

## **The Triangle of Language Use: A Corpus-Based Analysis of Hotel Responses to Reviews**

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### **Abstract**

Mastery of the art of crafting online reviews and responses is essential as a valuable additional tool for enhancing learners' English proficiency in specialised contexts. This study aims to: 1) Examine the formality levels in crafting reviews and responses; 2) Explore face-threatening acts utilised in reviews and politeness strategies employed in responses; and 3) Uncover moves and steps in composing reviews and responses. Data was collected from the Top 25 Hotels in the World in 2022 according to Tripadvisor.com. Six distinct corpora were formed, comprising positive, negative, and mixed reviews, along with corresponding responses, resulting in 87,973 tokens. Findings show reviewers leaned towards casual language (85.87%), while respondents used a consultative style (82.67%) in their responses. The shift from casual to consultative occurred most frequently (70.67%). For politeness, admiration (73.07%) and expressions of complaints/reprimands (64.53%) were common in reviews. In responses, strategies like offering, promising, or giving gifts (72.00%) and apologising and begging for forgiveness (50.40%) were prevalent. Reviews used three moves and ten steps, while responses employed six moves and 16 steps. These insights can be integrated into ESP classrooms to enhance review and response writing skills effectively.

**Keywords:** Hotel reviews' responses, Tripadvisor; Language formality, Politeness theory, Move analysis

Numerous tourism management studies have extensively explored the impact of electronic word-of-mouth discussions on consumer choices and hotel performance (Fileri et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2015; Luo & Zhong, 2015). These investigations highlight the significance of both reviews in raising consumer awareness about hotels (Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009). Hotels eagerly anticipate reviews as they provide prospective customers with authentic insights into specific products or services (Thumvichit & Gampper, 2019). These customer-generated

reviews are often perceived as more reliable than business-generated content, which tends to focus solely on positives (Floyd et al., 2014). Online ratings and reviews play a dual role, guiding booking decisions and profoundly influencing overall hotel performance. Travellers frequently turn to shared experiences of others when making accommodation or destination choices. Similarly, service providers utilise review feedback to enhance their offerings. Acknowledging the impact of online reviews, numerous top hotels assign senior staff members to review management due to its potential effects on image and reputation (Panseeta & Watson Todd, 2014).

Positive reviews (PRs) offer valuable insights for service providers, acknowledging strengths and encouraging growth. Responding to positive reviews (RPRs) can foster customer relationships and loyalty. Conversely, negative reviews (NRs) highlight weaknesses, prompting improvement efforts and prevention of recurring issues. Notably, responses to negative reviews (RNRs) are essential for addressing service failures and enabling recovery (Sparks et al., 2016). Additionally, mixed reviews (MRs), combining positive and negative sentiments towards hotel services, demand distinct responses. Thus, responses to mixed reviews (RMRs) are crucial, similar to the significance of RPRs and RNRs. These responses significantly impact guest satisfaction, extending beyond casual interactions. RNRs have predominantly been researched (Ho, 2017; Madon & Singh, 2023; Panseeta & Watson Todd, 2014; Thumvichit & Gampper, 2018; Zhang & Vásquez, 2014), with limited attention to RPRs (Cenni & Goelthals, 2021; Thumvichit, 2016). Moreover, no research on RMRs is evident. Despite abundant literature, most studies focus on responses, neglecting the equally vital review dimension. Understanding review composition nuances enhances response formulation by gaining insights into customer perceptions. The authors thus suggest exploring both response and review aspects. Additionally, mixed attitudes should be analysed in conjunction with positive and negative categories for effective online response to review management in the hotel industry. Additionally, based on the literature review, it was found that previous research on the use of language in responding to hotel service reviews has mainly focused on conducting move analysis (Cenni & Goelthals, 2021; Ho, 2017; Madon & Singh, 2023; Panseeta & Watson Todd, 2014; Thumvichit, 2016; Thumvichit & Gampper, 2018; Zhang & Vásquez, 2014), and some have analysed aspects of speech acts (Madon & Singh, 2023; Nasser, 2022). However, research to find answers regarding responding to hotel service reviews still has many unexplored issues, such as the level of language formality or the politeness strategies that should be used in responses.

Through an extensive literature review mentioned earlier, it is evident that present internet media has significantly altered the ways in which global customers communicate and express opinions about hotel services. Online genres have thus emerged in the era of technology to address the evolving and newly emerging requirements of professionals (Bhatia, 2005). Currently, with online channels providing users the opportunity to freely express their opinions on hotel services anytime and anywhere globally, organisations in the hotel business must pay attention to and deal with managing complaints, compliments, and feedback about services online. Genres on the web emphasise a distinct call for academia to fulfil the business's requirements for specialised communication in the English language (Anthony, 2016). English teaching for specific purposes related to the hotel business is now starting to focus on using language appropriately in responding to service reviews on the internet. Due to an inadequate essential knowledge on how to respond to hotel service reviews, hotels themselves often have to organise special classes to train staff on handling guests in various situations, including

responding to service reviews in online channels. However, these training sessions often involve significant expenses, so they are usually undertaken by large hotels that can afford them. The ability to respond to online reviews appropriately is another essential skill that hotels of all sizes currently require from employees. These issues highlight the importance and urgency of finding ways and knowledge to strengthen language skills in responding to online reviews for English learners. To promote the ability to produce appropriate responses to reviews, a curriculum should be designed to provide learners with a comprehensive framework for crafting responses. This framework should include recommendations on language patterns and guidelines based on reliable and systematically conducted research, rather than being solely designed by individual instructors. Therefore, this study aims to offer learners a comprehensive framework for crafting review responses. The framework covers aspects of formality, politeness, and the typical structure used in hotel reviews and their corresponding responses.

### **Language Formality and Formality Shifting**

Individuals express themselves in various ways depending on the audience. Language formality profoundly impacts communication styles. People naturally differentiate between formal and informal communication. Consequently, when writing hotel reviews and responses, different levels of language formality might be necessary. Language formality discussions often revolve around the spectrum of formal and informal language, positioned at opposite ends. Formal language is known for precision, coherence, and clarity, regardless of context or shared knowledge. On the other hand, informal language is conversational, personal, and context-specific, relying on shared understanding and familiarity (Graesser et al., 2014). An important concept in language formality is “The Five Clocks,” introduced by Joos (1962). Joos’s influential work offers insightful observations and a systematic categorisation of five significant style levels in English through a straightforward hierarchical analysis. ‘Clocks’ refers to distinct formality levels in spoken and written English, classified as frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. These terms are based on varying degrees of familiarity and intimacy among individuals, significantly influencing their communication style (Coupland, 2007). The ‘Frozen Clock’ embodies highly formal and rigid language patterns, often found in religious rituals or legal decrees, characterised by strict standardisation and unchanging conventions. The ‘Formal Clock’ signifies precise and refined language used in formal settings like public speeches, academic presentations, or official documents. Meanwhile, the ‘Consultative Clock’ reflects language used in professional or consultative contexts, involving more interaction and collaboration among participants and often using specialised terms. The ‘Casual Clock’ represents everyday informal language, featuring relaxed and familiar speech patterns, often including slang and colloquialisms, commonly used among acquaintances. Lastly, the ‘Intimate Clock’ corresponds to the most informal language level, typically used in close relationships or private conversations, characterised by personal language, inside jokes, and shared understandings between individuals. In the realm of reviews and corresponding responses, both guests and service providers have the ability to adeptly switch between these distinct linguistic ‘clocks’, guided by the specific social situation and context. The research aims to explore the complexity of five formality levels, investigating how shifts occur in reviews and their responses.

