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THE REALIZATION OF STRATEGIES OF IMPOLITENESS IN IRAQI FACEBOOK COMMENTS ON COVID_19

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Abstract:

The Facebook comments provide a rich source of qualitative data that reflects public opinion and sheds light on how people make decisions and build beliefs. There was a notion of politeness and impoliteness in the world of pragmatics. Every person has a public self-image or a face. They hope that other people will appreciate their appearance. Studying impoliteness can help people understand bad manners and impolite language so they can prevent or regulate their actions when interacting with others. To achieve the research aim and objectives, analyzing this specific data source necessarily requires a well-thought-out methodological approach. The aim of this study is to look into the impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi Facebook users in reference to Covid-19. It investigates how impoliteness strategies are implemented on Facebook comments. The descriptive qualitative method was used in this study. The data was provided from Iraqi Facebook users' comments in Iraqi real pages on Facebook.

1. Introduction:

Kadar (2017: 7) offers a general concept of politeness by stating that "politeness is a key means of working out and keeping interpersonal relationships between people." His definition based on the belief that people have learned how to act in a positive way with members of society since

childhood. The notion of impoliteness by which fresh blood in pragmatics has been introduced into academia is closely related to politeness.

The subject of impoliteness is considered to be one of linguistic researchers' most desirable subjects. There are several researches performed to analyze the techniques of impoliteness implemented in various ways by people. Computer mediated communication is a mechanism by which two or more participants connect and create social relationships with each other. It is a trend that never disappears to develop around the globe. Web pages for social media networks have become so popular and have attracted a large number of Internet users around the world. Among many social networking sites, because of its high use patterns that bridge online and offline links, Facebook is considered a rich site for researchers interested in social networks. (Safaa Al-Shloul, 2016: 32). Facebook is still only one example of social network sites used by individual people to connect with members of their group that have common goals and objectives. Sites of social networks, such as Facebook, paved the way for researchers to do research in online contexts and attract them. Facebook has many user-attracting functions, one of which is the opportunity to engage by sharing on public pages and even replying to comments. There are still theoretical issues, despite the enormous literature on politeness, but research on politeness does not end, and the field of impoliteness also continues to expand rapidly. (Dyner, 2015). In order to provide a clearer understanding of these fields of study, which are still not satisfactorily understood despite the enormous literature and/or analysis on them, researchers have pointed out that studies in impoliteness still need to be carried out in many areas. It is not an easy job to define impoliteness, since certain verbal actions, while impolite, are not necessarily considered impolite. The understanding of impolite behavior depends greatly on the situation as well as on how in a particular context one perceives what is said. For instance, it may be considered highly impolite to speak and also use offensive language to an elderly man, but if a footballer does the same actions in the middle of the crowd, it may not be taken at all as impolite (Culpeper, 2011: 22). Interest has increased in the study of computer-mediated communication, especially on social media sites. The use of the language of impoliteness will impact this new context and the various topics and events in which Facebook users participate.

2. Statement of the Problem:

In various fields and languages, Culpeper's impoliteness strategies are studied, but these strategies are not explored in Iraqi comments about Covid-19 by the online community (i.e. Facebook). The current study, therefore, covers this space by defining and evaluating impolite comments on Facebook.

The uses of social media Iraqi users are unconcerned with offensive language used in Facebook comments.

3. Aims:

The aims of the current research are as follows:

1. This research proposes to recognize and describe the strategies of impoliteness used by Iraqi people by using unacceptable forms of digital communication in Covid-19 Facebook comments that may cause social hatred and division among participants.
2. To explore the positions and styles of strategies of impoliteness used by Iraqi people on Covid-19 in Facebook

3. Understanding how the use of impoliteness impacts the topic of Covid-19.

4. Impoliteness:

Over the years, the definition of the notion of impoliteness has undergone numerous changes and additions. For example, Culpeper (2011) defines impoliteness as "the use of strategies designed to have the opposite effect of social disruption." The aim of such strategies is to attack the face, which is a concept of self that is emotionally sensitive.

Nawal Fadhil Abbas, Hiba Nassrullah Mohammed, and Many linguists believe that impoliteness is an independent phenomenon, so in its own terms it really should be treated, not in terms of the principle of politeness. Yet, in contrast to this viewpoint, Leech says "the best way to start theorizing about impoliteness is to build on a theory of politeness, which is clearly a closely related phenomenon, in fact, the polar opposite of politeness" (Leech, 2014, p. 219).

