

FACE NEEDS

Goffman (1967)

Face is “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact”.

Brown & Levinson's Concept of Politeness (1978)

- Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that in order to meet Face needs a speaker will adopt Positive and Negative Politeness Strategies
- Politeness strategies are used to preserve the other speaker's **FACE**: the respect you have for yourself, maintaining self-esteem in public/private situations, *eg. embarrassment or feeling uncomfortable*.
- **Face Threatening Acts**: acts which infringe on the hearer's need to maintain his/her self-esteem (face), to be and feel respected.
- **Face Saving Acts**: Speakers develop politeness strategies for dealing with situations where face may be lost.

Positive Face Needs

- **Positive Face Needs** means that we want to be liked and approved of (hence the way we use greetings, compliments and appropriate terms of address).
- *Hello! How are you? Good to see you!*
- *Greetings like this will meet Positive Face Needs*

Negative Face Needs

- **Negative Face Needs** means that a considerate person will wrap up unpleasant requests in orders by using hedges (“It’s sort of difficult but...”) and apologies (“I’m sorry but would you mind if...”) thus avoiding face threatening behaviour.
- So interaction like this means that a person’s negative face needs have been met