### **Face-Threatening Acts and Politeness Strategies**

Politeness, deeply rooted in human interaction, arises from our innate drive to cultivate harmonious connections and resolve conflicts (Brown & Levinson, 1978; Kasper, 1990; Lakoff, 1973; Leech, 1983). Universally acknowledged, it involves adeptly adapting communication styles within specific linguistic contexts (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1986). This concept has given rise to notions like “face” and the “Face-Threatening Act” (FTA). Brown and Levinson (1987) differentiate face into positive and negative forms. Positive face entails seeking approval and recognition, aligning with one’s self-image, while negative face emphasises autonomy and freedom from external disruption. Both carry emotional weight, being internalised and influenced externally. Recognising interactions’ impact on face, the FTA enhances understanding of communication management. This comprehension is indispensable for hotels when responding to online reviews, as it aids in maintaining reputation. Politeness is key to rephrasing messages during inevitable FTAs, preserving recipients’ reputation and fostering politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987) extensively discuss recognised politeness strategies, including choices to convey or not convey messages as indicators of FTA performance. When conveyed, four strategies can be used. Direct and unambiguous speech acts involve clear and straightforward communication. Positive politeness includes speech acts that show solidarity, intimacy, or empathy with the listener. On the other hand, negative politeness is used in social situations where there is a certain distance between individuals, requiring formal politeness and respect. Off-record strategies involve speech acts that allow the listener to draw their own conclusions, avoiding imposition.

The increase in online platforms for reviewing hotel services has raised the significance of politeness in corporate communication. Despite its vital role in managing responses, the significance of incorporating politeness into response composition has largely been overlooked (Cowan & Anthony, 2008; Harrison-Walker, 2001). In this study, we analyse the FTAs employed in reviews. Conversely, we investigate the politeness utilised in responses to reviews.

### **Move Analysis**

Genre analysis involves a comprehensive exploration of text structures and how they interact with members of the discourse community (Bhatia, 2002; Martin, 1985). Swales (1990) defines genre as a distinct category of communicative events marked by shared communicative objectives. These genres exhibit evident patterns of similarity in structure, style, content presentation, and audience preferences. The analytical approach of move analysis plays a vital role in illustrating this concept, where each move and step serves a coherent communicative function in written or spoken discourse (Bhatia, 2013; Ho, 2017; Swales, 2004).

Utilising move analysis, a method adapted to study diverse text types, proves valuable for understanding the rhetorical structure of various genres (Connor, 1996; Martin, 2003). This approach involves closely examining a collection of texts that represent a specific genre (Biber & Conrad, 2009). Move analysis finds relevance across multiple domains, including research abstracts (Alyousef, 2021; Fauzan et al., 2020; Yoon & Casal, 2020), presentations (Hu & Liu, 2018; Rowley-Jolivet & Carter-Thomas, 2005), TED talks (Chang & Huang, 2015; Li & Li, 2021), job recruitment posters (Phattisiri, et al., 2023), and press conferences (Laosrirattanachai & Laosrirattanachai, 2023).

The domain of computer-mediated business discourse has garnered substantial interest in move analysis, particularly in relation to responses to reviews, focusing primarily on RNRs of hotels

(Ho, 2017; Madon & Singh, 2023; Panseeta & Watson Todd, 2014; Thumvichit & Gampper, 2018, 2019; Zhang & Vásquez, 2014), followed by RPRs (Cenni & Goelthals, 2021; Thumvichit, 2016). To ensure a comprehensive analysis of the various attitudes expressed towards hotel services in reviews, this study conducts a move analysis encompassing NRs, PRs, MRs, RNRs, RPRs, and RMRs.

## Research Questions

The present study aims to investigate the following research questions:

1. What are the prevalent levels of language formality observed in hotel service reviews and their corresponding responses? Moreover, what patterns of formality shifting are commonly employed?
2. Which Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) are predominantly used in delivering service reviews within the hotel business context, and what specific politeness strategies are frequently applied in formulating responses?
3. What are the discernible moves and submoves present in hotel service reviews and their corresponding responses?

## Methodology

### Corpora Compilation

The study employed a systematic data collection method, focusing on reviews and corresponding responses from the Top 25 Hotels in the World for 2022, as ranked by Tripadvisor.com. A total of 15 review-response pairs were meticulously gathered from each hotel, resulting in a dataset of 375 pairs. These were evenly distributed among positive (rated as excellent or very good), negative (rated as terrible or poor), and mixed (rated as average) categories, with 125 pairs in each. Table 1 presents a brief overview of the three corpora.

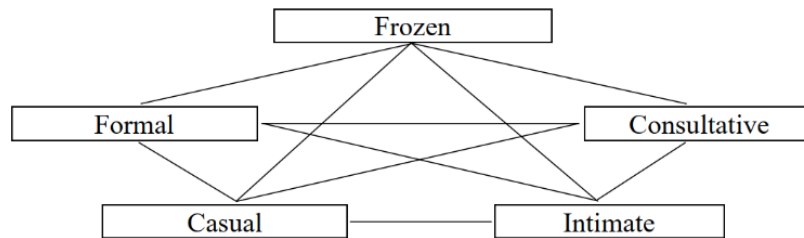
**Table 1. General information of the three corpora**

Corpus		Corpus size (Tokens)	Total (Tokens)
Positive category	Review	7,301	15,514
	Response	8,213	
Negative category	Review	24,775	45,114
	Response	20,339	
Mixed category	Review	14,323	27,345
	Response	13,022	
<b>Total</b>	<b>Review</b>	<b>46,399</b>	<b>87,973</b>
	<b>Response</b>	<b>41,574</b>	

### Exploring the Shifts in Language Formality Used in Hotels' Reviews and Responses

The study analysed both reviews and their corresponding responses to assess formality, covering five styles: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate (Joos, 1962). Formality shifts within each review-response pair were then examined. Results as percentages showed how reviews and responses demonstrated different formality levels. A thorough evaluation identified respondent tendencies to match observed formality levels in reviews. As asserted by Skalicky (2013), the communicative function of every textual unit encompasses a compilation of one or more clauses, which facilitates the conveyance of a singular idea or topic. It is

noteworthy that each review or response is constituted by one or more clauses. Consequently, the formality level attributed to each review or response is determined by the formality level predominating in the majority of its constituent sentences. For example, if a review has five sentences and three of them are casual, the review is classified as manifesting a casual level. Figure 1 shows 25 potential patterns of formality shifts based on the five degrees of formality.