One of the most critical elements of social communication is politeness: human beings will live in harmony together only if certain simple principles of politeness are followed. The 'politeness' theory was initially formulated and published in 1978 by Brown and Levinson.

Culpeper, Jonathan and Oliver Holmes (2013) stated that in general terms, politeness means preserving or enhancing social peace by voicing optimistic objective assessments and/or by doing what is agreed, anticipated or desired. It is appropriate to keep in mind two crucial points about both politeness and impoliteness. Impoliteness is not something that a speaker or performer produces literally. Impoliteness objectives are not passive but active co-builders of impoliteness. Politeness and impoliteness are most often mutually reciprocated.

Impoliteness has been studied in a number of situations and media, including television shows and social activities. Impolite type of behavior can be found not only in real life but also on social media.

4.1. The Concept of Face:

1) Negative and Positive Face:

Erving Goffman developed the idea of face in the 1960s, and it has since become a basic concept in the study of linguistic politeness. Later, face is described as follows by Brown and Levinson (1987:62):

Negative face: the want of every 'competent adult member' that his/her actions be unimpeded by others. When a person does not avoid or intends to avoid obstructing their interlocutor's freedom of action, negative face is threatened. It may hurt either the speaker or the listener, and it causes one of the interlocutors to submit his or her will to the other.

Positive face: every member's desire for his or her desires to be attractive and desirable to at least some others. When the speaker or hearer is unconcerned with their interlocutor's thoughts or desires, or does not want what the other wants, positive face is threatened. Positive face-threatening actions can harm both the speaker and the listener. When a person is forced to be isolated from others, their well-being is regarded as less significant, their positive image is threatened. <https://en.wikipedia.org/>

2) Face-threatening acts (FTA)

Positive and negative face occur generally in human society, according to Brown and Levinson; it has been suggested that the definition of face is the actual universal aspect of their proposed politeness theory.

Brown and Levinson (1987:65-67) introduced the concept FTA, a face-threatening act that cannot always be prevented, in relation to the concept of face. A speech act (such as a warning or a threat) that can damage the hearer's positive or negative face is known as a face threatening act (Brown and Levinson 1987:61). When they talk, people of all cultures are conscious of their own self-image, or "face." A "face-threatening act" (FTA) is one that has the potential to cause someone to lose their face or to damage it in any way. FTAs, which are popular in daily interactions, are often softened by politeness.

4.2 Impoliteness Strategies:

1) Bald on record impoliteness:

Goldsmith, J. (2000) mentioned that while there are ways that bald on-record politeness can be used and try to reduce face-threatening actions indirectly, such as providing non-manipulative advice, the bald on-record strategy does not try to minimize the threat to the hearer's face. Since this strategy is likely to shock or insult the addressee, it is most commonly used in circumstances where the speaker has an intimate relationship with the listener, such as with family or close friends. Brown and Levinson discuss a variety of scenarios in which the bald on record strategy could be used. For example, in an emergency, where the danger to the hearer's face is minimal (e.g. "Come in" or "Do sit down"), face issues are suspended, another example is when the speaker is far more effective than the listener (for example, a parent asking a child to "stop complaining"). In both of these situations, there is no face on the line, and the speaker does not want to target the listener's face.

2) Positive impoliteness:

This strategy is designed to embarrass the addressee's positive side, in which he or she wishes to be welcomed by others. Culpeper (2011) expresses that ignoring the other, excluding the other from an interaction, becoming disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic, using unacceptable identity symbols, using ambiguous or secretive language, causing disagreement, using taboo language, and calling the other names are all examples of positive impoliteness strategy.

3) Negative impoliteness:

This strategy, according to Culpeper (2011), is used to attack the addressee's negative face wants. The speaker uses this strategy in order to stop the addressee's desire for freedom of action. Fearing the other, condescending, ridiculing the other, being contemptuous, not taking the other seriously, invading the other's area, clearly associating the other with a negative aspect, and placing the other's indebtedness on record are examples of negative impoliteness strategies' production strategies.

4) Sarcasm/ mock impoliteness:

This strategy is based on deception, and what is done is the exact opposite of what is intended, such like irony.

