Comparative study of terminating conversation strategies used by graduate TEFL students and graduate native English speaking students

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Abstract

In every interaction everyone needs to use strategies to terminate the conversation and there are possible differences among people. This study had insight to terminate the conversation and the way graduate native English-speaking students and graduate TEFL students end their conversation and what strategies they use in ending their conversation. This study also examined the role of power and solidarity in ending conversations as well as the role of gender in the use of those strategies. To collect the data, 50 graduate TEFL students were randomly selected from Islamic Azad University of Najafabad, Isfahan University of Technology and Islamic Azad University of Khorasgan as well as 27 graduate native English-speaking were randomly selected from UCL University and Kings College University of London. Students were asked to complete a discourse completion test (DCT) designed by the researcher. They were supposed to read nine scenarios and reply the questions. The data was analyzed based on Liddicoats' (2007) taxonomy. The results revealed that graduate native English-speaking used announcing closure and arrangements more than graduate TEFL students before terminating their conversation, male and female students use these strategies for terminating the same. Also the result showed that power (especially for higher status) plays an important role in choosing these strategies.

Keywords: conversation; terminating conversations; gender; power

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1. Introduction

Conversation is a social activity and people use it to exchange information, ideas and feelings (Fei, 2010). As stated by Sacks and Schegloff (1973), a conversation does not simply end, rather is brought to a close. According to Wardhaugh (2010), "Conversations must have ways of getting started, have some recognizable core or substance to them, i.e., topic or topics, are concludable" (p. 319). The opening of a conversation will generally involve an exchange of greeting such as hello (Schegloff, 1986). In addition, Wardhaugh (2010) believed "Once a conversation has been initiated and the opening forms have been exchanged, it will be necessary to be established a topic or topics on which to talk" (p. 320). At last, conversations must also be brought to a satisfactory close (Aston, 1995).

Dörnyei and Thurrell (1994) pointed out some following points may be relevant to a conversation: 1) Openings: he believed that there are some ways to open a conversation, e.g. 'how are you',… 2) Turn-taking: there some rules to determine when people talk, who talks,… these rules have been labelled turn-taking mechanisms, many students especially those from different cultures do not know these rules in the target language 3) Interrupting: one special case in turn-taking is interrupting. In English, a certain amount of interruption is tolerated, but too much, or in the wrong situation, appears rude. Interruptions are often introduced by set phrase, e.g. 'sorry to interrupt',… and students should be familiar with such phrases, 4) Topic-shift: when one wants to change the subject, either he or she does not to talk about a certain topic, 5) Adjacency pairs: there are some utterances, which require an immediate response, these utterances plus their responses are known as adjacency pairs, 6) Closings: unless everyone wants to be rude, he or she cannot close a conversation just by saying 'bye' and people should apply a sequence of pre-closing and closing for ending a conversation, e.g. 'it's been nice talking to you'. Dörnyei and Thurrell (1994) believed that EFL learners misunderstand closing signals in a foreign language, therefore it is important to learn closing strategies and raise their awareness of the kind of phrases they encounter in face to face conversation.

Sacks and Schegloff (1973) believed that ending conversation may be interpreted to mean that one does not wish for the conversation to continue. In order to close a conversation we should consider two points: 1. It is a proper initiation of the closing section and 2. It is terminal exchange. It means that one participant proposes to close the conversation by saying 'goodbye' and the other accepts it by answering to this 'goodbye'. There is a collection of possible component parts for closing sections, e.g., closing may include making arrangements, with varieties such as giving directions, arranging a later meeting.

Bardovi-Harling, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan, and Reynolds (1991) pointed out that, closing conversation including 3 steps: terminal exchange, the pre-closing, and the shut-down. Terminal exchange is saying 'goodbye'. The pre-closing and shutting-down the topic are signaling a speaker's intention to close the conversation. According to Bardovi-Harling et al. (1991), some cultures minimize the closing sections or have no closing sections in some contexts, while in other cultures the closing sections are more elaborate.

Liddicoat (2007) stated that conversational closings are events which are achieved collaboratively by participants. Closing is achieved by passing up opportunities rather than by providing specifically for closing as the activity which is being undertaken. Liddicoat (2007) explored the practices speaker's use to end conversations such as:

➢ Pre-closing sequences: in this step each party declines talking before producing terminal sequences such as 'okay', 'alright', or 'right' with falling intonation. Pre-closing component passes the talk to an

interlocutor, who may introduce some new mentionable into the conversation. Pre-closings set of actions are required to achieve closure and they are placed at the end of a topic. As Sacks and Schegloff (1973) pointed out pre-closings, provide a place in which a speaker introduce new material rather than indicating that the conversation may move to closure.

➢ Closing implicative environments: according to Liddicoat (2007), this step means " to set of actions after which ending may be a relevant next activity and after which closure is a common activity, but it does not imply that closure will happen after such an action" (p. 259). Closing implicative environments categorized in some groups such as:

Announcing closure - Liddicoat (2007) believed "announcing closure invoke some external circumstance which warrants ending the current conversation" (p. 259). For example, an announcement of closure such as 'I've gotta go' invokes an unspecified external circumstance which affects the speaker's ability to continue in the current conversation (Sacks & Schegloff, 1973).

Arrangements - according to Sacks and Schegloff (1973), arrangements such as 'I will call you then', are very common in the last topic in conversation and after arrangements a conversation may proceed to close.

Formulating summaries - one possible activity that conversationalists do in during the talk is to talk about their talking so far, they formulate a summarized version of the talk (Sacks & Garfinkel, 1970). According to Button (1991), these formulations present the talk as a thing which is completing to the point where it can be talked about as a bounded event.

Appreciations - according to Liddicoat (2007), appreciations have a bounding function because they design a segment of talk as potentially complete and appreciation in conversation means there is no relevant future talk for this conversation and conversation may now be completed and can move to ending.

Sequence-closing sequence - Liddicoat (2007) believed sequence closing sequences are topic bounding and they may serve as the final action in conversation. "Where sequence-closing sequences occur as a preliminary to closing, they are commonly initiated by a closing implicative action" (Liddicoat, 2007, p. 264).

Back references - Liddicoat (2007) pointed out that, "back references have already been talked about may be found as the last topic before a closing" (p. 265).