**Figure 1. Twenty-five possible patterns of formality-shifting**

### **Investigating the FTA Used in Reviews and the Politeness Strategies Used in Responses**

In the current study, a two-fold approach was employed. Firstly, the construction of politeness measurement items was derived from the FTAs identified by Brown and Levinson (1987). Then, the adapted FTA framework was utilised for coding the instances of FTAs present in the PRs, NRs, and MRs. Secondly, Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies were applied to code the RPRs, RNRs, and RMRs obtained from Tripadvisor.com. Subsequently, a quantitative investigation was conducted to examine the correlations between the occurrence of FTAs in reviews and the politeness strategies observed in the corresponding responses.

### **Unveiling Moves and Steps within Three Types of Hotels' Reviews and Responses**

Literature reviews on hotel review responses have mainly focused on RNRs, with limited attention given to RPRs, and scarce investigations conducted on RMRs. The present study adopted a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches. Leveraging insights from previous investigations on RNRs (Ho, 2017; Panseeta & Watson Todd, 2014; Thumvichit & Gampper, 2019; Zhang & Vásquez, 2014) and RPRs (Cenni & Goelthals, 2021; Thumvichit, 2016), the top-down approach was initially applied to analyse RNRs, RPRs, and RMRs provided by hotel staff in the current study. Subsequently, any additional moves and steps identified during the analysis were incorporated to refine the move structure. In contrast, for NRs, PRs, and MRs submitted by hotel reviewers, the bottom-up approach was employed, as no prior studies have been conducted on these specific categories.

The research began by analysing ten comments from each review and response category: NRs, PRs, MRs, RNRs, RPRs, and RMRs. Trial move and step candidates were identified. Another set of ten comments from each category was then examined using trial move codes to uncover additional moves or steps. The third round of coding was conducted with an additional set of ten comments from each category to develop the final move code. After obtaining a stable and comprehensive set of move codes, the subsequent step involved having two trained move coders proceed with the coding process. In this step, the sample set consisting of 25 randomly selected NRs, PRs, and MRs, totalling 75 reviews (20% of all reviews), and 25 randomly selected RNRs, RPRs, and RMRs, totalling 75 responses (20% of all responses), was coded. Two trained coders used a yes-no codebook to achieve an agreement rate of 89.60% for reviews and 91.78% for responses, signifying strong agreement. With the coding protocol validated, it was applied to the entire set of NRs, PRs, MRs, RNRs, RPRs, and RMRs.

Identifying compulsory moves is crucial for highlighting suitable move types and their significance in reviews and responses. Researchers have used various cut-off percentages to define compulsory moves, such as 60% (Kanoksilapatham, 2005; Yang, 2015), 90% (Thumvichit & Gampper, 2019; Xiao & Cao, 2013), 95.6% (Cheung, 2008), and 100% (Tessuto, 2015). However, rigidly categorising moves as compulsory or optional can be overly restrictive in authentic language use. This study proposes criteria: moves in 80% or more of the corpus are compulsory, 50–79% are recommended, and less than 50% are elective.

## Results

Although an equal number of reviews and responses were collected for positive, negative, and mixed attitudes, the corpus's token count yields intriguing findings. The reviewer exhibited a tendency to express their opinions more extensively when dissatisfied, evident in the larger number of tokens found in NRs (24,775) compared to PRs (approximately 7,301 tokens, about 3.40 times fewer). MRs, with 14,323 tokens, likely resulted from encompassing both positive and negative sentiments about the service. The overall corpus size showed a ratio of approximately 1:2:3 for PRs, MRs, and NRs, indicating the reviewer's inclination to offer feedback, particularly concerning mixed and negative attitudes. These findings underscore the significance of integrating these service reviews into the evaluation and enhancement of hotel business services and utilising them as an additional tool alongside user survey questionnaires to gather authentic, in-depth, and valuable insights.

### Language Formality

Language levels in reviews can vary based on attitudes towards the received service. However, what is more crucial is the language level that the respondent chooses when responding to these reviews. This can impact guest perceptions and future service usage. Adapting language in responses can encourage repeated service usage. Language levels in composing reviews, responding, and shifts in formality are displayed in Tables 2 and 3.

**Table 2. Proportions of different formality levels (Clocks) used in reviews and responses**

Formality levels	PRs	NRs	MRs	Total	RPRs	RNRs	RMRs	Total
<b>Frozen</b>	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	<b>0</b> <b>(0.00%)</b>	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	<b>0</b> <b>(0.00%)</b>
<b>Formal</b>	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	<b>0</b> <b>(0.00%)</b>	11 (8.80%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	<b>11</b> <b>(2.93%)</b>
<b>Consultative</b>	22 (17.60%)	20 (16.00%)	11 (8.80%)	<b>53</b> <b>(14.30%)</b>	104 (83.20%)	116 (92.80%)	90 (72.00%)	<b>310</b> <b>(82.67%)</b>
<b>Casual</b>	103 (82.40%)	105 (84.00%)	114 (91.20%)	<b>322</b> <b>(85.87%)</b>	10 (8.00%)	9 (7.20%)	35 (28.00%)	<b>54</b> <b>(14.40%)</b>
<b>Intimate</b>	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	<b>0</b> <b>(0.00%)</b>	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	<b>0</b> <b>(0.00%)</b>
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>125</b> <b>(100%)</b>	<b>125</b> <b>(100%)</b>	<b>125</b> <b>(100%)</b>	<b>375</b> <b>(100%)</b>	<b>125</b> <b>(100%)</b>	<b>125</b> <b>(100%)</b>	<b>125</b> <b>(100%)</b>	<b>375</b> <b>(100%)</b>

Table 2 indicates the frequent use of casual language by the reviewer, evident in 322 reviews (85.87%) out of a total of 375 reviews. Distribution of language across the three review types - PRs (82.40%), NRs (84.00%), and MRs (91.20%) - reveals a similar frequency of usage. This implied a consistent inclination towards casual language in reviews, regardless of the reviewers' attitudes towards the service. An examination of responses to these reviews

highlighted the respondent's preference for the consultative level in interactions, representing 310 out of 375 responses (82.67%). Notably, in the analysis of RNRs, the respondent's use of consultative language was significantly higher (92.80%) compared to RPRs (83.20%) and RMRs (72.00%). This observation underscored the respondent's deliberate employment of consultative language to mitigate negative sentiments and restore trust among guests.

