

A Comparative Pragmatic Study of Threatening Speech Acts in Trump's and Araghchi's Posts during the U.S.–Israel–Iran War

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ABSTRACT

The study deals with a pragmatic analysis for threatening in the social media posts of both Donald Trump and Abass Araghchi that are related to the U.S.–Israel–Iran War in 2026 by using an eclectic model of Searle's (1969, 1976) and Brown and Levinson's (1987). The study deals with analyzing speech act theory and politeness theory. The study aims at: Identifying the meaning of speech act of threat. Showing the way the politicians use of politeness theory and its strategies. Recognizing the effect of using speech act and politeness theory on the delivered message. The study hypothesized that: Both of Trump and Araghchi use indirect speech act rather than direct speech act for the sack of diplomacy. Bald-on record is the highly used by Araghchi rather than Trump. Collectively, the findings validate the study's hypotheses; Trump uses indirect speech act (71%) and Araghchi (87%) while the direct (28%) for Trump and (12.5%) for Araghchi. The second hypothesis is valid too since Trump uses bald-on strategy (33%) and Araghchi (50%) this is related to the fact that Araghchi uses a direct and unmitigated judgment, his uses strong words and communicate in straightforward manner, leaving little ambiguity.

KEYWORDS: Donald Trump, Abass Araghchi, the U.S.–Israel–Iran War, threatening, politeness theory.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Problem

SA of threatening mainly employed to tell others about future detrimental consequences whether it is spoken or written (Ali, 2019: 6). However, it is regarded as "unwelcome promise" because it brings an unpleasant action to the addressee (Grant, 1949: 362 cited in Ali, 2019: 6). Speech act of threatening can be expressed clearly called "direct" when it is expressed implicitly it is regarded as "indirect". Since this paper deals with the speech of political people, so it is necessary to diagnose the politeness theory and the four strategies. Henceforth, the present paper tries to answer the following questions:

1. What is meant by threat as a speech act and how it is expressed by the speakers?
2. How politician people make use of politeness theory in their speech?
3. Does politeness theory and speech act theory affect the message delivered to the hearers?

1.2 The Aims:

The study aims at:

1. Identifying the meaning of speech act of threat.

2. Showing the way the politicians use of politeness theory and its strategies.
3. Recognizing the effect of using speech act and politeness theory on the delivered message.

1.3 The Hypotheses:

It is hypothesized that:

1. Both of Trump and Araghchi use indirect speech act rather than direct speech act for the sack of diplomacy.
2. Bald-on record is the highly used by Araghchi rather than Trump.
3. Araghchi uses positive politeness strategy more than Donald Trump does.

1.4 Procedures

The following steps are followed:

1. Presenting a theoretical background about threatening speech act and politeness theory.
2. Analyzing six speeches for Trump and six for Araghchi in respect of The U.S.–Israel–Iran war, according to eclectic model of Searle's (1969, 1976) and Brown and Levinson's (1987)

1.5 The Limits

The study is limited to analyzing threatening speech act and politeness theory in twelve extracts, six for Trump and six for Araghchi, in respect to "The U.S.–Israel–Iran war" in the period from January, 2026 to Mid-May 2026.

1.6 The Value

The study is hoped to be valuable for those who are interested in politics and analyzing the speech of the pollical figures

2. Speech act of threatening:

1.2 Definition

Searle (23: 1969) defines Speech act (henceforth SA) as an utterance that performs an action, just like threatening, ordering, promising etc. speech acts are very important in understanding the way language functions in communication, particularly when the speaker intents to convey a specific message beyond literal meanings.

Speech act theory is classified to three cats: locutionary (literal meaning), illocutionary (intended meaning) and perlocutionary act (effect of the listener) (Austin, 101:1962). Later, Searle classified illocutionat act into five categories: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations (Searle, 23-24:1969).