➢ Terminal sequences: conversation is usually closed by an exchange of 'goodbyes' or similar token. And after such an exchange a conversation is considered closed.

➢ Moving out of closing: Liddicoat (2007) pointed out that, it happens that one participant is prepared to end a conversation, but another participant is willing to continue further talk. "Moving out may lead to a brief prolongation of the conversation, where a closing is re-established very soon or it may lead to much longer talk" (p. 267).

As stated by Hudson (1996), speech or conversation reflects the social relations between the speakers most particularly power and solidarity manifested in that relationship. Liu (2004) defined power "as status: professors, administrators, and students are on a hierarchy from powerful to powerless" (p. 16). As noted by Fasold (1990), solidarity is associated with reciprocal forms of address, both speakers address each other by first name, solidarity governs relationships characterized by social equality and similarity.

Coppock (2005) pointed out that, "the content and sequence of closings in English conversation ending between strangers was shown to have do not only with the turn-taking machinery, as discussed by Sacks and Schegloff (1973), but also with these issues concerning and the relationship between the participants and their social roles" (p. 7). Coppock (2005) maintained that solidarity is an important part of one's role in American society as well.

Another factor that has an influential effect in conversation, is gender. Gender refers to the cultural traits and behaviors deemed appropriate for men and women by a particular society (Cameron, 2006). Males and females treated differently in conversation. Men are more concerned with power and women with solidarity (Hudson, 1996). Furthermore, there are possible differences between English learners as well as TEFL students and native English-speaking students on the way they end their conversation according to their cultures and social norms. Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1989) pointed out that English learners are often unable to close their conversations appropriately. Even advanced English learners have difficulty recognizing when a native speaker is ending the conversation. Their findings showed that closings, which are overly brief or overly extended may make learners appear rude. Bardovi-Harling et al. (1991) believed that, closing in conversation is culture specific, knowing how to end the conversation and saying 'goodbye' in one's native language does not ensure success in another language. Therefore, getting familiar with conversation ending patterns can be helpful in understanding conversation ending for English learners as well as for TEFL students to communicate more appropriately and effectively.

To help TEFL and EFL learners to communicate more effectively and appropriately, this study attempts to investigate the difference of terminating the conversation between graduate native English-speaking students and graduate TEFL students. The investigation of strategies used by native English-speaking students enable EFL learners as well as TEFL students to develop the sociolinguistics rules, therefore the findings of this study allow TEFL students to improve their knowledge toward L1 and L2 cultures. Being aware of such differences can minimize the mismatches which exist between two cultures. The study of different cultures helps students in getting to know different people. The practical side lies in relational development among students, professors and administrators in a university setting. Based on what is mentioned above, the following research questions were guided this investigation:

➢ Is there any significant difference between graduate native English-speaking students and graduate TEFL students to end their conversation?

➢ Is there any significant difference between male graduate students and female graduate students in ending conversation?

➢ How do male graduate students and female graduate students end their conversation when facing with people in higher status, equal status and lower status?

2. Method

2.1 Pilot Study

Before performing the main study, a pilot study was conducted in order to see if the situations of the test were reliable. Therefore, at first 15 graduate TEFL students were chosen to undertake the questionnaire for the pilot test, after that 10 of 15 graduate TEFL students were chosen to take in the pilot test again in order to measure reliability, after doing Test-Retest the amount of correlation was 0.93. Moreover, three Ph.D. degree holders checked the content validity.

2.2 Participants

This study was conducted by one group of graduate TEFL students and one group of graduate native English-speaking students. The first group included 50 graduate TEFL students both males and females age ranged from 23-35 years old. Here the participants were chosen randomly from Islamic Azad University of Najaf Abad, Isfahan University of Technology and Islamic Azad University of Khorasgan. The second group included 27 graduate native English-speaking students both males and females age ranged from 23-28 years old, who were all engineering students from UCL University and Kings college University of London and collected by a

researcher at these universities.

Table 1

Frequency and Percentage of Native English-Speaking Students and TEFL Students

	Frequency	Percent
Native English speaking students	27	35.1
TEFL students	50	64.9
Total	77	100.0

2.3 Instruments

In order to compare terminating strategies, the researcher prepared one questionnaire in English. The questionnaire was based on Discourse Completion Test (DCT), and it included 9 situations. The situations were considered to be higher, equal and lower status of the interlocutor. In this study, the subjects were asked to answer the nine situations about how they terminated their conversations. Participants were asked to write only their gender, level of education and age. The researcher informed the participants that the data collected from the questionnaire would be used to conduct the research and would not serve any other purposes. This was done in an attempt to secure the most accurate and natural responses from the students involved.

2.4 Designing the Situations of the Questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaire was to elicit the data how graduate native English-speaking students and graduate TEFL students end their conversations also social factors of gender and power were considered. Therefore, the researcher designed nine situations within which social distance was carefully considered. To ensure the generalizability of the results the situations were designed variously. In situations number one, number two and number three, the participants were asked to terminate their conversations with their professors; who were in higher status of the participants. Situations number four, number five and number six were related to the equal status of the participants and they had to terminate their conversations with their classmates. In situations number seven, number eight and number nine the participants were asked to terminate their conversations with their friends; who were undergraduate students in lower status.

2.5 Applying an Open-ended Elicitation

In conducting this research, both open and close formats of data elicitation could be used to gather the needed data, but since the present study aimed to elicit the natural data from terminating conversation strategies of the respondents can be precisely identified, the open elicitation one was more suitable. The open format of elicitation would not restrict the respondents and would give more space to them; therefore the final data would be more natural. One of the disadvantages that most of the researchers and participants of the research studies propose is that the open elicitation is really time consuming, but the pilot study showed that 20 minutes was enough for providing answers to the nine situations.

2.6 Procedures

In the course of conducting this study, one questionnaire in English language was administered to the Persian graduate TEFL students and graduate native English-speaking students. For Persian students, the researcher took part in university classes and took approximately 20 minutes of each class to clarify the purpose of the study and explained the questionnaire to the students and wait for them to give appropriate responses to the situations. For graduate native English-speaking students, a researcher helped to gather the data.

