlihy. Robbie asks Julia about her fiancé.]

In interaction (3), shares a personal appraisal of her fiancé with Robbie. At this point in the film, their relationship has not turned into a romantic one yet since Julia is engaged, but they are beginning to find out more about each other. When Robbie asks Julia a rather personal question about her love life, she is open to demonstrate her affection and highlight the positive qualities she sees in her future husband. Although the strategic use of these positively charged words are not aimed at flattering Robbie, Julia opening up to Robbie on such a personal matter help enhance their relationship. As a matter of fact, as the two characters display more and more vulnerability and discuss more subject where they have to show their emotions, their relationship grows stronger.

(4) NATALIE: I was hoping you'd **win**, not that I wouldn't have been **nice** to the other bloke, just always given him the boring biscuits with no chocolate.

PM: Thanks very much. Thanks... Natalie.

[Film: "Love Actually" (2003). Screenwriter: Richard Curtis. Natalie is making small talk with her new boss.]

Although interactions between these characters are mostly work related, from the first time they meet, they both seem to be seeking more than a professional relationship with the other. However, due to the power dynamics between the characters - Prime Minister and secretary – they are cautious when interacting with one another and strategic with their language choices. In extract (4), Natalie is vocal about her being joyous that her boss became Prime Minister, and insinuates that he is being treated better than his opponent would have, and in doing so addresses his positive face needs. Natalie's positively-emotional utterance accompanied by other positive politeness strategies help her gradually evolve to a more intimate relationship.

## E.6 - Informal Title Examples Analysis

***Male Dialogue***

(1) GUY: **Dude,** you rock! [Film: "Never Been Kissed" (1999). Screenwriter: Abby Kohn, Marc Silverstein.]

(2) JACK: That really sucks, **dude.** [Film: "Forgetting Sarah Marshall" (2008). Screenwriter: Jason Segel.]

Although the use of *dude* is most commonly used by younger men addressing their peers, its use is not only restricted to men and has expanded as a more gender-neutral form of address (Kiesling, 2004). The use of dude helps the speaker express camaraderie with the listener, and is commonly interpreted as a positive politeness strategy. In examples (1) and (2), the characters are friends, and no romantic relationship is being pursued by either participant and therefore the risk of causing offence in minimal. Had the female listener been interested in a romantic relationship with the male speaker, and had she been addressed as *dude*, it is possible that she would feel her need to be liked or admired was not met.

(3) MILES: Thanks, **buddy.** [Film: "Intolerable Cruelty" (2003). Screenwriter: Coen Brothers]

(4) JERRY: Just for a few minutes, **buddy** – [Film: "Jerry Maguire" (1996). Screenwriter: Cameron Crowe]

(5) DAN: I'm sorry, **buddy.** [Film: "What Women Want" (2000). Screenplay: Josh Goldsmith, Cathy Yuspa]

The use of the term *buddy* in extracts (3) to (5), are used as a term of endearment to a certain degree. The speakers have a certain emotional connection with the listeners such as friends (3), stepfather (4), or mentor (5), and the presence of this term of address attends to the listeners' positive face wants. When addressing strangers, or listeners in a higher position of power, the presence of this term can easily be perceived as disrespectful or condescending which would be seen as impolite behaviour on the part of the speaker.

(6) NICK: What's a best man for? I guess that pilot's license came in handy after all. Here you go, **champ.** [Film: "Crazy Rich Asians" (2018). Screenwriter: Jon M. Chu]

(7) DR. PELLAGRINO: Hi, there, **champ.** And you must be Debbie's sister... Alice. [Film: "Knocked Up" (2007). Screenwriter: Judd Apatow.]

Similarly to the use of *buddy*, *champ* is commonly used as a term of endearment towards the listener. It is also used among participants with similar power (6), or by a speaker with some form of power over the listener (7). In both examples, the use of this term helps the speaker meet the listeners' positive face wants.