SA of threatening mainly employed to tell others about future detrimental consequences whether it is spoken or written (Ali, 2019: 6). However, it is regarded as "unwelcome promise" because it brings an unpleasant action to the addressee (Grant,1949: 362 cited in Ali, 2019: 6).

threatening is intended to cause harm and inconvenience on the behalf of the hearer if s/he does not comply with the speaker's wishes. Clashing with polite norms and conventions consistent in any given language. Limberg (2008:164) states that threatening is issued in conflict situations. It is mostly found in situations when the addressee does not comply with the speaker's wishes. Therefore, in public contexts this type of act is issued implicitly rather than explicitly. However; there are some situations that require threatening SA to be expressed explicitly, for example in upbringing children. It is also realized in reply to threat acts. For illustration:

(1) A: *I'll don't punch you on the nose.*

B: *Don't threaten me (Stubbs, 1983:156).*

SA of threatening it regarded as "hybrid speech act" since it is related to directive SAs because it is being speaker- oriented as Searle (1969) accommodates, and commissive SAs because it is addressee- oriented as Leech (1983) point of view. Moreover, threats can be achieved by non-human beings; for instance, "Clouds threaten heavy rain." (Searle and Vanderveken, 1985: 139). Yule (54: 1996) states that when expresses a SA of threatening the speaker intents to do harmful action in which there is a negative consequence in the future for the hearer, therefore he regards it as a type of **commissive act**. Henceforth; Searle (1976: 10-12) expresses an idea that In political discourse, threat is regarded as directive SA or commissive one since they are relevant for analyzing coercion.

SA of threatening can be used positively by managers, bosses, officers, teachers, etc. to achieve their will which has useful outcomes. Also, ot can be used negatively criminals, thieves to achieve their malicious wills (Hernandez, 2001: 287). As in:

2. *"Your money or your life".*

Or, the speaker has an institutional, personal or social power, such as:

3. *"If you hurt them, I will sue you." (ibid).*

2.2 Felicity conditions

For the speech act of threatening to be felicitous, it should follow the felicity conditions which are a set of rules responsible for creating the illocutionary force of a given utterance (Searle,1969: 59-69) (Levinson, 1983: 238-239). These conditions are:

1. The speaker informs the hearer to do a future action.
2. Even though the hearer does not want to do the action, the speaker wants the hearer to do that.

3. The speaker knows that the hearer can do that action, but doing the action occur in the behalf of the speaker.
4. The speaker thinks that the hearer does not want to do the action.
5. Both of them are normal, conscious beings.
6. The utterance is spoken by the speaker seriously not in a joking circumstances.
7. The utterance has some illocutionary Force indicating device.

3.2 Dimensions for the SA of threatening

Hall, et al(2013: 298) mention that there are certain dimensions should be followed to achieve SA of threatening. These dimensions are:

1. Negativity: It includes harm, damage, danger, loss, etc.
2. Intentionality: The speaker has the will to do the threat.
3. Potentiality: The speaker has the ability to achieve the intended goal.
4. Imminence: the speaker's performance of the threat could be followed by some entailments.
5. Relativity: It refers that threat is specific-goal oriented.

4.2 Direct and Indirect Speech Acts of Threatening

Mosly, every SA can be expressed in two ways: directly and in indirectly. When the speaker explicitly threatens the hearer by using clear language. For example:

4. *"I will report you if you don't follow the rules."*

The SA of threatening is so obvious and directly encoded in the sentence structure, (Austin, 98 : 1962).

Another example:

5. *"I am going to kill you."*

In this utterance, SA of threat is expressed directly which means in a straightforward manner. I.e, the speaker will do harm to the hearer (Ali, 2019: 6).

Meanwhile, when using the indirect SA, the speaker implies it rather than stating it outright. The speaker may use statement or question carries the meaning of threat depending on the context. for instance:

6. *"It would be unfortunate if your supervisor heard about this."*

In this utterance, the speaker implicitly implies his threatening. (Searle, 47:1975).

(Levinson, 210: 1983) states that indirect SA of threatening is more socially acceptable and polite since it relies basically on **context, shared knowledge, and inference**. Therefore, the speaker's intention must be interperated by the hearer according to situational cues. (Brown, 70: 1987) adds that a speaker may

choose the indirect way of threatening to reduce face threatening acts, along with politeness theory. So that the speaker achieves the social harmony and conveying threat meaning at the same time.

Henceforth, both direct and indirect SA of threatening achieve the same fundamental function which is expressing harmful future intention but they differ in the way they express that intention

3. Politeness Strategies and Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs)

Brown and Levinson(1987:61) define the term "face" as "public self-image" that every member in the society has and want to privilege for himself. This term is divided into two specific types: positive face, which h the desire to be appreciated, accepted and approved of by the members of the society. While the second one is negative face: the desire to be unimpeded and free from imposition. In political speeches, Face-Threatening Acts (henceforth: FTAs) is often regarded as negative face since there is an attempt to restrict their future behavior.