2.7 Data Analysis

The participants' responses were analyzed based on Liddicoat's taxonomy (2007), introducing four

strategies for closing the conversation i.e., 1. Pre-closing (strategy 1), 2. Closing implicative environment section including; announcing closure (strategy 2.1), arrangements (strategy 2.2), formulating summaries (strategy 2.3), appreciation (strategy 2.4), sequence-closing-sequence (strategy 2.5), back reference (strategy 2.6), 3. Terminal sequence (strategy 3), 4. Move out of closing (strategy 4). The researcher used Fisher exact test to compare the measure of the frequency and percentage between native English-speaking students and TEFL students and also between males and females. Mann-Whitney U test was used to measure of the number of strategies used by native English-speaking students and TEFL students as well as used by males and females. Also Cochran's Q exact test was used to compare the frequency and percentage of strategies used by native English-speaking students and TEFL students among three levels; higher status, equal status, lower status, and Friedman exact test was done to compare the number of strategies used by native English-speaking students and TEFL students as well as males and females among three levels.

Table 2

Liddicoat's Taxonomy (2007)

Closing strategies	
Strategy 1	**Pre-closing**
	e.g. okay, well
Strategy 2	**Closing implicative environment**
Strategy 2.1	**Announcing closure**
	e.g. I gotta go now
Strategy 2.2	**Arrangements**
	e.g. I'll call you then
Strategy 2.3	**Formulating summaries**
	e.g. if we want to repeat the whole thing over again
Strategy 2.4	**Appreciations**
	e.g. thank you
Strategy 2.5	**Sequence-closing sequences**
	e.g. A: may be something will turn up
	B: yeah never know something will turn up ,
	A: yeah
Strategy 2.6	**Back references**
	e.g. A: We'll meet up on Saturday B: yeah Saturday
Strategy 3	**Terminal sequence**
	e.g. bye, good bye
Strategy 4	**Moving out of closing**

3.   Results

In line with the first research question, the collected data were tested by Fisher exact test. Subsequently, the number of different strategies used by students was tested by Mann-Whitney U test.

Table 3

Percentage and Frequency of Strategies Used by Native English-Speaking Students and TEFL Students

Types of Strategies	Group	Use strategy				Total		*Sig.*
		No		Yes				
		F	P	F	P	F	P	
Strategy 1	Native	2	7.4	25	92.6	27	100.0	
	TEFL	3	6.0	47	94.0	50	100.0	1.00
	Total	5	6.5	72	93.5	77	100.0	
Strategy 2.1	Native	0	0.0	27	100.0	27	100.0	
	TEFL	0	0.0	50	100.0	50	100.0	----
	Total	0	0.0	77	100.0	77	100.0	
Strategy 2.2	Native	1	3.7	26	96.3	27	100.0	
	TEFL	10	20.0	40	80.0	50	100.0	.085
	Total	11	14.3	66	85.7	77	100.0	

Table 3 … continued

Types of Strategies	Group	Use strategy				Total		Sig.
		No		Yes				
		F	P	F	P	F	P	
Strategy 2.3	Native	13	48.1	14	51.9	27	100.0	
	TEFL	40	80.0	10	20.0	50	100.0	.009
	Total	53	68.8	24	31.2	77	100.0	
Strategy 2.4	Native	2	7.4	25	92.6	27	100.0	
	TEFL	4	8.0	46	92.0	50	100.0	1.00
	Total	6	7.8	71	92.2	77	100.0	
Strategy 2.5	Native	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0	
	TEFL	50	100.0	0	0.0	50	100.0	----
	Total	77	100.0	0	0.0	77	100.0	
Strategy 2.6	Native	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0	
	TEFL	50	100.0	0	0.0	50	100.0	----
	Total	77	100.0	0	0.0	77	100.0	
Strategy 3	Native	0	0.0	27	100.0	27	100.0	
	TEFL	3	6.0	47	94.0	50	100.0	.548
	Total	3	3.9	74	96.1	77	100.0	
Strategy 4	Native	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0	
	TEFL	50	100.0	0	0.0	50	100.0	1.00
	Total	77	100.0	0	0.0	77	100.0	

Note. f = Frequency, P = Percentage

The results revealed that 92.6% of graduate native English-speaking students and 94% of graduate TEFL students used strategy one (pre-closing). In order to compare the percentage between graduate English-speaking students and graduate TEFL students to use this strategy, there was no significant difference between native English-speaking students based on Fisher exact test ($p > 0.05$). Based on Fisher test, both of graduate native English-speaking students and graduate TEFL students (100%) used announcing of closing (strategy 2.1). Among graduate TEFL students 96.3% of them and 80% of graduate native English-speaking students used arrangements of closing (strategy 2.2), based on Fisher exact test there was no significant difference between native English-speaking students and TEFL students to use this strategy ($p > 0.05$). Among graduate native English-speaking students 51.9 of them and 20% of graduate TEFL students used formulating summaries of closing (strategy 2.3), and based on Fisher test there was a significant difference between these two groups of students ($p < 0.05$), and native English-speaking students used this strategy more than TEFL students.

Among graduate native English-speaking students 92.6% of them and 92% of graduate TEFL students used appreciation of closing (strategy 2.4), and based on Fisher test there was no significant difference between these two groups of students ($p > 0.05$). Neither graduate native English-speaking students nor graduate TEFL students used sequence-closing-sequence of closing (strategy 2.5) and back-reference of closing (strategy 2.6). All of the graduate native English-speaking students (100%) and 94% graduate TEFL students used terminal closing (strategy 3), and based on Fisher test there was no significant difference between two groups of students. For strategy 4 (move out of closing), neither graduate native English-speaking students nor TEFL students used this strategy. Table 4 shows the results of Mann-Whitney U test:

Table 4

The Number of Strategies Used by Native English-Speaking Students and TEFL Students

Strategy	Group	N	Mean	*Std.* Error	Mann-Whitney U	Sig.
Strategy 1	Native	27	3.11	.29	620.50	.553
	TEFL	50	3.40	.24		
Strategy 2.1	Native	27	5.96	.23	467.00	.023
	TEFL	50	5.10	.23		
Strategy 2.2	Native	27	2.19	.21	440.50	.009
	TEFL	50	1.52	.19		

Table 4 … continued

Strategy	Group	N	Mean	Std. Error	Mann-Whitney U	Sig.
Strategy 2.3	Native	27	.78	.19	441.50	.002
	TEFL	50	.22	.07		
Strategy 2.4	Native	27	1.78	.16	635.00	.651
	TEFL	50	1.76	.15		
Strategy 2.5	Native	27	.00	.00	675.00	1.000
	TEFL	50	.00	.00		
Strategy 2.6	Native	27	.00	.00	675.00	1.000
	TEFL	50	.00	.00		
Strategy 3	Native	27	5.30	.40	649.00	.780
	TEFL	50	5.34	.31		
Strategy 4	Native	27	.00	.00	661.50	.462
	TEFL	50	.00	.00		

As Table 4 shows, the number of using strategy 2.1 (announcing closure) is higher than the other strategies by graduate native English-speaking students, and in nine situations the mean of using this strategy is 5.96±024, and graduate TEFL students used terminal closing (strategy 3) much more than the other strategies and the mean of using this strategy is 5.34±0.37.