## E.7 - Swearing Examples Analysis

***Male Dialogue***

In (1) two instances of negative vocatives are observed; one of the characters is complaining about his peer not meeting the expectations of something he was paid to do. It is worth mentioning that even though the insults were not directly aimed at the listener, they refer to a friend of the addressee and therefore it is expected that the use of these personalised negative vocatives will offend the listener.

(1)JOEY: What's Bianca doing here with that cheese **dick**? I didn't pay you to let some little **punk ass** snake me.

[Film: "10 Things I Hate About You" (1999). Screenwriter: Karen McCullah Lutz, Kirsten Smith. Joey is confronting the main character over plans not going his way]

Upon inspection of (2), the use of negative vocatives can be interpreted as verbally aggressive and rude given that the listener does not have a close relationship with the speaker (Culpeper, 2011, pp. 98-100). Even though insults are not directed at the addressee, the use of negative modifiers result in an aggressive and potentially offensive message.

(2) KUMAIL: Who the **fuck** is this "we", man? Who the **fuck** is this "we"? It's me and you. We're just people. **Fucking** listen to me. **Fuck** this corporate entity. Put four slices of cheese on the **fucking** burger.
[Film: "The Big Sick" (2017). Screenwriter: Kumail Nanjiani, Emily V. Gordon. Kumail, the male lead, becomes angry when told his order cannot be placed at a fast-food restaurant]

In (3) for example, the male lead expresses his anger in a fight with his girlfriend and personalised negative vocatives as well as negative expressions are observed. However, it should be noted that the character avoids, to some extent, to direct the insults to his pregnant girlfriend, but blames her hormones for her behaviour. In spite of this, it is clear that it constitutes a face-threatening act, and the addressee will be hurt.

(3) BEN: You know what? I know this isn't you talking, it's your hormones, but I would just like to say, "**Fuck you**, hormones! You are a **crazy bitch**, hormones! Not Alison! Hormones!" **Fuck** them. It's a girl. Buy some pink **shit**!

[Film: "Knocked Up" (2007). Screenwriter: Judd Apatow. Ben becomes angry when his girlfriend questions his commitment to their relationship]

In the example (4) below, the main male character does not use any personalised negative vocatives but does use lexicon which can be classified as offensive (Wang et. al., 2014). It is also worth noting that the listener is a potential love interest, and this type of language might have a negative impact on the relationship. However, the choice of words for this character might be intentional to portray someone who is not concerned with pleasantries regardless of who the addressee is.

(4)MIKE: No. Some men pretend to care. When we ask you how you're doing, it's just guy code for "let me put my **dick** in your **ass**."
[Film "The Ugly Truth" (2009). Screenwriter: Nicole Eastman, Karen McCullah, Kirsten Smith. Mike and Abby are discussing relationships.]

Consider (5), where some similarities can be found with the previous extract. The male character uses potentially offensive language, but his aim is not to insult the addressee, who is also a love interest. In the three extracts given (3-5) the speakers and listeners were all love interests.

(5)BEN: You're a **dick** if you date a girl for too long, and don't marry her. But you marry her, and then you're an **asshole** for marrying her before you're ready. **Shit** – I don't know.

[Film: "He's just not that into you" (2009). Screenwriters: Marc Silverstein, Abby Kohn. Two of the main characters are talking about the reason they married their partner]

***Female Dialogue***

Consider (6) where Sally uses some potentially offensive words can be identified but note that while they are not intended as an insult towards Harry, given the context she might be using unpalatable questions or other devices to show her anger towards the listener.

(6) Sally: What the **hell** does that have to do with anything? That will prove that I'm over Joe? Because I **fucked** somebody?

[Film: "When Harry Met Sally" (1989). Screenwriter: Nora Ephron. Harry and Sally are talking about past relationships]

In (7), Mercedes is having an argument with her future ex-husband and utters personalised negative references which clearly aim to offend the listener. No examples were found which contained as many taboo words or insults which were aimed at hurting or offending the listener as in (7) for films written by a group of equals or female writers.

(7)MERCEDES: Loser! I MARRIED A LOSER!!! With a tiny **dick**! Tiny **dick** LOSER!