Brown and Levinson (ibid:95) outline four strategies that Politicians use to manage FTAs: (1) **Bald-on-record** (without any softening, direct threats, e.g., "We will act"), (2) **Off-record** (implied threats by using hints or metaphors, e.g., "It'd be a shame if..."). (3) **Positive politeness** (framing threats as shared concerns i.e, using solidarity, e.g., "We all know the risks"), and (4) **Negative politeness** (softening threats with hedges, e.g., "We might have to intervene").

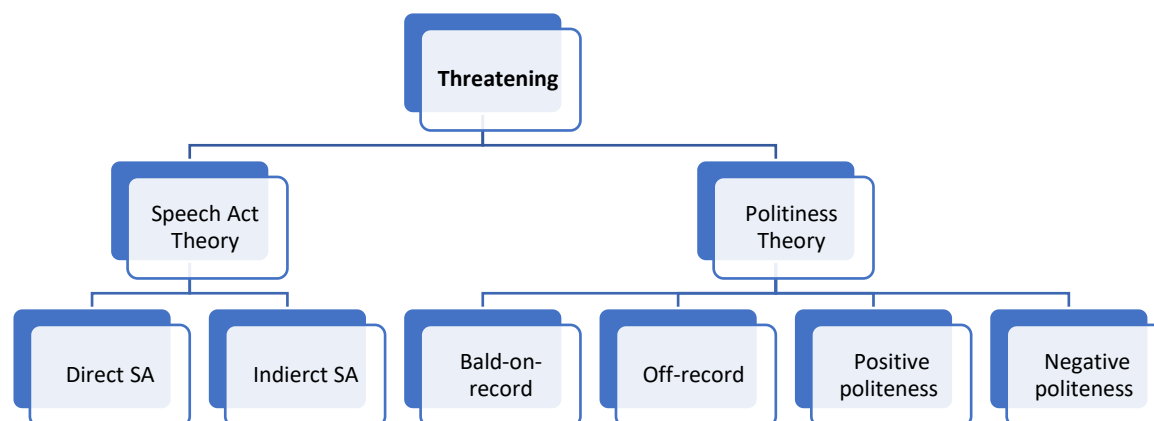
Wodak (70:2009) highlights the fact that using FTA vary according to the speaker's culture. Leaders who are Western often prefer directness, meanwhile Eastern leaders prefer implicature.

4. Methodology

The study adopts an eclectic model that integrates two theoretical models: Speech Act Theory (Searle, 1969), Politeness Theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987), The primary data of this study consists of twelve extracts drawn from the speeches of Donald J. Trump and Abbas Araghchi that are delivered in the American- Iranian war from February 28, 2026 until May, 2026, which is available publicly on social media, exactly on "X" or Tweeter formally. Each extract is analyzed firstly; according to Searle's (1969, 1976) classification of illocutionary acts: assertives, directives, commissives and expressives, therefore, threat is identified as commissive or directive acts. Along with Classify the threat as explicit or implicit. Secondly; according to Brown and Levinson's (1987) classification of politeness strategies. which

include: • Bald-on-record threats (direct impositions), Off-record strategies (implied threats). • Positive politeness (appeals to solidarity) and • Negative politeness (hedged impositions)

Figure (1): The Eclectic Model of the Study



5. Data Analysis

The procedure that is followed in analyzing the following extracts (which are 12 for Donald Trump and 6 for Abbaas Araghchi) are identify the speech act of threatening and classify it whether explicit or implicit. Then, Diagnose the politeness strategy employed.

Extract 1:

“If Iran shots and violently kills peaceful protesters, which is their custom, the United States of America will come to their rescue. We are locked and loaded and ready to go. Thank you for your attention to this matter!” – President Trump.

In this extract the president of the United States expresses an indirect speech act of threatening in the phrase " locked and loaded and ready to go" it is regarded as conditional threat that is if they attack the protesters the US will intervene.

Politeness theory:

According to Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, there is neither diplomatic nor indirect use of hints in manipulating the words, on the contrary, he uses the most direct and clear language. Therefore; the used strategy is bald on record. There is a grate use of FTA in the phrase" which is their custom" as it is regarded as an insult or a damage for their public image by describing them as habitual killers.

Extract 2:

“Many Countries, especially those who are affected by Iran’s attempted closure of the Hormuz Strait, will be sending War Ships, in conjunction with the United States of America, to keep the Strait open and safe. “We have already destroyed 100% of Iran’s Military capability, but it’s easy for them to send a drone or two, drop a mine, or deliver a close-range missile somewhere along, or in, this Waterway, no matter how badly defeated they are.