According to Mann-Whitney test, in order to compare the number of strategies between graduate native English-speaking students and graduate TEFL students there was a significant difference between native English-speaking students and TEFL students to use strategies 2.1 (announcing), 2.2 (arrangement), and 2.3 (formulating-summaries); data shows $p < 0.05$ and native English-speaking students used these strategies more than TEFL students. In using other strategies there was no significant difference between native English-speaking students and TEFL students ($p > 0.05$).

To answer the second research questions, the following table with total frequency and percentage of used strategies by gender was drawn to make the comparison.

Table 5

Percentage and Frequency Strategies Used by Female and Male (TEFL Students)

Types of Strategies	Group	Use strategy				Total		Sig.
		No		Yes				
		F	P	F	P	F	P	
Strategy 1	Female	3	10.0	27	90.0	30	100.0	
	Male	0	0.0	20	100.0	20	100.0	.265
	Total	3	6.0	47	94.0	50	100.0	
Strategy 2.2	Female	4	13.3	26	86.7	30	100.0	
	Male	6	30.0	14	70.0	20	100.0	.171
	Total	10	20.0	40	80.0	50	100.0	
Strategy 2.3	Female	23	76.7	7	23.3	30	100.0	
	Male	17	85.0	3	15.0	20	100.0	.720
	Total	40	80.0	10	20.0	50	100.0	
Strategy 2.4	Female	2	6.7	28	93.3	30	100.0	
	Male	2	10.0	18	90.0	20	100.0	1.00
	Total	4	8.0	46	92.0	50	100.0	
Strategy 3	Female	1	3.3	29	96.7	30	100.0	
	Male	2	10.0	18	90.0	20	100.0	.556
	Total	3	6.0	47	94.0	50	100.0	
Strategy 4	Female	30	100.0	0	0.0	30	100.0	
	Male	20	100.0	0	0.0	20	100.0	1.00
	Total	50	100.0	0	0.0	50	100.0	

Note. ƒ = Frequency, P = Percentage

As Table 5 presents, according to percentages and frequencies based on Fisher exact test there was no

significant difference between male graduate students and female graduate students to use these strategies for closing conversation among graduate TEFL students ($p > 0.5$).

Table 6

Percentage and Frequency Strategies Used by Female and Male (Native English-speaking Students)

Strategy	Group	Use strategy				Total		Sig.
		No		Yes				
		F	P	F	P	F	P	
Strategy 1	Female	1	7.1	13	92.9	14	100.0	
	Male	1	7.7	12	92.3	13	100.0	1.00
	Total	2	7.4	25	92.6	27	100.0	
Strategy 2.2	Female	0	0.0	14	100.0	14	100.0	
	Male	1	7.7	12	92.3	13	100.0	.481
	Total	1	3.7	26	96.3	27	100.0	
Strategy 2.3	Female	4	28.6	10	71.4	14	100.0	
	Male	9	69.2	4	30.8	13	100.0	.041
	Total	13	48.1	14	51.9	27	100.0	
Strategy 2.4	Female	0	0.0	14	100.0	14	100.0	
	Male	2	15.4	11	84.6	13	100.0	.222
	Total	2	7.4	25	92.6	27	100.0	
Strategy 3	Female	0	0.0	14	100.0	14	100.0	
	Male	0	0.0	13	100.0	13	100.0	---
	Total	0	0.0	27	100.0	27	100.0	
Strategy 4	Female	14	100.0	0	0.0	14	100.0	
	Male	13	100.0	0	0.0	13	100.0	---
	Total	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0	

Note. f = Frequency, P = Percentage

As table 6 shows, the resulted percentage and frequency revealed that among graduate native English-speaking students, females used strategy 2.3 (formulating summaries) more than males and based on Fisher exact test there was a significant difference between males and females to use this strategy for closing conversation ($p < 0.05$). In order to use other strategies there is no significant difference between male graduate students and female graduate students ($p > 0.05$).

Table 7

General table comparing the Percentage and Frequency of Strategies Used by Male and Female Students

Strategy	Group	Use strategy				Total		Sig.
		No		Yes				
		F	P	F	P	F	P	
Strategy 1	Female	4	9.1	40	90.9	44	100.0	
	Male	1	3.0	32	97.0	33	100.0	.385
	Total	5	6.5	72	93.5	77	100.0	
Strategy 2.1	Female	0	0.0	44	100.0	44	100.0	
	Male	0	0.0	33	100.0	33	100.0	----
	Total	0	0.0	77	100.0	77	100.0	
Strategy 2.2	Female	4	9.1	40	90.9	44	100.0	
	Male	7	21.2	26	78.8	33	100.0	.190
	Total	11	14.3	66	85.7	77	100.0	
Strategy 2.3	Female	27	61.4	17	38.6	44	100.0	
	Male	26	78.8	7	21.2	33	100.0	.137
	Total	53	68.8	24	31.2	77	100.0	
Strategy 2.4	Female	2	4.5	42	95.5	44	100.0	
	Male	4	12.1	29	87.9	33	100.0	.393
	Total	6	7.8	71	92.2	77	100.0	

Table 7… continued

Strategy	Group	Use strategy				Total		Sig.
		No		Yes				
		F	P	F	P	F	P	
Strategy 2.5	Female	44	100.0	0	0.0	44	100.0	
	Male	33	100.0	0	0.0	33	100.0	----
	Total	77	100.0	0	0.0	77	100.0	
Strategy 2.6	Female	44	100.0	0	0.0	44	100.0	
	Male	33	100.0	0	0.0	33	100.0	----
	Total	77	100.0	0	0.0	77	100.0	
Strategy 3	Female	1	2.3	43	97.7	44	100.0	
	Male	2	6.1	31	93.9	33	100.0	.573
	Total	3	3.9	74	96.1	77	100.0	
Strategy 4	Female	44	100.0	0	0.0	44	100.0	
	Male	33	100.0	0	0.0	33	100.0	1.000
	Total	77	100.0	0	0.0	77	100.0	