**Table 3. Patterns of formality shifting in reviews and their corresponding responses**

Rank	PRs to RPRs (125)	NRs to RNRs (125)	MRs to RMRs (125)	Rs to RRs (375)
1	Casual to Consultative (86 = 68.80%)	Casual to Consultative (96 = 76.80%)	Casual to Consultative (83 = 66.40%)	Casual to Consultative (265 = 70.67%)
2	Consultative to Consultative (18 = 14.40%)	Consultative to Consultative (20 = 16.00%)	Casual to Casual (31 = 24.80%)	Casual to Casual (48 = 12.80%)
3	Casual to Formal (9 = 7.20%)	Casual to Casual (9 = 7.20%)	Consultative to Consultative (7 = 5.60%)	Consultative to Consultative (45 = 12.00%)
4	Casual to Casual (8 = 6.40%)		Consultative to Casual (4 = 3.20%)	Casual to Formal (9 = 2.40%)
5	Consultative to Casual (2 = 1.60%)			Consultative to Casual (6 = 1.60%)
6	Consultative to Formal (2 = 1.60%)			Consultative to Formal (2 = 0.53%)

As was evident from Table 3, six distinct patterns of formality shifting have been identified in reviews and their corresponding responses. Among these six patterns, the casual to consultative pattern was the most frequently employed (70.67%). The findings in the domain of language formality shifting aligned with the results presented in Table 2, underscoring the recurrence of the reviewer's inclination to employ language at the casual level when composing reviews. Simultaneously, a shift in the level of language employed became apparent in the responses, moving towards the consultative level. Notably, the patterns of formality shifting most frequently encountered in the second and third ranks were the casual to casual pattern (12.80%) and the consultative to consultative pattern (12.00%), respectively. These instances emphasised the significance of these patterns within the contextual dynamics of linguistic interaction.

### FTAs Used in Reviews and Politeness Strategies Used in Responses

Besides considering language level, when the reviewer composes reviews, the FTAs often come into play. To ensure seamless communication and positive operational outcomes, the respondent needs to employ various politeness strategies to address these FTAs from the reviewer. See Tables 4 and 5.

**Table 4. FTAs utilised in giving reviews**

Face Threatening Acts		PRs (125)	NRs (125)	MRs (125)	Total (375)
Positive Face Threatening Acts (P-FTA)	P-FTA1: Expressions of complaints and reprimands	1 (0.80%)	124 (99.20%)	117 (93.60%)	242 (64.53%)
	P-FTA2: Expressions of insults	0 (0.00%)	29 (23.20%)	12 (9.60%)	41 (10.93%)
	P-FTA3: Boasting about self	11 (8.80%)	49 (39.20%)	16 (12.80%)	76 (20.27%)
Negative Face Threatening Acts (N-FTA)	N-FTA1: Suggestions and advice	1 (0.80%)	16 (12.80%)	28 (22.40%)	45 (12.00%)
	N-FTA2: Reminders	0 (0.00%)	34 (27.20%)	12 (9.60%)	46 (12.27%)
	N-FTA3: Threats, warnings, and dares	0 (0.00%)	11 (8.80%)	6 (4.80%)	17 (4.53%)
	N-FTA4: Expressions of admiration	125 (100.00%)	37 (29.60%)	112 (89.60%)	274 (73.07%)



**Table 5. Politeness strategies employed in composing responses**

Politeness Strategies		RPRs (125)	RNRs (125)	RMRs (125)	Total (375)
Bald on Record (OnR-PS)	OnR-PS: Doing FTA directly without mitigating threats	0 (0.00%)	12 (9.60%)	7 (5.60%)	<b>19</b> <b>(5.07%)</b>
Positive Politeness Strategies (P-PS)	P-PS1: Noticing and attending to the reviewer's patronage, interests, and wants	12 (9.60%)	25 (20.22%)	12 (9.60%)	<b>49</b> <b>(13.07%)</b>
	P-PS2: Expressing agreement and avoiding disagreement	16 (12.80%)	52 (41.60%)	17 (13.60%)	<b>85</b> <b>(22.67%)</b>
	P-PS3: Offering, promising, or giving gifts to the reviewer	119 (95.20%)	77 (61.60%)	74 (59.20%)	<b>270</b> <b>(72.00%)</b>
	P-PS4: Being optimistic	0 (0.00%)	15 (12.00%)	10 (8.00%)	<b>25</b> <b>(6.67%)</b>
	P-PS5: Giving explanations or reasons	3 (2.40%)	44 (35.20%)	37 (29.60%)	<b>84</b> <b>(22.40%)</b>
Negative Politeness Strategies (N-PS)	N-PS1: Questioning and hedging	10 (8.00%)	49 (39.20%)	42 (33.60%)	<b>101</b> <b>(26.93%)</b>
	N-PS2: Minimising the imposition	7 (5.60%)	39 (31.20%)	32 (25.60%)	<b>78</b> <b>(20.80%)</b>
	N-PS3: Giving deference	6 (4.80%)	30 (24.00%)	29 (23.20%)	<b>65</b> <b>(17.33%)</b>
	N-PS4: Apologising and begging for forgiveness	0 (0.00%)	103 (82.40%)	86 (68.80%)	<b>189</b> <b>(50.40%)</b>
	N-PS5: Stating the FTA as a general rule	0 (0.00%)	24 (19.20%)	12 (9.60%)	<b>36</b> <b>(9.60%)</b>

Table 4 presents an extensive analysis of the FTAs utilised by the reviewer in conveying PRs, NRs, or MRs. In the realm of PRs, expressions of admiration (N-FTA4) emerged as the predominant choice, closely followed by self-boasting (P-FTA3). A parallel trend was evident for NRs, with expressions of complaints and reprimands (P-FTA1) emerging as the most frequently utilised FTA, trailed by self-boasting (P-FTA3) and expressions of admiration (N-FTA4), respectively. This suggested that despite negative sentiments towards the hotel's services, the guest acknowledged aspects deserving appreciation. Within the context of MRs, the reviewer notably favoured expressions of complaints and reprimands (P-FTA1), followed by expressions of admiration (N-FTA4) and offering suggestions and advice (N-FTA1). Broadly observed, expressions of admiration (N-FTA4) remained the consistently preferred FTA choice, supported by the comprehensive data analysis.