5) Withhold impoliteness:

It can be defined as the absence of politeness in places where it is required For example; failing to express gratitude for a gift may be construed as intentional impoliteness.

5. Computer-Mediated Communication CMC:

Computer mediated communication can be described as any connection between two or more people who communicate via or are facilitated by computers and the internet. It is a type of computer-mediated communication that can take both oral and written forms.CMC is an open channel that enables users to be involved and participate in two-way communication; it is a low-cost method of collecting information for increasing performance and productivity (Miller, 2009). Furthermore, computer-mediated communication is a form of asynchronous communication that has the advantages of reducing problems caused by time and space barriers; being cost-effective; being relatively simple to use; and having the ability to be more personal and flexible. (Lee 2010: 41)

6. Facebook:

Daniel Nations (2019) defined Facebook as a platform for social networking where users can post comments, share photos, and post links to news or other interesting web material, chat online, and watch short-form videos.Shared content may be made publicly available, or may only be shared with a small group of friends or family, or with a single person.As a school-based social network at Harvard University, Facebook began in February of 2004. Mark Zuckerberg, along with Edward Saverin, both students at the college, developed it. It was not until 2006 that Facebook started and took off for everyone 13 years or older, soon overtaking MySpace as the world's most popular social network.Facebook is open to anyone and user-friendly. Even the least technical-minded people on Facebook could sign up and start posting. While it began as a form of staying in touch or reconnecting with long-lost friends, it soon became the darling of marketers that were able to target an audience closely and distribute commercials directly to the people most likely to want their goods or services.<https://www.lifewire.com/what-is-facebook-3486391>

According to Social Media Stats Iraq<https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/iraq>, in Iraq there are 30 million users (2020) of internet, the data shows the stats of social media in Iraq from Sept 2019 - Sept 2020. YouTube has 36.65%, Facebook has 54.75% it means nearly 55% on Facebook.

In January 2020, there were 20,982,000 Facebook users in Iraq, accounting for 49.7 percent of the entire population. Most of them-71.4 percent-were men. The largest user group (8,400,000) was users aged 25 to 34.[https://napoleoncat.com/stats/facebook-users-in-iraq/2020/01#:~:text=There%20were%2020%20982%20000,group%20\(8%20400%20000\).](https://napoleoncat.com/stats/facebook-users-in-iraq/2020/01#:~:text=There%20were%2020%20982%20000,group%20(8%20400%20000).)

Henrich,& Holmes (2013) said that despite the fact that comments have the ability to improve our understanding of public opinion, how people make choices, and how attitudes are formed, they are seldom used as data. Confirming a basis for analyzing these data is a challenge when using reader comments in analysis.

7. Covid-19:

The COVID-19 pandemic in Iraq is part of the 2019 global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic caused by massive coronavirus 2 acute respiratory syndrome (SARS-CoV-2). Iraq registered the first confirmed cases of SARS-CoV-2 infection during the pandemic on 22 February in Najaf. By April, the number of confirmed cases in Baghdad, Basra, Sulaymaniyah, Erbil and Najaf had passed the Hundred mark. (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_pandemic_in_Iraq

It infects people of all ages with the COVID-19 virus. Yet the, facts to date, It means that two types of individuals are at greater risk of developing extreme disease COVID-19. There are elderly persons and those with underlying medical carecircumstances. World Health Organization insists that everyone must defend themselves against COVID-19 with a view to saving others. <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200311-sitrep-51-covid-19.pdf#:~:text=The%20COVID%2D19%20virus,with%20underlying%20medical%20conditions>

8. Previous Studies:

Ningsih. T (2018) investigated impoliteness strategies that are written by users in celebrities' Instagram. The aim of his study was to look at social media users' language impoliteness on Instagram. He describes the reasons of using language impoliteness which were realized by social media users in celebrities' Instagram. Researcher's findings are: Negative impoliteness was the most common strategy among social media users on celebrities' Instagram pages, whereas bald on record impoliteness and sarcasm or mock politeness were the least popular. In his study it was discovered that there was no withhold politeness because withhold politeness appears to keep silent in response to the speaker's utterances, which is a strategy used to avoid performing as expected politeness strategies in the comments of celebrities on Instagram. The aim of using impolite language in celebrities' Instagram posts was to vent negative feelings, entertain viewers, and serve mutual goals. The latest explanations include expressing disagreement, disappointment, mocking the celebrity, and clarifying something.