“Hopefully China, France, Japan, South Korea, the UK, and others, that are affected by this artificial constraint, will send Ships to the area so that the Hormuz Strait will no longer be a threat by a Nation that has been totally decapitated. “In the meantime, the United States will be bombing the hell out of the shoreline, and continually shooting Iranian Boats and Ships out of the water. One way or the other, we will soon get the Hormuz Strait OPEN, SAFE, and FREE!”

This extract contains a direct speech act of threat relying on commissive and assertive verbs to deliver a powerful message. In the line "the United States will be bombing the hell out of the shoreline, and continually shooting Iranian Boats and Ships out of the water" this is considered a direct threat to the Iranian regime which is regarded as a future plan for the US. So that, the verbs like: bombing, shooting, destroyed. This extract contains also an indirect threatening S A such as "Hopefully ... will send Ships to the area so that the Hormuz Strait will no longer be a threat ..." and "Many Countries ... will be sending War Ships ..." also "One way or the other, we will soon get the Hormuz Strait OPEN, SAFE, and FREE!" all of these phrases are indirect threat.

Politeness theory:

In this extract there is Bald-on-Record strategy since there is a clear announcement of the action which is bombing "In the meantime, the United States will be bombing the hell out of the shoreline, and continually shooting Iranian Boats and Ships out of the water." without any softening nor ambiguity nor even use of hedges. In the sentence: "Many Countries, especially those who are affected by Iran's attempted closure of the Hormuz ..." there is a sense of solidarity and appeals to a sense of group unity henceforth: positive politeness strategy appears, since the speaker claims that not only the United State want the strait to be opened but also other countries working together for a common goal. Meanwhile the sentence "Hopefully China, France, Japan, South Korea, the UK, and others, that are affected by this artificial constraint, will send Ships to the area..." contains negative politeness as the speaker uses the justifying expression "Hopefully" rather than using direct demand that these countries send ships which means the speaker uses imposition and give addressees freedom to choose whether to participate.

Extract 3:

Based on conversations with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir, of Pakistan, and wherein they requested that I hold off the destructive force being sent tonight to Iran, and subject to the Islamic Republic of Iran agreeing to the COMPLETE, IMMEDIATE, and SAFE OPENING of the Strait of Hormuz, I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks. This will be a double sided CEASEFIRE! The reason for doing so is that we have already met and exceeded all Military objectives, and are very far along with a definitive Agreement concerning

Longterm PEACE with Iran, and PEACE in the Middle East. We received a 10 point proposal from Iran, and believe it is a workable basis on which to negotiate. Almost all of the various points of past contention have been agreed to between the United States and Iran, but a two week period will allow the Agreement to be finalized and consummated. On behalf of the United States of America, as President, and also representing the Countries of the Middle East, it is an Honor to have this Longterm problem close to resolution. Thank you for your attention to this matter! President DONALD J. TRUMP

This speech carries indirect speech act of threatening in the line: "Subject to the Islamic Republic of Iran agreeing to the COMPLETE, IMMEDIATE, and SAFE OPENING of the Strait of Hormuz..." this can be interpreted as if Iran does not obey the conditions, the suspension of military action may end. The threat is not explicitly stated but is understood from the condition. Also, the line "I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks." Which means that attacks could resume after two weeks if conditions are not met. Thus, a harmful consequence is implied rather than directly threatened. In the line "two week period will allow the Agreement to be finalized and consummated." The speaker means that if the agreement is not fulfilled within the suggested period bad consequences will happen. Therefore, this is regarded as indirect threat.

Politeness theory:

In the line "I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks." without hedging or indirect language, the speaker willingly announces a military decision this a direct, clear, and unambiguous message so that Bald-on-Record strategy is used. The speaker also uses positive politeness strategy when talking about stopping fire for a limited period. In the line "Based on conversations with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir, of Pakistan..." the speaker acknowledges the role of other leader's decision-making process. He shows mutual respect, and shared goals to form a sense of solidarity among them. The same idea is repeated in the sentence "This will be a double-sided CEASEFIRE!" which means that cease fire is beneficial for both of the parties. Another example about using positive politeness theory is in line "Almost all of the various points of past contention have been agreed to between the United States and Iran..." since there is emphases on agreement and common ground.