Note. f = Frequency, P = Percentage

As table 7 shows, according to frequencies and percentages these two groups, 90.9% female students and 97% of male students used pre-closing (strategy 1). In order to compare the percentage of this strategy there was no significant difference between male and female students ($p > 0.05$). All male and female students (100%) used announcing closure (strategy 2.1). Among male students 78/8% of them and 90.9% of female students used arrangements before closing their conversations and based on Fisher test there was no significant difference between male and female students to use this strategy ($p > 0.05$). 38.6% of female students and 21.2% of male students used formulating summaries (strategy 2.3), and based on Fisher test there was a significant difference between male and female students to use this strategy ($p < 0.05$).

Among female students 95.5% of them and 87.9% of male students used appreciation before closing their conversations and there was no significant difference between male and female students based on Fisher test (p>0.05). Neither male students nor female students used sequence-closing-sequence (strategy 2.5) and back reference (strategy 2.6). 97.7% of female students and 93.9% of male students used terminal closing (strategy 3) at the end of their conversations and based on Fisher test there was no significant difference between male and female students to use this strategy. Neither male students nor female students used strategy 4 (move out of closing). Table 8 shows the results of Mann-Whitney test for TEFL students:

Table 8

The Number of Strategies Used by Male and Female Students (TEFL Students)

Strategy	Group	N	Mean	Std. Error	Mann-Whitney U	Sig.
Strategy 1	Female	30	3.10	.32	233.00	.177
	Male	20	3.85	.36		
Strategy 2.1	Female	30	5.20	.33	266.00	.493
	Male	20	4.95	.30		
Strategy 2.2	Female	30	1.70	.23	227.50	.131
	Male	20	1.25	.30		
Strategy 2.3	Female	30	.27	.09	273.50	.450
	Male	20	.15	.08		
Strategy 2.4	Female	30	1.77	.20	295.50	.925
	Male	20	1.75	.23		
Strategy 2.5	Female	30	.00	.00	300.00	1.000
	Male	20	.00	.00		
Strategy 2.6	Female	30	.00	.00	300.00	1.000
	Male	20	.00	.00		
Strategy 3	Female	30	5.47	.44	282.00	.720
	Male	20	5.15	.63		
Strategy 4	Female	30	.00	.00	300.00	.414
	Male	20	.00	.00		

As Table 8 indicates, among graduate TEFL students both male and female students used terminal closing (strategy 3) more than other strategies and for nine situations the mean of using this strategy for female students is 5.47±0.45, the mean for male students is 5.15±0.63. In order to compare the number of strategies used by TEFL males and females according to Mann-Whitney U test, there was no significant difference between male and female students to use these strategies ($p > 0.05$). Table 9 shows the results of Mann-Whitney test for Native English-Speaking students:

Table 9

The Number of Strategies Used by Male and Female (Native English-Speaking Students)

Strategy	Group	N	Mean	Std. Error	Mann-Whitney U	Sig.
Strategy 1	Female	14	3.14	.44	89.50	.940
	Male	13	3.08	.40		
Strategy 2.1	Female	14	6.14	.31	76.50	.467
	Male	13	5.77	.36		
Strategy 2.2	Female	14	2.07	.30	72.50	.349
	Male	13	2.31	.30		
Strategy 2.3	Female	14	1.14	.29	50.50	.033
	Male	13	.38	.18		
Strategy 2.4	Female	14	1.93	.19	78.50	.493
	Male	13	1.62	.26		
Strategy 2.5	Female	14	.00	.00	91.00	1.000
	Male	13	.00	.00		
Strategy 2.6	Female	14	.00	.00	91.00	1.000
	Male	13	.00	.00		
Strategy 3	Female	14	6.07	.57	54.00	.069
	Male	13	4.46	.48		
Strategy 4	Female	14	.00	.00	91.00	1.000
	Male	13	.00	.00		

As Table 9 shows, among graduate native English-speaking students both male and female students used announcing closure (strategy 2.1) more than other strategies and for nine situations the mean of using this strategy for female students is 6.14±0.31 and for male students is 5.77±0.36. In order to compare the number of strategies used by male and female students according to Mann-Whitney U test, female students used formulating summaries (strategy 2.3) more than male students, and there was a significant difference between male and female students to use this strategy ($p < 0.05$).

Table 10

General Table Comparing the Number of Strategies Used by Male and Female Students

Strategy	Group	N	Mean	Std. Error	Mann-Whitney U	Sig.
Strategy 1	Female	44	3.11	.25	626.50	.297
	Male	33	3.55	.27		
Strategy 2.1	Female	44	5.50	.25	643.00	.382
	Male	33	5.27	.23		
Strategy 2.2	Female	44	1.82	.18	669.00	.543
	Male	33	1.67	.23		
Strategy 2.3	Female	44	.55	.12	590.00	.085
	Male	33	.24	.08		
Strategy 2.4	Female	44	1.82	.15	699.00	.768
	Male	33	1.70	.17		
Strategy 2.5	Female	44	.00	.00	726.00	1.000
	Male	33	.00	.00		
Strategy 2.6	Female	44	.00	.00	726.00	1.000
	Male	33	.00	.00		

Table 10 … continued

Strategy	Group	N	Mean	Std. Error	Mann-Whitney U	Sig.
Strategy 3	Female	44	5.66	.35	590.50	.160
	Male	33	4.88	.42		
Strategy 4	Female	44	.00	.00	726.00	1.000
	Male	33	.00	.00		

As Table 10 presents, female students used terminal closing (strategy 3) more than other strategies and for nine situations the mean of using this strategy is 5.66±0.36, while male students used announcing closure (strategy 2.1) more than other strategies and for nine situations the mean of using this strategy is 5.27±0.24. In order to compare the number of strategies used by male and female students there was no significant difference between these two groups ($p > 0.05$).