[Film: "Larry Crowne" (2011). Screenwriter: Tom Hanks, Nia Vardalos. Mercedes and her husband are having an argument]

For example, in (8), Katherine - Tess's boss - finds out Tess plans and feels betrayed and utters two formulaic impoliteness expressions: [demonstrative pronoun] [adjective] [offensive noun].

(8) KATHERINE: Tess, you forgot your n-notebook... That... little...**slut**! That...**goddamn** little **bitch**...secretary!

[Film: "Working Girl" (1988). Screenwriter: Kevin Wade. Katherine finds evidence that the main character is making plans behind her back.]

In interaction (9), the characters are mother and daughter talking about relationship problems they have had. Clearly, the use of offensive language here is not aimed as an attack on the addressee, but to express anger about the situation. In this particular case, the speaker could have used more aggressive language, but she is aware that her mother is the listener and that might cause offense.

(9) MARIN: **Fucking** men. You don't care when I say **fuck**, do you?

[Film: "Something's Gotta Give" (2003). Screenwriter: Nancy Meyers]

Consider (10), where the character uses swear words when talking to her friend; and similarly to the previous example, the aim is not to attack the listener. It is worth noting that the main character and her group of close friends frequently use offensive language, and although within their group

it might not constitute a face-threatening act, it is seen as that in other contexts as it is depicted in the film.

(10) SHAZZER: **Fuck** 'em. **Fuck** the lot of them. Tell them they can stick **fucking** Leavis... up their **fucking** asses.

[Film: "Bridget Jones's Diary" (2001). Screenwriter: Helen Fielding, Richard Curtis, Andrew Davies]

## E.8 – Linguistic Negation Examples Analysis

### *Male Dialogue*

(1) ZOE: Are you making fun of me? Do you think I spoil him?

STAN: **No,** I really think you're amazing […]

[Film: "The Back-Up Plan" (2010). Kate Angelo. Zoe and Stan are discussing Zoe's love for dogs and how that helped her start her own business.]

(2)DIANE: Don't do this to me. You're too good at making me nervous.

JIM: **No,** listen to me. You're the best in the country, **don't** you understand? […] narrows it down to one brilliant person who is so special that they celebrate you on two continents […] So tell me something, where's the flaw in that? There is **no** flaw.

[Film: "Say Anything". Cameron Crowe. Jim tells his daughter that she has won a scholarship.]

In interactions (1) and (2), the use of negation in its different functions, helps the speakers address the addressees' positive face. The presence of *no* in both examples is used to contradict the listeners when they express they feel insecure about certain aspects in themselves. In (1), the use of *no* helps Stan clarify that he admires certain qualities about Zoe and avoids being misinterpreted by her. While in (2), Jim uses negation in different ways to counter his daughter's insecurities and attend to her positive face needs and build her confidence.

### *Female Dialogue*

(3) DANIEL: So, um, how about a drink at my place? Totally innocent, no funny business...just full sex.

BRIDGET: **No, no, no.** I should get a taxi. But thank you for the lovely dinner.

[Film: "Bridget Jones's Diary" (2001). Screenwriter: Helen Fielding, Andrew Davies, Richard Curtis]

In example (3), Bridget declines Daniel's invitation through the use of negation. However, she minimises the risk of threatening Daniel's positive face needs by following her rejection by thanking him. Considering that Daniel is Bridget's boss, declining an offer from a superior can have negative consequences for her. Daniel's request, on the other hand, is rather forthright, but given their hierarchies the risk of being considered an attack on Bridget's face is not as great had the roles been reversed. Even though Bridget ultimately accepts his invitation, it could be argued that she believes it necessary to reject his offer at first not necessarily as a negative politeness strategy, but more closely related to unwritten rules about women becoming involved with their

superiors in the way Daniel proposes. In contrast with the way negation is used in example (5), negation here is followed by markers of politeness to minimise the risk of causing offence.

## E.9 - Second Person Pronouns Examples Analysis

The following extracts help illustrate the many different uses of second person pronouns and their different contribution to politeness or impoliteness realisations.