As it is explained in the theoretical part so far, when the speaker implies or make his speech allowing multiple interpretations, Off-Record strategy appears. For instance, line: "It would be nice if the Strait were opened soon." Could indirectly mean "Iran should open the Strait." Or "Someone needs to solve this problem." Also, the line: "A two-week period will allow the Agreement to be finalized and consummated." Implies that the agreement will succeed. The same in line "It is an Honor to have this Longterm problem close to resolution." The speaker does not explicitly say the conflict is over instead of that he uses the phrase " *close to resolution*."

Extract 4:

"We're negotiating now and it'd be great if we could do something, but they have to open it up. They have to open up the **Strait of Trump**—I mean, **Hormuz**. Excuse me. I'm so sorry. It's such a terrible mistake. The fake news will say, *He*

accidentally said'—no, there's no accidents with me, not too many. If there were, we'd have a major story."

In this extract the speaker uses indirect speech act of threatening in the line "We're negotiating now and it'd be great if we could do something, but they have to open it up." This sentence is conditional sentence, the use of "but" creates condition which can be interpreted as: if they do not open the strait of Hormuz, negotiations will not fulfill. Henceforth, a future consequence will happen. Indirect threat is repeated by using the same words "They have to open up the Strait of Trump—I mean, Hormuz." The use of "have to" means there is a demand with implied future consequences. The intentionally use of slip-of-tongue and the apology are on the locutionary level but still the illocutionary level is a threat.

Politeness theory

In the lines "They have to open it up." And "They have to open up the Strait of Trump—I mean, Hormuz." Bald-on strategy is used because of the use of necessity and obligation by using the modal verb "have to". These two sentences impose a requirement for the side, which is Iran, without any use of hedges or any softening word. The purpose behind that is to make people realize that the United State is the controlling side, holding the reins of the war. The text also contains positive politeness strategy in the line " We're negotiating now and it'd be great if we could do something " because of the existence of the pronoun "we" which gives the sense of partnership and common purpose. Thus, the speaker uses it to present the issue as a shared endeavor and collaborative atmosphere. Negative politeness is also found in the line " it'd be great if we could do something " it is used to reduce the force of the coming actions.

Extract 5:

"If they don't agree, the bombing will begin at a much higher level than it already has. The 'Epic Fury' campaign will escalate to a point this world has never seen before. But if they do agree, the blockade on Kharg Island and their ports will be lifted, and we can move toward a very big, very beautiful deal."

This extract contains an explicit statement of harmful consequences " the bombing will begin" will occur if Iran does not agree about the negotiations. Therefore; it is regarded as direct speech act. The indirect speech act is represented in the line "'Epic Fury' campaign will escalate to a point this world has never seen before" because here the sentence seems to be a prediction. Henceforth he does not explicitly say "I will punish you"

Politeness theory

The text contains a direct, explicit statement. Thus, bald-on- record strategy is clearly used since the speaker declares the consequences without using hedges, apologies or indirect language. Then, the speaker shifted to another strategy which is positive politeness because of the use of the pronoun "we" in the sentence" and we can move toward a very big, very beautiful deal "the speaker try to suggest a corporation rather than a confrontation. Off-record strategy occur in the line " The 'Epic Fury' campaign will escalate to a point this world has never seen before" since there is an indirectness because of the use of the modal verb "will"

Extract 6:

“For Iran, the Clock is Ticking, and they better get moving, FAST, or there won’t be anything left of them. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE!”

The first line is an assertive speech act that describes a situation of urgency. Politically, it is regarded as an indirect speech act of threat since it conveys that Iran has act quickly to avoid negative consequences. The line "They should act quickly. FAST" is a direct threat for Iran urging them to accept all the conditions otherwise bad future consequences will happen as Trump pointed in the following line "there won’t be anything left of them" and he pointed to the fact that " TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE!" in which he wants to urge them and to threatened them in a direct way at the same time.

Politeness theory

In this text Trump uses bald-on strategy because he urging them by using time-critical and direct and severe language " TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE!" also by considering himself as a superior power, all the countries must follow his orders.

The following extracts will deal with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran Abbass Araghchi's speeches concerning the war.