To answer the third research question, Cochran's exact test was used to measure the percentage and frequency of strategies used by graduate TEFL students among three levels. According to Table 11, the percentage and frequency of strategies of pre-closing (strategy 1) and appreciation (strategy 2.4) used by TEFL students in facing with their professors (higher status) were more than in facing with their classmates (equal status) and with undergraduate students (lower status). In comparison among three levels the percentage of using strategy, announcing closure (strategy 2.1) for higher status was less than the equal status and lower status. In facing with equal status the percentage of using arrangements (strategy 2.2) was more than with facing the higher status and lower status.

Table 11

The Percentage of Strategies Used by TEFL Students among Three Levels

Strategy	Level	Use strategy No F	Use strategy No P	Use strategy Yes F	Use strategy Yes P	Total F	Total P	Cochran's Q	df	Sig.
Strategy 1	Higher	6	12.0	44	88.0	50	100.0	8.00	2	.018
	Same	21	42.0	29	58.0	50	100.0			
	Lower	12	24.0	38	76.0	50	100.0			
Strategy 2.1	Higher	7	14.0	43	86.0	50	100.0	6.22	2	.045
	Same	3	6.0	47	94.0	50	100.0			
	Lower	1	2.0	49	98.0	50	100.0			
Strategy 2.2	Higher	35	70.0	15	30.0	50	100.0	17.520	2	<.001
	Same	21	42.0	29	58.0	50	100.0			
	Lower	35	70.0	15	30.0	50	100.0			
Strategy 2.3	Higher	46	92.0	4	8.0	50	100.0	2.46	2	.292
	Same	45	90.0	5	10.0	50	100.0			
	Lower	49	98.0	1	2.0	50	100.0			
Strategy 2.4	Higher	4	8.0	46	92.0	50	100.0	42.56	2	<.001
	Same	49	98.0	1	2.0	50	100.0			
	Lower	37	74.0	13	26.0	50	100.0			
Strategy 2.5	Higher	50	100.	0	0.0	50	100.0	----	----	----
	Same	50	100.	0	0.0	50	100.0			
	Lower	50	100.	0	0.0	50	100.0			
Strategy 2.6	Higher	50	100.	0	0.0	50	100.0	----	--	----
	Same	50	100.	0	0.0	50	100.0			
	Lower	50	100.	0	0.0	50	100.0			
Strategy 3	Higher	4	8.0	46	92.0	50	100.0	4.80	2	.091
	Same	9	18.0	41	82.0	50	100.0			
	Lower	9	18.0	41	82.0	50	100.0			
Strategy 4	Higher	50	100.	0	0.0	50	100.0	-----	-----	-----
	Same	50	100.	0	0.0	50	100.0			
	Lower	50	100.	0	0	50	100.0			

As Table 11 shows, all of the graduate native English-speaking students used announcing closure (strategy 2.1) in three levels. According to Cochran's exact test for native students like non-native students the percentage of strategies, pre-closing (strategy 1) and appreciation (strategy 2.4) in facing with their professors (higher status) were more than in facing with their classmates (equal status) and with undergraduate students (lower status). . In facing with equal status the percentage of using arrangements (strategy 2.2) was more than with facing the higher status and lower status.

Table 12

The Percentage of Strategies Used by Native English-Speaking Students among Three Levels

Strategy	Level	Use strategy				Total		Cochran's Q	df	Sig.
		No		Yes						
		F	P	F	P	F	P			
Strategy 1	Higher	3	11.1	24	88.9	27	100.0			
	Same	11	40.7	16	59.3	27	100.0	13.68	2	.001
	Lower	7	25.9	20	74.1	27	100.0			
Strategy 2.1	Higher	0	0.0	27	100.0	27	100.0			
	Same	0	0.0	27	100.0	27	100.0	----	----	----
	Lower	0	0.0	27	100.0	27	100.0			
Strategy 2.2	Higher	21	77.8	6	22.2	27	100.0			
	Same	4	14.8	23	85.2	27	100.0	11.52	2	.003
	Lower	14	51.9	13	48.1	27	100.0			
Strategy 2.3	Higher	19	70.4	8	29.6	27	100.0			
	Same	19	70.4	8	29.6	27	100.0	2.60	2	.273
	Lower	23	85.2	4	14.8	27	100.0			
Strategy 2.4	Higher	2	7.4	25	92.6	27	100.0			
	Same	26	96.3	1	3.7	27	100.0	72.40	2	<.001
	Lower	24	88.9	3	11.1	27	100.0			
Strategy 2.5	Higher	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0			
	Same	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0	----	--	----
	Lower	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0			
Strategy 2.6	Higher	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0			
	Same	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0	----	--	----
	Lower	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0			
Strategy 3	Higher	0	0.0	27	100.0	27	100.0			
	Same	2	7.4	25	92.6	27	100.0	4.54	2	.103
	Lower	4	14.8	23	85.2	27	100.0			
Strategy 4	Higher	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0			
	Same	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0	----	----	----
	Lower	27	100.0	0	0.0	27	100.0			

Table 13 shows the percentage and frequency of strategies used by native English-speaking students and TEFL students among three levels.

Table 13

The Percentage of Strategies Used by Native English-speaking students and TEFL Students among Three Levels

Strategy	Level	Use strategy				Total		Cochran's Q	df	Sig.
		No		Yes						
		F	P	F	P	F	P			
Strategy 1	Higher	9	11.7	68	88.3	77	100.0			
	Same	32	41.6	45	58.4	77	100.0	21.57	2	<.001
	Lower	19	24.7	58	75.3	77	100.0			
Strategy 2.1	Higher	7	9.1	70	90.9	77	100.0			
	Same	3	3.9	74	96.1	77	100.0	6.22	2	.045
	Lower	1	1.3	76	98.7	77	100.0			