The reviewer employed the P-FTA through three approaches. Expressions encompassing complaints and rebukes (P-FTA1) were conveyed through utterances such as *"The hotel staff is not friendly, not helpful, and not flexible."* Sometimes, the reviewer expressed certain phrases in a sarcastic manner. For example, instances of insults (P-FTA2) were represented by phrases like *"Upon arrival, I was taken to the reception, and the first thing they offered was a voucher for the swimming pool. Really? It was raining heavily! Who wants to go to the pool at that time?"* Lastly, within the context of P-FTA, the reviewer might engage in self-promotion (P-FTA3) by articulating statements like *"I am a very frequent customer of [hotel's name] worldwide. I have stayed in at least 20 different [hotel's name] properties. At least 5 different [hotel's name] properties only this year."*

The N-FTA could be enacted in four distinct ways when composing reviews. Instances of suggestions or advice (N-FTA1) were illustrated by phrases like *"Maybe the management*

*should spend a few days in some pool villas of their competition to understand what the standard of hospitality is and how to get repeating customers.”* Utterances providing reminders (N-FTA2), especially when the reviewer reminded the hotel that it was claimed as a 5-star hotel but provided an underqualified service, such as *“We are given only 3 towels for 2 guests; generally, in all 5-star hotels, we get at least 4, 2 per person,”* were another manifestation. Should the reviewer aim to employ expressions that threaten, warn, or challenge the hotel (N-FTA3), they could do so through statements like *“Such a place should invest more in their staff’s manners; otherwise, they will, of course, lose high-potential clients forever.”* Finally, the hotel could be praised by the reviewer (N-FTA4), exemplified by an utterance like *“Everything was perfect! Food, service, the property was super clean,”* for instance.

In Table 5, to compose responses to reviews, the respondent employed politeness strategies through various methods. For RPRs, the strategy of offering, promising, or giving gifts to the guest (P-PS3) was the most frequently used (95.20%). In the context of RNRs and RMRs, the strategy of apologising and begging for forgiveness (N-PS4) was utilised most often, at 82.40% and 68.80% respectively, in response to FTAs directed towards the reviewer. Overall, the strategy of offering, promising, or giving gifts to the reviewer (P-PS3) was the most commonly employed (72.00%) across all three categories.

In the case of OnR-PS, the respondent was expected to communicate the intended message directly to the reviewer without making significant efforts to mitigate potential threats to the reviewer’s face. For instance, *“It’s rather silly that this review was even permitted to be posted.”*

In relation to the positive politeness strategies, five strategies were found to be applied in crafting responses. The respondent mentioned the guest’s patronage, interests, and desires (P-PS1) to emphasise something positive about the reviewer and show appreciation for it, with an utterance such as *“We thank you for your patronage and deeply appreciate your kind words.”* To avoid disagreement, the respondent expressed agreement with the reviewer, indicating that the reviewer’s opinion was correct and endorsed (P-PS2), through a response like *“You are absolutely correct in expecting only the best at [hotel’s name], and we have failed to meet your expectations and ours.”* After receiving compliments, complaints, or criticism, the respondent promised or offered gifts to the reviewer (P-PS3) to ensure that the hotel would continue to provide excellent service or improve and prevent any recurrence of poor service, as seen in a response like *“We are committed to your satisfaction and will keep working harder every day to surpass all of your expectations.”* The respondent employed the strategy of being optimistic (P-PS4) when assuming that the reviewer wanted or agreed with what the respondent thought, aiming to align the reviewer with the respondent’s mutual goal. For example, *“At least you enjoyed drinking with us!”* When faced with criticism, particularly in a negative manner, the respondent explained or provided reasons for the incident (P-PS5) to help the reviewer understand. This could be achieved through a response such as *“The reason the prices are high is due to the taxes and customs duties of 350% levied by the government.”*

In the case of the negative politeness strategies, six strategies were utilised. The respondent chose to use questions or to be vague about their opinions (N-PS1), making the reviewer feel that they were not coerced into something. For instance, *“Since you had 4 people in your suite, perhaps others charged drinks to your suite?”* For N-PS2, the respondent aimed to lessen the seriousness of the FTAs towards the reviewer, making the imposition appear smaller using utterances like *“We didn’t receive any other complaints, so I think it only happened this*

morning.” The respondent could also reduce self-importance to make the reviewer seem more important by using honourific expressions when mentioning the reviewer, resulting in giving the reviewer deference (N-PS3). For example, “*We deeply appreciate and highly value loyal guests like you.*” The strategy of apologising and begging for forgiveness (N-PS4) was used most frequently in response to negative and mixed reviews, using utterances such as “*Please accept my heartfelt apologies for all the inconvenience.*” The last strategy found to be employed in giving responses to reviews was stating the FTA as a general rule (N-PS5). The respondent expressed that they did something because it is a general rule, regulation, or obligation. For example, “*Please know that the law requires that restaurants generally close at midnight and registered places like bars and nightclubs can be open until 1.00 am.*”

### Moves and Steps within Three Types of Hotels’ Reviews and Responses

After analysing the moves and steps involved in review composition using a bottom-up move-based approach, the results revealed three moves and ten steps. See Table 6 and 7.

**Table 6. Moves and steps utilised in crafting reviews**

Moves Steps	PRs (125)	NRs (125)	MRs (125)
<b>1. Opening</b>	<b>34<sup>E</sup></b> <b>(27.20%)</b>	<b>58<sup>E</sup></b> <b>(46.40%)</b>	<b>50<sup>E</sup></b> <b>(40.00%)</b>
A. Providing background	5 <sup>E</sup> (4.00%)	30 <sup>E</sup> (24.00%)	7 <sup>E</sup> (5.60%)
B. Specifying the services used or relevant details	30 <sup>E</sup> (24.00%)	37 <sup>E</sup> (29.60%)	45 <sup>E</sup> (36.00%)
<b>2. Giving feedback</b>	<b>125<sup>C</sup></b> <b>(100.00%)</b>	<b>125<sup>C</sup></b> <b>(100.00%)</b>	<b>125<sup>C</sup></b> <b>(100.00%)</b>
A. Ranking or rating the hotel	14 <sup>E</sup> (11.20%)	12 <sup>E</sup> (9.60%)	21 <sup>E</sup> (16.80%)
B. Expressing opinion or attitude towards experience	59 <sup>E</sup> (47.20%)	66 <sup>R</sup> (52.80%)	18 <sup>E</sup> (14.40%)
C. Complimenting or reprimanding	124 <sup>C</sup> (99.20%)	118 <sup>C</sup> (94.40%)	123 <sup>C</sup> (98.40%)
D. Detailing the incident during staying at the hotel thoroughly	1 <sup>E</sup> (0.08%)	95 <sup>R</sup> (76.00%)	39 <sup>E</sup> (31.20%)
E. Giving suggestions to the hotel	0 <sup>E</sup> (0.00%)	14 <sup>E</sup> (11.20%)	18 <sup>E</sup> (14.40%)
F. Giving suggestions to the future guest	1 <sup>E</sup> (0.80%)	25 <sup>E</sup> (20.00%)	21 <sup>E</sup> (16.80%)
<b>3. Ending</b>	<b>74<sup>R</sup></b> <b>(59.20%)</b>	<b>59<sup>E</sup></b> <b>(47.20%)</b>	<b>33<sup>E</sup></b> <b>(26.40%)</b>
A. Agreeing or disagreeing to re-visit	36 <sup>E</sup> (28.80%)	28 <sup>E</sup> (22.40%)	25 <sup>E</sup> (20.00%)
B. Recommending others to or not to stay at the hotel	47 <sup>E</sup> (37.60%)	36 <sup>E</sup> (28.80%)	9 <sup>E</sup> (7.20%)