Hammod, N. and A. Rassul. (2017) studied impoliteness strategies in English and Arabic Facebook comments. Their study employs impoliteness strategies to establish whether impoliteness occurs in Facebook comments and which forms are most widely used. The researchers collected data from Arabic and English pages on Facebook, next they analyzed the comments' strategies and found what percentage each strategy was occurred. The study found that in both English and Arabic Facebook, impoliteness strategies are commonly used. Also they resulted to that in English and Arabic Facebook, the form of page and the content of the post have an influence on the use of impoliteness. As a consequence, the use of impoliteness is directly affected by the context.

9. Methodology:

The research uses the impoliteness strategies of Culpeper (1996) to describe the presence of impoliteness in Facebook Iraqi comments about Covid-19 and what forms are commonly used.

9.1 Procedures:

In order to collect impolite comments from such accounts, the first step is to collect data by finding real Iraqi pages on Facebook. The next step, according to the pragmatic model adopted (Culpeper's 1996) to study Iraqi comments about Covid-19, taking into account the discursive factors that influence this analysis. The percentage of each strategy is determined by statistics to assess. Finally, the results of Iraqi comments are contrasted with the conclusions reached.

9.2 Data Presentation:

As a human, the use of language is our personal skill, thus we choose to use it to either save or threaten others face. Consciously or not, we follow politeness strategy in our interactions. Both in English and Arabic, it is difficult to find and collect online texts from Facebook pages. These pages must be public and represent institutions or groups. The pages are liked by millions of Facebook users. The comments selected for analysis are impolite ones. To represent the Facebook comments, different pages were chosen. These are the pages:

https://www.facebook.com/coronavirus_info/

<https://www.facebook.com/usaidiraq/>Government Organization

<https://www.facebook.com/iraqiministryofhealth/>Government Website

<https://www.facebook.com/NRTTVenglish/>News & Media Website

<https://www.facebook.com/WHONon-profit> Organization

<https://www.facebook.com/RTnews/> Media

<https://www.facebook.com/unicefiraq/> Organization

The above pages are liked by millions facebookers. Most of them are official pages of the news media channels, media websites, organizations, and COVID-19 Information Centre.

These pages share news about politics, celebrities, health, culture, economy, entertainment, sports, and press.

9.3 Analysis and Results:

The following are the steps that were taken to analyse the data:

- Understanding, that this process began with a careful reading of the comments.
- Identifying, this process began with reading the comments and determining which were impoliteness strategies based on Culpeper's theory of impoliteness strategies.
- Separating the comments into specific categories of impoliteness strategies was one step in this process.
- Describing impoliteness strategies that have already been classified into separate points, as well as describing how language impoliteness is expressed in Facebook comments.

In Iraqi Facebook comments about Covid-19, social media users found so many cases of impoliteness.

Post1: A post in 3 March 2020, said WHO Representative in Iraq Dr Adham Ismail: “COVID-19 preventive measures during mass gatherings discussed with religious leaders and health officials in Iraq”

((Find this funny, what an idiot))

((You seem to be laughing at the others))

The commenters were excessively blunt and complete lack of respect for other people's feelings. In the first comment, the Facebook user attacked Dr Adham Ismail (the speaker of the post) directly and clearly by saying "idiot". This is a **negative impoliteness** since the Facebook user ridicules the speaker clearly.

In sarcasm way, the second commenter replies for the speaker's post about Covid-19, the Facebook user scorns him for his post showing how it is a mockery and laughter to lie on people. This is a **sarcasm/ mock impoliteness** strategy.

Post2: A post in 16 March 2020, said "In Baghdad, a complete curfew has been enforced started from 17/3 to 23/3"

((Does the virus appear only on curfew days?))

((Stop making Iraqi people starving, go to hell!))

The first commenter, being sarcastic indirectly expresses his/her dislike towards this post, mockery asking an irony question which is offense question. So, this is **Sarcasm or mock impoliteness strategy**.