Table 13 … continued

Strategy	Level	No F	No P	Yes F	Yes P	Total F	Total P	Cochran's Q	df	Sig.
Strategy 2.2	**Higher**	**56**	**72.7**	**21**	**27.3**	**77**	**100.0**			
	Same	25	32.5	52	67.5	77	100.0	**26.88**	**2**	**<.001**
	Lower	49	63.6	28	36.4	77	100.0			
Strategy 2.3	Higher	65	84.4	12	15.6	77	100.0			
	Same	64	83.1	13	16.9	77	100.0	4.96	2	.084
	Lower	72	93.5	5	6.5	77	100.0			
Strategy 2.4	Higher	6	7.8	71	92.2	77	100.0			
	Same	75	97.4	2	2.6	77	100.0	114.03	2	<.001
	Lower	61	79.2	16	20.8	77	100.0			
Strategy 2.5	Higher	77	100.	0	0.0	77	100.0			
	Same	77	100.	0	0.0	77	100.0	----	----	----
	Lower	77	100.	0	0.0	77	100.0			
Strategy 2.6	Higher	77	100.	0	0.0	77	100.0			
	Same	77	100.	0	0.0	77	100.0	----	----	----
	Lower	77	100.	0	0.0	77	100.0			
Strategy 3	Higher	4	5.2	73	94.8	77	100.0			
	Same	11	14.3	66	85.7	77	100.0	8.38	2	.015
	Lower	13	16.9	64	83.1	77	100.0			
Strategy 4	Higher	77	100.	0	0.0	77	100.0			
	Same	77	100.	0	0.0	77	100.0	----	----	----
	Lower	77	100.	0	0.0	77	100.0			

Cochran exact test was done to measure the percentage of strategies used by both graduate native English-speaking students and graduate TEFL students. As table 11 shows, 94.8% of students used terminal closing (strategy 3) in facing with their professors (higher status), 96.1% of students used announcing closure (strategy 2.1), in facing with their classmates (equal status) also 98.7% of students used announcing closure (strategy 2.1) in facing with undergraduate students (lower status). Totally the percentage of using strategies 1 (pre-closing), 2.4 (appreciation) and 3 (terminal closing) with facing with higher status were more than facing with the other levels.

Table 14

The Number of Strategies Used by TEFL Students among Three Levels

Strategy	Group	N	Mean	Std. Error	χ2	df	Sig.
	Higher	50	1.44	.10			
Strategy 1	Same	50	.88	.12	18.45	2	<.001
	Lower	50	1.08	.11			
	Higher	50	1.18	.09			
Strategy 2.1	Same	50	1.90	.12	39.18	2	<.001
	Lower	50	2.02	.11			
	Higher	50	.32	.07			
Strategy 2.2	Same	50	.88	.13	19.34	2	<.001
	Lower	50	.32	.07			
	Higher	50	.10	.05			
Strategy 2.3	Same	50	.10	.04	2.60	2	.273
	Lower	50	.02	.02			
	Higher	50	1.48	.11			
Strategy 2.4	Same	50	.02	.02	82.25	2	<.001
	Lower	50	.26	.06			
	Higher	50	.00	.00			
Strategy 2.5	Same	50	.00	.00	----	----	----
	Lower	50	.00	.00			

Table 14 … continued

Strategy	Group	N	Mean	*Std.* Error	χ2	df	Sig.
Strategy 2.6	Higher	50	.00	.00			
	Same	50	.00	.00	----	----	----
	Lower	50	.00	.00			
Strategy 3	Higher	50	2.02	.13			
	Same	50	1.48	.14	10.23	2	.006
	Lower	50	1.84	.16			
Strategy 4	Higher	50	.00	.00			
	Same	50	.00	.00	-----	----	-----
	Lower	50	.00	.00			

Friedman test was done in order to compare the number of strategies used by graduate TEFL students to face with professors (higher status), with classmates (equal status), and with undergraduate students (lower status). Based on Table 12, graduate TEFL students used pre-closing (strategy 1), appreciation (strategy 2.4), terminal closing (strategy 3) more than other strategies in facing with their professors, and when they faced with classmates and undergraduate students used these strategies less.

In facing with professors, announcing closure (strategy 2.1) was found to be the least favored strategy by graduate TEFL students, while arrangements (strategy 2.2) were the most used strategy by graduate TFEL students in facing with their classmates.

Table 15

The Number of Strategies Used by Native English-speaking Students among Three Levels

Strategy	Group	N	Mean	Std. Error	χ2	df	Sig.
Strategy 1	Higher	27	1.48	.15			
	Same	27	.67	.11	17.83	2	<.001
	Lower	27	.96	.14			
Strategy 2.1	Higher	27	1.59	.11			
	Same	27	2.26	.13	18.91	2	<.001
	Lower	27	2.11	.08			
Strategy 2.2	Higher	27	.22	.08			
	Same	27	1.41	.14	26.14	2	<.001
	Lower	27	.56	.12			
Strategy 2.3	Higher	27	.30	.09			
	Same	27	.30	.09	1.29	2	.526
	Lower	27	.19	.09			
Strategy 2.4	Higher	27	1.59	.13			
	Same	27	.04	.03	43.76	2	<.001
	Lower	27	.15	.08			
Strategy 2.5	Higher	27	.00	.00			
	Same	27	.00	.00	----	----	----
	Lower	27	.00	.00			
Strategy 2.6	Higher	27	.00	.00			
	Same	27	.00	.00	----	----	----
	Lower	27	.00	.00			
Strategy 3	Higher	27	2.33	.15			
	Same	27	1.33	.15	19.49	2	<.001
	Lower	27	1.63	.20			
Strategy 4	Higher	27	.00	.00			
	Same	27	.00	.00	----	----	----
	Lower	27	.00	.00			

Friedman test was done in order to compare the number of strategies used by graduate native English-speaking students. As table 13 shows, these students like TEFL students used pre-closing (strategy 1),

appreciation (strategy 2.4), terminal closing (strategy 3) in facing with their professors (higher status)   more than other levels, while the least used strategy in this level was announcing closure (strategy 2.1). Also graduate native English-speaking students like graduate TEFL students used arrangements (strategy 2.2) in facing with their classmates more than other levels.