Note: <sup>C</sup> = Compulsory, <sup>R</sup> = Recommended, <sup>E</sup> = Elective

It was observed that for PRs, one move with one step, one move, and one move along with nine steps were considered compulsory, recommended, and elective, respectively. In the case of NRs, one move with one step, two steps, and two moves along with seven steps were categorised as compulsory, recommended, and elective, respectively. Lastly, for MRs, one move with one step and two moves along with nine steps were designated as compulsory and elective, respectively. Interestingly, no moves or steps were identified as recommended in

MRs. The definitions and exemplar statements corresponding to each specific move and step employed in composing reviews are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7. Definitions and exemplar statements of each move and step in reviews**

<b>Move and step</b>	<b>Definition and exemplar statement</b>
<b>Move 1 Opening</b>	This move pertains to providing information about the reviewer.
Step A Providing background	The reviewer provides information regarding their experiences of using hotel services from the past up to the present. <u>Example:</u> <i>On my three-week travel through Thailand, I have been in more than 10 hotels throughout the country of which [hotel's name] was by far the worst.</i>
Step B Specifying the services used or relevant details	The reviewer furnishes information concerning the utilised services or pertinent details such as dates or length of stay, number of guests, or room types, etc. <u>Example:</u> <i>We stayed at the [hotel's name] for 9 nights with another couple.</i>
<b>Move 2 Giving feedback</b>	This move revolves around furnishing feedback based on their opinion subsequent to experiencing hotel services.
Step A Ranking or rating the hotel	The reviewer rates or ranks the hotel based on their personal opinion. <u>Example:</u> <i>This is a 2-star hotel under the skin of a 5-star hotel.</i>
Step B Expressing opinion or attitude towards experience	The reviewer articulates their opinion after having experienced the hotel's services. <u>Example:</u> <i>My experience there has been just like in a peaceful and joyful dream.</i>
Step C Complimenting or reprimanding	The reviewer expresses compliments or complaints regarding the hotel's staff, services, activities, ambience, cuisine, amenities, pricing, etc. <u>Example:</u> <i>I was disappointed with the overpriced room.</i>
Step D Detailing the incident during staying at the hotel thoroughly	The reviewer provides comprehensive details about their utilisation of the hotel's services. <u>Example:</u> <i>The GM said, "All resorts in the world have mosquitoes" (I wonder how many he had been to). I had to cut the conversation short because he was too argumentative and not helping to alleviate the situation. And I was surprised that he approached me at the main pool to talk about this problem when I have already told him to meet in my villa after the swim. Rather, his staff were very nice and offered us ice and ointment.</i>
Step E Giving suggestions to the hotel	The reviewer offers recommendations for aspects that should be either maintained or improved in the hotel. <u>Example:</u> <i>They should have valet service.</i>
Step F Giving suggestions to the future guest	The reviewer provides suggestions or cautions for future guests who are planning to use or are interested in using the hotel's services. <u>Example:</u> <i>Don't upgrade to a beachfront villa it's not worth the additional money.</i>
<b>Move 3 Ending</b>	The reviewer concludes their review by providing a personal assessment regarding whether they would return to the hotel and whether they would recommend others to visit the hotel or not.
Step A Agreeing or disagreeing to re-visit	The reviewer conveys whether they intend to return to use the services in the future or not. <u>Example:</u> <i>We love everything about [hotel's name] and will be back again soon!</i>
Step B Recommending others to or not to stay at the hotel	The reviewer suggests to other potential service users whether they should opt for or refrain from using the hotel's services. <u>Example:</u> <i>If you want a hotel experience, look somewhere else.</i>

In contrast to the move analysis of crafting reviews, the top-down move-based approach was adopted to analyse the moves and steps employed in crafting responses. See Table 8 and 9.

**Table 8. Moves and steps employed in crafting responses**

Moves Steps	RPRs (125)	RNRs (125)	RMRs (125)
<b>1. Opening</b>	<b>62<sup>E</sup></b> <b>(49.60%)</b>	<b>19<sup>E</sup></b> <b>(15.20%)</b>	<b>17<sup>E</sup></b> <b>(13.60%)</b>
<b>2. Expressing gratitude</b>	<b>121<sup>C</sup></b> <b>(96.80%)</b>	<b>93<sup>R</sup></b> <b>(74.40%)</b>	<b>97<sup>R</sup></b> <b>(77.60%)</b>
A. For choosing the hotel	45 <sup>E</sup> (36.00%)	32 <sup>E</sup> (25.60%)	17 <sup>E</sup> (13.60%)
B. For sharing reviews or rating	116 <sup>C</sup> (92.80%)	79 <sup>R</sup> (63.20%)	93 <sup>R</sup> (74.40%)
<b>3. Acknowledging feedback</b>	<b>105<sup>C</sup></b> <b>(84.00%)</b>	<b>114<sup>C</sup></b> <b>(91.20%)</b>	<b>114<sup>C</sup></b> <b>(91.20%)</b>
A. Re-stating the compliment or complaint	41 <sup>E</sup> (32.80%)	50 <sup>E</sup> (40.00%)	60 <sup>E</sup> (48.00%)
B. Appreciating the compliment or apologising for trouble	90 <sup>R</sup> (72.00%)	104 <sup>C</sup> (83.20%)	106 <sup>C</sup> (84.8%)
C. Valuing feedback	17 <sup>E</sup> (13.60%)	39 <sup>E</sup> (31.20%)	34 <sup>E</sup> (27.20%)
<b>4. Dealing with incidents</b>	<b>35<sup>E</sup></b> <b>(28.00%)</b>	<b>105<sup>C</sup></b> <b>(84.40%)</b>	<b>98<sup>R</sup></b> <b>(78.40%)</b>
A. Asserting hotel's commitment or standard	29 <sup>E</sup> (23.20%)	43 <sup>E</sup> (34.40%)	38 <sup>E</sup> (30.40%)
B. Explaining causes of the incident	0 <sup>E</sup> (0.00%)	32 <sup>E</sup> (25.60%)	36 <sup>E</sup> (28.80%)
C. Reporting action taken	0 <sup>E</sup> (0.00%)	60 <sup>E</sup> (48.00%)	32 <sup>E</sup> (25.60%)
D. Passing on to associated staff	11 <sup>E</sup> (8.80%)	22 <sup>E</sup> (17.60%)	22 <sup>E</sup> (17.60%)
E. Disagreeing with complaints and clarifying the problems	1 <sup>E</sup> (0.80%)	24 <sup>E</sup> (19.20%)	19 <sup>E</sup> (15.20%)
<b>5. Ending</b>	<b>117<sup>C</sup></b> <b>(93.60%)</b>	<b>108<sup>C</sup></b> <b>(86.40%)</b>	<b>106<sup>C</sup></b> <b>(84.80%)</b>
A. Giving a second thank or apology	25 <sup>E</sup> (20.00%)	48 <sup>E</sup> (38.40%)	39 <sup>E</sup> (31.20%)
B. Promising to maintain standards or to improve service	6 <sup>E</sup> (4.80%)	51 <sup>E</sup> (40.80%)	56 <sup>E</sup> (44.80%)
C. Invitation for a future visit	114 <sup>C</sup> (91.20%)	69 <sup>R</sup> (55.20%)	78 <sup>R</sup> (62.40%)
D. Taking the reviewer aside	0 <sup>E</sup> (0.00%)	32 <sup>E</sup> (25.60%)	14 <sup>E</sup> (11.20%)
<b>6. Closing</b>	<b>96<sup>R</sup></b> <b>(76.80%)</b>	<b>29<sup>E</sup></b> <b>(23.20%)</b>	<b>40<sup>E</sup></b> <b>(32.00%)</b>
A. Closing pleasantries	83 <sup>R</sup> (66.40%)	28 <sup>E</sup> (22.40%)	31 <sup>E</sup> (24.80%)
B. Respondent's information	77 <sup>R</sup> (61.60%)	5 <sup>E</sup> (4.00%)	22 <sup>E</sup> (17.60%)

