

## Abstract

Politeness and Face negotiation are an integral aspect of interpersonal communication. The significant role of face for maintaining harmony has long been acknowledged in the studies of politeness. Politeness arises as a result of face negotiation in interaction. It is noticed that the existing studies perceive politeness as a normative behavior. They contend that in daily interpersonal communication, participants engage in face-negotiation naturally without even noticing it. However, in the situations of differences and conflict, the participants' 'face' comes under challenge. Face-negotiation in such situations becomes challenging. Although face has evoked a plethora of researches in interpersonal social interaction, it has not been explored much in interpersonal conflict situations. The research is an attempt to examine politeness strategies in interpersonal conflict interactions from the perspective of face-negotiation. The data for analysis is taken from two collections of short fiction of Jhumpa Lahiri, *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008) and *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999). In these stories we find interpersonal conflict as an underlying theme, and in several contexts protagonists seem to engage in face negotiation, while striving for a smooth communication. The methodology for analysis is taken from Face Negotiation Theory of Stella Ting-Toomey (1985). Although the model discusses face work in intercultural conflict contexts, it provides an insight for various face strategies in conflict situations in interpersonal contexts as well. The analysis reveals that in interpersonal interactions, during conflict, face negotiation demands an extra mindfulness on the part of the participants and it is guided by certain human and relational factors. Human factors include courage, integrity and emotional bond, whereas relational factors include power relation between participants, relational histories of participants, and their interdependence. The study observes certain major points relating to effective face negotiation in interpersonal conflict situations. It emphasizes on emotional strength as a motivation for face negotiation. Free and healthy communication is taken as the base of effective face negotiation. Selection of appropriate conflict styles and communication strategy is considered necessary for face negotiation.

Keywords: Politeness, Face Negotiation, Conflict, Interpersonal Communication, Mindfulness