Table 16

The Number of Strategies Used By Native English-Speaking Students and TEFL Students among Three Levels

Strategy	Group	N	Mean	*Std.* Error	χ2	df	Sig.
Strategy 1	Higher	77	1.45	.08			
	Same	77	.81	.09	35.32	2	<.001
	Lower	77	1.04	.09			
Strategy 2.1	Higher	77	1.32	.07			
	Same	77	2.03	.09	56.58	2	<.001
	Lower	77	2.05	.07			
Strategy 2.2	Higher	77	.29	.05			
	Same	77	1.06	.10	43.44	2	<.001
	Lower	77	.40	.06			
Strategy 2.3	Higher	77	.17	.04			
	Same	77	.17	.04	3.58	2	.167
	Lower	77	.08	.03			
Strategy 2.4	Higher	77	1.52	.08			
	Same	77	.03	.01	125.59	2	<.001
	Lower	77	.22	.05			
Strategy 2.5	Higher	77	.00	.00			
	Same	77	.00	.00	---	---	---
	Lower	77	.00	.00			
Strategy 2.6	Higher	77	.00	.00			
	Same	77	.00	.00	---	---	---
	Lower	77	.00	.00			
Strategy 3	Higher	77	2.13	.10			
	Same	77	1.43	.11	26.09	2	<.001
	Lower	77	1.77	.12			
Strategy 4	Higher	77	.00	.00			
	Same	77	.00	.00	----	---	.----
	Lower	77	.00	.00			

As Table 16 presents, the most strategy used by both graduate native English-speaking students and graduate TEFL students in facing with their professors (higher status) was terminal closing (strategy 3), and the mean of using this strategy was 2.13±0.104. While, the most strategy used by both native English-speaking students and TEFL students with their classmates (equal status) was announcing closure (strategy 2.1), and the mean of using this strategy is 2.03±0.94, also the most strategy used by both native and non-native students with undergraduate students (lower status) was announcing closure (strategy 2.1), and the mean of using this strategy was 2.05±0.078.

Friedman test was done in comparison of the number of strategies used by native English-speaking students and TEFL students among three levels. The results revealed that the most strategies used by both native English-speaking students and TEFL students in facing with professors (higher status) were pre-closing (strategy 1), appreciation (strategy 2.4), and terminal closing (strategy 3), while the least strategy used by these students in this level was announcing closure (strategy 2.1). Also native English-speaking students and TEFL students use announcing closure (strategy 2.1) in facing with their classmates (equal level) and undergraduate students (lower level) more than other strategies, and they used pre-closing (strategy 1) in these levels less than in facing with higher status.

4. Findings and Discussion

The focus of the first question was on the difference between graduate native English-speaking students and graduate TEFL students in terminating their conversations. Findings showed that graduate native English-speaking students tended to use announcing closure (strategy 2.1) and arrangements (strategy 2.2) for terminating their conversations. The most strategies used by graduate TEFL students were terminal closing (strategy 3). According to Ventola (1979), there are two types for saying goodbye: short goodbyes like 'bye', and extended goodbyes like 'a wish to see you again'. Results showed that TEFL students tended to say 'by', 'goodbye' … at the end of their conversations more than native English-speaking students.

The second research question addressed the difference between male and female students in using strategies for terminating their conversations. In response to this question, the second hypothesis was formulated, therefore Fisher exact test and Mann-Whitney U test was done. In comparison between female native English-speaking students and female TEFL students, the results showed that female TEFL students tended to use terminal closing (strategy 3) at the end of their conversations, also in comparison between male native English-speaking students and male TEFL students, male TEFL students used terminal closing (strategy 3) at the end of their conversations more than male native English-speaking students, but male native English-speaking students used arrangements (strategy 2.2) in their conversations more than male TEFL students and in this regard there was a significant difference between male native English-speaking students and male TEFL students ($p < 0.05$) (table 4.18). In comparison, between male and female TEFL students, the results revealed they used terminal closing (strategy 3) more than native English-speaking students and also there was no significant difference between male and female TEFL students. In comparison between male and female native English-speaking students, the results showed that female native English-speaking students used formulating summaries (strategy 2.3) more than male native English-speaking students. In comparison between male and female students the results revealed that female students tended to use terminal closing (strategy 3) more than male students at the end of their conversations, while the most strategies used by male students was announcing closure (strategy 2.1). Totally according to the results, there was no significant difference between male and female students in using these strategies for terminating their conversation ($p > 0.05$).

The third research question focused on power and solidarity in choosing strategies facing with people in higher status, equal status and lower status. According to the findings, the most strategies used by female students in facing with their professors were pre-closing (strategy 1) and terminal closing (strategy3) and the least strategies used by them in this level was announcing closure. According to (table 4.22), the most strategies used by male students were pre-closing (strategy 1), appreciation (strategy 2.4) and terminal closing (strategy 3) and the least strategy used by them in this level was announcing closure (strategy 2.1). The results showed the same for native English-speaking students and TEFL students. Totally the results revealed that both native English-speaking students and TEFL students were more cautious in using an appropriate strategy in order to keep distance, and power played an important role in using these strategies specially in facing with their professors (higher status), according to Robert (1992), power refers to status or social distance between two people. In social, the students stand lower than the professors, therefore, students should be more polite in facing with their professors. In addition, solidarity had effect to use these strategies in facing with equal status and lower status, because in these two levels the most strategies used by students were announcing closure and arrangements.

5. Conclusion

Based on the above presented discussion some concluding remarks can be drawn. This study found that there was a significant difference between graduate English-speaking students and graduate TEFL students in choosing strategies (1-2), (2.2) and (2.3) for terminating their conversations, but in choosing other strategies there was no significant difference between graduate English-speaking students and graduate TEFL students. And in content most of the graduate TEFL students used 'I am glad to see you', 'nice to see you' at the end of

their conversations, according to Liddicoat (2007), these phrases could only be used at the begging of the conversations. Therefore, it showed that it is a transfer from L1 into L2. The findings also showed that there was no significant difference between male and female students, but power and solidarity had an effect in choosing strategies for terminating conversations with students and both native English-speaking students and TEFL students were more polite when facing with their professors.

5.1 Implications

The findings of this study familiarize the readers with the speech patterns of Persian EFL speakers, the results can be helpful for EFL learners as well as TEFL students to improve their knowledge toward L1 and L2 cultures. According to (Simin, Eslami-Rasekh, Eslami-Rasekh, & Ketabi, 2014), the findings can be helpful for students who aim to choose job in field dealing with cross-cultural communication activities, because the misunderstanding caused a result of unintended outcome of what is said. The findings of this study also are helpful for language teachers. Teachers have to raise student's awareness by choosing the right strategies to say at the proper time as native English-speaking students utilize in their closing. Teachers have to equip the EFL learners with communicative competence and sociolinguistic competence, not only the structure of the language. Finally, the findings of this study can be helpful for material designers to prepare empirical materials and syllabus for learners to develop their communication across cultural boundaries.

6. References

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