Note: <sup>C</sup> = Compulsory, <sup>R</sup> = Recommended, <sup>E</sup> = Elective

The findings unveiled six moves and 16 steps. It was noted that, for RPRs, three moves with two steps were considered compulsory, one move and three steps were recommended, and two moves along with 11 steps were designated as elective. In relation to RNRs, three moves with one step were compulsory, one move and two steps were recommended, and two moves along with 13 steps were classified as elective. For RMRs, two moves with one step were compulsory, two moves and two steps were recommended, and two moves along with 13 steps

were categorised as elective. The definitions and exemplar statements corresponding to each specific move and step employed in composing responses are illustrated in Table 9.

**Table 9. Definitions and exemplar statements of each move and step in response**

<b>Move and step</b>	<b>Definition and exemplar statement</b>
<b>Move 1 Opening</b>	The respondent begins the response with opening pleasantries or greetings. <i>Example: Dear Guest, Greetings from the [hotel's name]!</i>
<b>Move 2 Expressing gratitude</b>	The respondent expresses appreciation for the reviewer's use of hotel services or for providing reviews about their experiences with the hotel's services.
Step A For choosing the hotel	The respondent thanks the reviewer for choosing to stay at the hotel. <i>Example: Thank you for staying with us at [hotel's name]!</i>
Step B For sharing reviews or rating	The respondent conveys gratitude for the reviewer's feedback on their experience with the hotel's services. <i>Example: Thank you for taking the time and write a kind review about our hotel.</i>
<b>Move 3 Acknowledging feedback</b>	The respondent informs the reviewer that the review has been acknowledged.
Step A Re-stating the compliment or complaint	The respondent mentions the compliments or complaints mentioned in the review. <i>Example: It is disappointing that you found our staff English ability was not sufficient, and the light switch, exhaust system and bathroom sliding door at your room did not work properly.</i>
Step B Appreciating the compliment or apologising for trouble	The respondent either appreciates the given compliment or expresses regret regarding the complaint. <i>Example: We are blown away by your kind words!</i>
Step C Valuing feedback	The respondent values the review as important information. <i>Example: Your feedback is very important to us to continue developing and grow the team.</i>
<b>Move 4 Dealing with incidents</b>	The respondent takes appropriate actions based on the compliments or complaints received.
Step A Asserting hotel's commitment or standard	The respondent declares about the pledged commitments or service policies to customers that the hotel adheres to. <i>Example: As a reputable hospitality brand, it is paramount to offer a pristine product and deliver exceptional experiences.</i>
Step B Explaining causes of the incident	The respondent explains the cause of any incidents mentioned in the review. <i>Example: Operating an island resort does require huge investment and incurs very high costs and expenses. In this regard, our rates are set in consideration of this.</i>
Step C Reporting action taken	The respondent informs the reviewer about the actions taken to address the mentioned incident. <i>Example: Thank you for your constructive advice on tea served at the afternoon high tea. I'm glad to share that some other brands are available for guests' preference.</i>
Step D Passing on to associated staff	The respondent notifies the reviewer that the review has been received and acknowledged by relevant staff. <i>Example: We have taken good note of your comments and will pass them on to the relevant departments.</i>
Step E Disagreeing with complaints and clarifying the problems	The respondent disagrees with the review and provides supporting information for their counterargument. <i>Example: Our security team was quite stunned to hear your claim that one of them would have been rude with an outside client.... We would like to add that we do not have that type of people working with us; if that was the case, such person would certainly not be with us; it is very likely that such person would have never found a job with us.</i>
<b>Move 5 Ending</b>	The respondent concludes the response by providing a final statement.
Step A Giving a second thank or apology	The respondent expresses gratitude or apologies once again. <i>Example: Once again, please accept our apology and thank you again for bringing forward your feedback.</i>
Step B Promising to maintain standards or to improve service	The respondent reaffirms their commitment to maintaining standards, improving service, or preventing problems in the future. <i>Example: We will be sure in the future to monitor the noise level and take action accordingly.</i>
Step C Invitation for a future visit	The respondent invites the reviewer to consider revisiting the hotel. <i>Example: We hope to see you again in the future at our resort.</i>
Step D Taking the reviewer aside	The reviewer is invited to discuss the matter privately, either on the phone, through email, or using other private channels. <i>Example: I would be glad to discuss your stay over the phone if you would kindly give me your contact information or contact me at [respondent's email address].</i>
<b>Move 6 Closing</b>	The respondent closes the response by offering closing pleasantries or providing the respondent's contact information.
Step A Closing pleasantries	The respondent includes closing pleasantries. <i>Example: Kindest regards</i>
Step B Respondent's information	The respondent shares personal information such as name, position, contact details, or affiliation.

## Discussion and Implications

An essential aspect of this research lies in the widespread distribution of the gathered data. Through meticulous analysis of the data, a distinct pattern emerges, indicating that each hotel tends to adopt a consistent or similar approach when composing responses to reviews. To address the issue of non-diverse data and avoid the potential bias of analysing only one hotel's response style, it is crucial to collect data from a diverse range of hotels in a reasonable quantity. Specifically, the current study obtained data from the top 25 hotels, including just 5 pairs of reviews and responses for each attitude category (positive, negative, and mixed) for every hotel. The patterns guiding the creation of reviews and responses are differentiated by a diverse array of input data, facilitating the identification and extraction of noteworthy and significant elements for integration into effective responses. This methodology ensures that the compiled responses encompass a comprehensive spectrum of diversity and multiplicity, thus offering broad relevance when applied across different hotel enterprises.