Extract 1:

Plan A for a clean rapid military victory failed, Mr. President. Your Plan B will be even bigger failure. The truth: Chance for unique deal burned after the 'America Last' cabal obscured "significant progress" we made in negotiations. 'Israel First' always means 'America Last'

This speech has neither direct nor indirect speech act of threat. The speaker avoids using it may be to get rid of tensions and to reduce room for negotiation. Also, it may be a technique using no threat but ambiguity to leave the audience uncertain about the actual intentions, even so it can be a tool of pressure without locking in a commitment.

Politeness theory

Araghchi uses direct, unmitigated commands/predictions: “Plan A... failed,” “Your Plan B will be even bigger failure.” No softening language; this is confrontational and intended to dominate the conversational floor. So, this regarded as bald-on record strategy since the speaker prioritizes clarity and force over face-saving. Even the line: "'Israel First' always means 'America Last'" contains direct and clear message without any softening.

Extract 2:

In intensive talks at highest level in 47 years, Iran engaged with U.S in good faith to end war. But when just inches away from "Islamabad MoU", we encountered

maximalism, shifting goalposts, and blockade. Zero lessons earned Good will begets good will. Enmity begets enmity.

In this extract the Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran talking about the ability of having peace between the two parties. He in fact does not use threat verbs in his speeches but in this extract, there is only one use of indirect speech act in the line "Enmity begets enmity." Which implies that hostile behavior will produce hostile responses. Without explicitly saying "If you continue hostile actions, we will hit back." Which are future negative consequences.

Politeness theory

This extract is rich of positive politeness. The line "Iran engaged with U.S in good faith to end war." This means there is a corporation and shared interest toward peace. And Iran is a cooperative negotiating partner. Also, in the line "Good will begets good will." The speaker recommends that positive actions from one side will be matched by positive actions from the other side, Araghchi emphasizes mutuality and cooperation between them.

In the line "Zero lessons earned." Araghchi directly said that other side has failed to learn from past events without any use of hedges nor softening the words. Thus, Bald-on-Record strategy is used here to express his frustration from the other party to fulfill the promises they made and also to strengthen the speaker's position. The line "We encountered maximalism, shifting goalposts, and blockade." Is regarded as bald-on record because the speaker criticize the other side and the obstacles that they faced because of America in a direct and unsoftening way.

Extract 3:

Today is Persian Gulf Day in Iran, marking our ancestors' expulsion of Portuguese from Strait of Hormuz 400 years ago. POTUS uses the correct term "Persian Gulf", not the Pentagon's fake version. But calling Hormuz anything else is indeed a "terrible mistake".

This extract is a reply for the speech of Trump calling the strait of Hormuz as Trump's strait (as it is shown in extract 4) this carries Sayed Abbass Araghchi to reply and use indirect threat as in the line " But calling Hormuz anything else is indeed a "terrible mistake". Rather than the direct for the sake of **Diplomatic appropriateness**, avoiding more openly escalating tensions. Therefore; it is indirect because it implies negative consequences by using the adjective "**terrible**" which intensifies the seriousness of the action being discussed and signals that calling Hormuz by another name is not merely incorrect but "potentially consequential"

Politeness theory

In this text Araghchi uses bald-on strategy in line "But calling Hormuz anything else is indeed a 'terrible mistake". This is considered a direct intentional warning without any use of hedges. Also, the line "Pentagon's fake version" without softening the message, Araghchi criticizes alternative naming practices. He literary does not attempt to reduce FTA for those who are against him. Also, the use of the pronoun "our" means there is shared identity, and common values that Araghchi refers to in order to tell Trump that

Iran has its own history which is impossible to be changed. The strategy that is used here is positive politeness.

Extract 5:

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has proven its commitment to regional stability, but let it be absolutely clear: we do not negotiate under the shadow of ultimatums. Iran is fully prepared for all scenarios. Military threats and obsolete policies of 'maximum pressure' will never force Tehran to compromise on its sovereign rights or surrender its national interests. If Washington chooses escalation over diplomatic equity, the responsibility for the consequences will rest entirely on their shoulders."

In this extract Abbass Araghchi, uses indirect speech act of threatening in the lines: "Iran is fully prepared for all scenarios ", "If Washington escalates... responsibility for the consequences will rest entirely on their shoulders." The threat is carried through out implication that Iran will react and ready to defense itself but without referring to a specific action, so that it is regarded as indirect SA. Also, there is a direct thread in the "Iran is fully prepared for all scenarios." Which is rarely used by Araghchi because direct speech act of threatening is not regarded as diplomatically appropriate.