***Male dialogue***

(1) JAMIE: Or I could give **you** 5% of the profits. [Film: "Love Actually" (2003). Screenwriter: Richard Curtis.]

(2) RABBI: **You** should come to our temple. [Film: "You've Got Mail" (1998). Screenwriter: Nora Ephron, Delia Ephron.]

(3) BEN: No work today. Do **you** want to get breakfast? [Film: "Knocked Up" (2007). Screenwriter: Judd Apatow.]

(4) MILES: If I came over there, would **you** go out with me New Year's Eve? [Film: "The Holiday" (2006). Screenwriter: Nancy Meyers.]

(5) JOSH: No, no, ah, that's not what I meant. **You**'re young **you**'re and beautiful... and... [Film: "Clueless" (1995). Screenwriter: Amy Heckerling.]

(6) CHRISTIAN: **You** asshole! [Film: "Clueless" (1995). Screenwriter: Amy Heckerling.]

(7) JOE: Shut up. I was a lawyer. Just like **you**. And my clients? Whores just like **you**. [Film: "Intolerable Cruelty" (2003). Screenwriter: Coen Brothers.]

(8) MILO: **You** better run, **you** crazy bitch. [Film: "The Bounty Hunter" (2010). Screenwriter: Sarah Thorp.]

***Female Dialogue***

(9) MOLLY: Can I give **you** a hand? [Film: "She's Out of My League" (2010). Screenwriter: Sean Anders, John Morris]

(10) PATRICIA: Would **you** get me another drink, sweetie? I'm all out. [Film: "You've Got Mail" (1998). Screenwriter: Nora Ephron, Delia Ephron.]

(11) TRACY: **You** should talk! **You** have a whiny voice. [Film: "Manhattan" (1979). Screenwriter: Woody Allen, Marshall Brickman.]

(12) JANE: I think **you**'re the Devil. [Film: "Broadcast News" (1987). Screenwriter: James L. Brooks.]

(13) ROSE: None of **your** business. [Film: "Moonstruck" (1987). Screenwriter: John Patrick Shanley]

(14) BIANCA: **You**'re sweet. [Film: "10 Things I Hate About You" (1999). Screenwriter: Karen McCullah, Kirsten Smith]

## E. 10 - First Person Singular Pronouns Examples Analysis

The following extracts help illustrate the many different uses of first-person singular pronouns and their different contribution to politeness or impoliteness realisations.

***Male Dialogue***

(1) BOB: Excuse **me**, could **I** have a coffee? No straw. [Film: "Return to Me" (2000). Screenwriter: Bonnie Hunt, Don Lake.]

(2) TED: Well...to be honest...**I**'m really crazy about you and it's making **me** nervous and when **I** get nervous **I**'m not myself and **I**'m afraid **I**'m going to doing something really dumb before we get started so **I** think **I** should just lay back until **I** regain **my** composure. [Film: "There's Something About Mary" (1998). Screenwriter: Farrelly Brothers]

(3) STAN: **I**'m sorry. **I**... **I**'m stunned. **I** don't know what to say. What the fuck am **I** supposed to say?! This is great fucking news? Congratulations?! Why did you wait so long to tell **me**? [Film: "The Back-Up Plan" (2010). Kate Angelo.]

### *Female Dialogue*

(4) ANNIE: Oh Jimmy, honey, **I** think it sounds wonderful! [Film: "Bull Durham" (1988). Screenplay: Ron Shelton.]

(5) TIFFANY: **I** always get **myself** in these fucking situations. **I** give everything to other people and nobody ever, **I** never -- **I** don't get what **I** want, okay? **I**'m not my sister. [Film: "Silver Linings Playbook" (2012). Screenwriter: David O. Russell.]

(6) KAT: **I** want to go to an East Coast school! **I** want you to trust **me** to make **my** own choices. **I** want – [Film: "10 Things I Hate About You" (1999). Screenwriter: Karen McCullah, Kirsten Smith.]