Regarding FTAs and moves in crafting reviews, it is apparent that while there exists a range of FTAs, seven distinct characteristics stand out prominently. Among these, expressions of admiration and complaints are particularly notable. This indicates that when shaping reviews, the primary aim of the reviewer is to convey their opinions, attitudes, and sentiments. Additionally, they might employ other FTAs to support recommendations, provide cautions, or highlight challenges faced during their stay, contributing to enhancing the hotel's improvements and alerting fellow guests to potential negative experiences. These frequently encountered FTAs linked to complaints and admiration align with the findings of the review's moves and steps analysis. In contrast to the composition of responses, the use of opening pleasantries or greetings in constructing reviews is infrequent. The reviewer's inclination seems to lean towards directness and conciseness when crafting reviews, in contrast to responses that require more comprehensive details and components to effectively persuade the readers.

Regarding crafting responses, the research findings revealed the respondent's consistent employment of politeness strategies and moves. Specifically, strategies like 'offering, promising, or presenting gifts' and 'apologising and seeking forgiveness' were frequently employed to effectively address the key concerns raised by the reviewer. Upon scrutinising the prevalent moves and steps, it becomes apparent that these encompass actions such as 'expressing gratitude for compliments or apologising for trouble' and 'invitation for a future visit.' The act of expressing gratitude for guests' compliments contributes to enhancing their overall impression, while offering apologies serves to mitigate any discontent and secure forgiveness. With both approaches yielding positive outcomes, the hotel then proceeded to extend an invitation for the guest to revisit their services. This step is crucial to ensuring the continued survival of the business.

An additional intriguing finding from this research was that the respondent now tends to present viewpoints that oppose the reviewer's critique. Furthermore, they make efforts to provide factual information to counterbalance negative criticisms directed at the hotel. This inclination was evident through the use of FTAs without mitigating threats and Move 4E (Disagreeing with complaints and clarifying the problems), both of which are currently integrated into the formulation of RNRs and RMRs. This implies that responding to hotel critiques in the current landscape transcends merely accepting all criticisms; instead, it involves a shift towards a

stance of rebuttal to affirm their integrity and guide readers to perceive the truth from the hotel's perspective.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

In addition to assigning employees in senior positions to manage reviews, the data also revealed that individuals responsible for responding to reviews span a range of roles, varying from operational levels like receptionists to managerial levels such as general managers or hotel managers. This reflects the importance of the ability to compose appropriate and effective review responses, and individuals working in the hotel industry are increasingly likely to be tasked with managing online service-related reviews. As a result, teaching and learning the skill of composing response to reviews becomes even more crucial for learners who will enter the hotel industry in the future.

Numerous research studies have explored the extent of formality in communication language. However, in the realm of education, the focus frequently gravitates towards formal language, which might not always align with practical language requirements. The outcomes of this research investigation revealed that an exclusive emphasis on and instruction in formal language can lead learners to adopt a formal language style that appears unnatural in genuine contexts, such as responding to hotel reviews. This discrepancy arises from the predominant emphasis on formal language in teaching materials, despite research findings demonstrating that responses not only employ formal language but also incorporate other language levels. Hence, it is imperative to craft lesson contents that incorporate both formal and non-formal English language. This approach, rather than exclusively presenting formal language, enables learners to proficiently and naturally compose responses to reviews.

Using established resources such as the hotel word list (Laosrirattanachai & Ruangjaroon, 2020; 2021a) and compiled lexical bundles (Thumvichit & Gampper, 2019), along with the insights gained from this study, is recommended for enhancing English proficiency among learners. A systematic teaching approach should be adopted, progressing from vocabulary acquisition to the development of pragmatic competence. Teachers should prioritise imparting vocabulary knowledge to learners first because a strong grasp of vocabulary is crucial for understanding English and significantly influences communication, particularly for English learners as a second language (Laosrirattanachai & Ruangjaroon, 2021b). Once learners master vocabulary and lexical bundles, it will help them compose responses to reviews more effectively, following the moves, language formality, and politeness strategies identified in the current study. As a result, this entails advancing from mastering word and lexical bundle lists to understanding move structure, language formality, and politeness strategies.

Utilising a learning framework based on corpora and genres, as demonstrated in earlier studies (e.g., Cheng, 2007; Hyland, 2003; Johns, 2002), has proven to be an effective method for enhancing writers' understanding of the generic features in field-specific writing (Dong & Lu, 2020; Işık, 2023; Lee & Swales, 2006). Therefore, teachers should emphasise having learners practice writing responses to reviews by applying the findings gained from the current study. For example, when devising a lesson plan, educators can provide learners with hotel service reviews encompassing positive, negative, and mixed evaluations. Subsequently, assign learners the task of scrutinising pivotal components, referring to the moves and steps identified in this research. Proceed to analyse the level of language formality used, while identifying the FTAs present in the reviews. Once learners have compiled the necessary data, guide them in



determining the requisite moves and steps for crafting responses to these reviews. Assist them in formulating responses using appropriate language formality levels and the required politeness strategies tailored to the specific contexts. Subsequently, facilitate a competition where learners collaboratively evaluate and select the most effective response to a given review. Each student should assume the role of a hotel guest, deliberating on the response that resonates most with them. Following the identification of the top three responses, engage in a classroom discussion to dissect and comprehend the employed moves, steps, language formality levels, and politeness strategies. This process will offer valuable insights, particularly for students who have grasped the writing guidelines but are yet to apply them practically.

### **Limitation of the Study**

The analysis of conversational exchanges utilising FTAs and politeness strategies within the context of review-response interactions on tripadvisor.com differs from the analysis of data derived from dialogues or online chat conversations, which conventionally involve responses structured at the sentence level. In the realm of review-response interactions, communications encompass a multifaceted array of topics and matters, rendering a sentence-by-sentence analysis impracticable. Consequently, this present study is exclusively dedicated to the thorough examination of the various types and prevalence of FTAs employed in reviews, along with the application of politeness strategies in formulating responses.

### **Future Research**

When responding to reviews given by people from different cultures, it is crucial to consider the cultural background of the speakers in order to effectively achieve the target communicative goals (Madon & Singh, 2023; Sann et al., 2020). Politeness norms vary across different cultural backgrounds in society, leading to diversities in the definitions of politeness and the strategies employed to enact politeness (Gu, 1992). As such, politeness manifests uniquely within distinct cultural contexts. To gain deeper insights and practical applications, it is recommended to conduct politeness analysis on hotel service reviews and their corresponding responses, particularly focusing on the issue of cultural differences.

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