Politeness theory

In this text, Araghchi uses bald-on strategy intensively in the lines: "We do not negotiate under the shadow of ultimatums.", "Iran is fully prepared for all scenarios." And "Military threats ... will never force Tehran to compromise." The speaker shows the power and strength of Iranian situation in a clear direct way rather than preserving the hearer's face. Meanwhile the speaker uses positive politeness but in one situation only, and he never uses negative politeness, when saying: "The Islamic Republic of Iran has proven its commitment to regional stability." The use of " regional stability " means the speaker knows that Iran is responsible and they share the same interest which is peace, with other countries. But at the same time, the main purpose of this text is confrontation and deterrence for all the threats of Trump. Araghchi uses off-record strategy when he does not declare about the consequences they think about if America shoots them "The responsibility for the consequences will rest entirely on their shoulders." Araghchi manipulate off-record strategy to convey a threatening message.

Extract 6:

"We welcome the constructive efforts of our regional neighbors to defuse current tensions, but diplomacy cannot succeed while our economy remains held hostage. For any framework or temporary truce to transition into a permanent settlement, it must include ironclad guarantees. Any viable ceasefire agreement must guarantee the immediate lifting of the naval blockade imposed on Kharg Island and all Iranian commercial ports, alongside a total halt to foreign aggression and targeted assassinations. Iran's sovereign red lines are non-negotiable."

This text contains indirect speech act of threatening in two lines: "Any viable ceasefire agreement must guarantee the immediate lifting of the naval blockade..." and "Iran's sovereign red lines are non-

negotiable." Using indirect SA make the hearers infer many messages one of them is that Iran will not compromise on its conditions.

Politeness theory

Araghchi tries to convey a message to the hearers that Iran is open to cooperation, so that he makes use of positive politeness in the line "We welcome the constructive efforts of our regional neighbors to defuse current tensions." By using this technique, Araghchi reduces the tension and emphasize that they share the same objective. But at the same time he reminds the hearers that there are conditions that Iran will not dispense with them. So that he uses direct language in these lines: "Any viable ceasefire agreement must guarantee the immediate lifting of the naval blockade..." and "Iran's sovereign red lines are non-negotiable.". Also, off-record strategy is found in the text in lines: "Diplomacy cannot succeed while our economy remains held hostage." And "Iran's sovereign red lines are non-negotiable." These indirect messages are left to be interpreted by the hearers. The speaker says that there are consequences when the red lined are crossed in the negotiations but he does not declare what will happen clearly.

6. The results

The following tables discuss the overall statistical results"

Table (1): deals with the direct and indirect speech act of threatening that are used by Trump:

Item	Count	Frequency
Direct	4	28%
Indirect	10	71%
Total	14	100%

Table (2): deals with the politeness theory strategies that are used by Trump:

Item	Count	Frequency
Bald-on Strategy	6	33%
Positive Strategy	6	33%
Negative Strategy	2	11%
Off-record Strategy	4	22%
Total	18	100%

Table (3) deals with the direct and indirect speech act of threatening that are used by Araghchi.

Item	Count	Frequency
Direct	1	12.5%
Indirect	7	87.5%
Total	8	100%

Table (4): deals with the politeness theory strategies that are used by Araghchi.

Item	Count	Frequency
Bald-on Strategy	8	50%
Positive Strategy	5	31%
Negative Strategy	0	0%
Off-record Strategy	3	19%
Total	16	100%

7. Conclusions

The findings of the study show that most of the post of Trump regarding the U.S.–Israel–Iran War mainly employed direct threats (25%) and Bald-on-Record strategies (33%) reflecting a argumentative and assertive communication style intended to increase the impact of threats and demonstrate power and determination over others. Araghchi, on the other side, relied more on indirect threats (87.5%) since he pays a great attention to diplomatic appropriateness.

The first hypothesis which reads as "Both of Trump and Araghchi use indirect speech act rather than direct speech act for the sack of diplomacy" is valid referring to the results Trump uses indirect speech act (71%) and Araghchi (87%) while the direct (28%) for Trump and (12.5%) for Araghchi. Therefore; the do so to for negotiating and future policy change, they use it to pressure on the other party in a diplomatic way. The second hypothesis which reads as " Bald-on record is the highly used by Araghchi rather than Trump." is valid too since Tramp uses (33%) and Araghchi (50%) this is related to the fat that Araghchi uses a direct and unmitigated judgment, his sues strong words and communicate in straightforward manner, leaving little ambiguity. The third hypothesis which reads as "Araghchi uses positive politeness strategy more than Donald Trump does." is not valid because both of them use positive politesse in nearly the same rate. This may refer that both of them try to be in a position of solidarity, encourage cooperation, and present themselves as peace-oriented actors.

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Appendix

1. Trump's Posts

January 2, 2026

“If Iran shots and violently kills peaceful protesters, which is their custom, the United States of America will come to their rescue. We are locked and loaded and ready to go. Thank you for your attention to this matter!” - President DONALD J. TRUMP

March, 14, 2026

Trump wrote on Saturday: “Many Countries, especially those who are affected by Iran’s attempted closure of the Hormuz Strait, will be sending War Ships, in conjunction with the United States of America, to keep the Strait open and safe.

“We have already destroyed 100% of Iran’s Military capability, but it’s easy for them to send a drone or two, drop a mine, or deliver a close range missile somewhere along, or in, this Waterway, no matter how badly defeated they are.

“Hopefully China, France, Japan, South Korea, the UK, and others, that are affected by this artificial constraint, will send Ships to the area so that the Hormuz Strait will no longer be a threat by a Nation that has been totally decapitated.

“In the meantime, the United States will be bombing the hell out of the shoreline, and continually shooting Iranian Boats and Ships out of the water. One way or the other, we will soon get the Hormuz Strait OPEN, SAFE, and FREE!”

[Apr 08, 2026, 1:32 AM](#)

Based on conversations with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir, of Pakistan, and wherein they requested that I hold off the destructive force being sent tonight to Iran, and subject to the Islamic Republic of Iran agreeing to the COMPLETE, IMMEDIATE, and SAFE OPENING of the Strait of Hormuz, I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks. This will be a double sided CEASEFIRE!

Donald Trump: "...We're negotiating now and it'd be great if we could do something, but they have to open it up. They have to open up the **Strait of Trump**—I mean, **Hormuz**.

Excuse me. I'm so sorry. It's such a terrible mistake. The fake news will say, '*He accidentally said*'—no, there's no accidents with me, not too many. If there were, we'd have a major story."

Friday, March 27, 2026

6/May/2026

"If they don't agree, the bombing will begin at a much higher level than it already has. The 'Epic Fury' campaign will escalate to a point this world has never seen before. But if they do agree, the blockade on Kharg Island and their ports will be lifted, and we can move toward a very big, very beautiful deal."

[5:05 PM · May 17, 2026](#)

“For Iran, the Clock is Ticking, and they better get moving, FAST, or there won't be anything left of them. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE!” - President Donald J. Trump

<https://x.com/WhiteHouse/status/2056058474954436923>

2. Araghchi's Posts

5, Mar, 2026

Plan A for a clean rapid military victory failed, Mr. President. Your Plan B will be even bigger failure. The truth: Chance for unique deal burned after the 'America Last' cabal obscured "significant progress" we made in negotiations. 'Israel First' always means 'America Last'

13 Apr, 2026

In intensive talks at highest level in 47 years, Iran engaged with U.S in good faith to end war. But when just inches away from "Islamabad MoU", we encountered maximalism, shifting goalposts, and blockade. Zero lessons earned Good will begets good will. Enmity begets enmity

April 30, 2026

Today is Persian Gulf Day in Iran, marking our ancestors' expulsion of Portuguese from Strait of Hormuz 400 years ago. POTUS uses the correct term "Persian Gulf", not the Pentagon's fake version. But calling Hormuz anything else is indeed a "terrible mistake".

May/ 2026

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has proven its commitment to regional stability, but let it be absolutely clear: we do not negotiate under the shadow of ultimatums. Iran is fully prepared for all scenarios. Military threats and obsolete policies of 'maximum pressure' will never force Tehran to compromise on its sovereign rights or surrender its national interests. If Washington chooses escalation over diplomatic equity, the responsibility for the consequences will rest entirely on their shoulders."

Mid-May 2026

"We welcome the constructive efforts of our regional neighbors to defuse current tensions, but diplomacy cannot succeed while our economy remains held hostage. For any framework or temporary truce to transition into a permanent settlement, it must include ironclad guarantees. Any viable ceasefire agreement must guarantee the immediate lifting of the naval blockade imposed on Kharg Island and all Iranian commercial ports, alongside a total halt to foreign aggression and targeted assassinations. Iran's sovereign red lines are non-negotiable."