The second commenter curses or threatens the speaker of the post including some negative behaviors and apprehensions. He/ She directly insult the author of the post complaining hungry people and how bad situation it is during curfew. It is a **positive impoliteness strategy**. The commenter also used a taboo word by saying "go to hell"

Post3: "Iraq reports a noticeable increase in COVID-19 cases"

((Fake news from a liar))

((It's nothing but a clear conspiracy against Iraqi people))

The first commenter insulted the author of the post by saying he was a liar. This comment classified as **positive impoliteness** because social media users used taboo words in his/her messages.

The second commenter accused the speaker of this post by saying it's just a plot, i.e. corona virus, and this saying is inappropriate driven by poverty and the financial losses caused by the curfew to Iraqi people. It's also a **positive impoliteness**.

Post4: "The Minister of Health discusses the rapid response to emergencies, especially the Corona virus"

((This Job is not looking good on you))

((This man gets madness. garbage trash))

The first comment has a **positive impoliteness**. It was realized by saying that the job isn't good. The Facebook user deeply disrespected and accused the minister of failing to manage the ministry.

The second comment includes a **negative impoliteness**. It was realized by using the negative aspects "garbage trash". In addition to that, Since Facebook user attacked the speaker specifically "gets madness" where the face is not insignificant or minimized; it was included as **Bald on record impoliteness**.

Post5: “The first confirmed death in Iraq of a person affected by Corona virus occurred”
((Thanks a lot, waiting for our roles, our bad situation increases worse))
((Owl..... you get us very bad news, and bring bad luck))

The first comment includes **positive impoliteness** because the Facebook user made other feels uncomfortable and excludes the other from any healthy activity.

The second comment includes **abald onrecord impoliteness** because the Facebook users did attacked and disrespectedthe speaker of the post clearly by saying “Owl”

Post6: “Iraq's Supreme Committee for Health and National Security has set November 29, 2020 as the start date for the new academic year”
((Failure after failure. The aim of teaching turned to God's mercy.))
((What about bad internet service?))

In sarcasm way, the first commenter makes fun of education describes this issue as failure. He/ She addthat the purpose of education has been abandoned and disrupted. This is a **sarcasm/ mock impoliteness** strategy.

The second Facebook user asks a rhetorical question. He/ She complained about the poor and bad internet service, especially for the purpose of education. Some Iraqi people refuse the electronic education for many reasons. This is a **positive impoliteness** strategy.

Post7: “The Ministry of Education adopted a dual strategy that incorporates classroom instruction on one day a week with electronic education on the other days, as well as preventive health initiatives”
((Lucky students, hahaha what about cheating in exams!))
((The teachers receive their salaries and send the lessons on the phone, comedy show))
((There is no corona virus, and this is a political ploy designed to make education useless))

The first commenter showed his/her contempt for electronic education by teasing and contemptuous words directed at students and cheating in exams. This is a **Sarcasm/ mock impoliteness** strategy.

The second comment involves disrespecting the teachers, this is also **Sarcasm/ mock impoliteness** strategy because the Facebook user insults, jokes, and uses words that are insensitive.

With a hint of disapproval, the last commenter denies the existence of the corona virus and claims that it is a political conspiracy to destroy education in Iraq. This refusal of the existence of corona virus occur for many reasons, perhaps ignorance, lack of knowledge, or the control of a conspiracy theory in some people's thinking. This is a **negative impoliteness** strategy.

9.3.1 The Results:

It was noticed that there was no withhold politeness because withhold politeness appears to stay silent in response to speaker utterances, which is a strategy used to avoid performing as planned politeness strategies in Facebook comments.

Culpeper proposed a total of five impoliteness strategies (1996). In Facebook comments, four impoliteness strategies were realized: 1) bald on record impoliteness, 2) positive impoliteness, 3) negative impoliteness, and 4) sarcasm or mock politeness.

In Facebook comments, Iraqi social media users used the strategy of positive impoliteness the most. Negative impoliteness was the least effective strategy. It was discovered that there was no withhold politeness because withhold politeness appears to keep silent in responding to speaker utterances, which is a strategy used to avoid performing as anticipated politeness strategies in Facebook comments. We find that Iraqi Facebook users do not keep silent in responding to the selected posts on Covid-19.

In Iraqi Facebook comments on Covid-19, impoliteness strategies were used to vent negative feelings, show frustration, display disagreement, ridicule the writers of the posts, and explain somethings on their minds.

Table 1. Types of Impoliteness Strategies

No	Strategy of impoliteness	Amount
1	Positive impoliteness	6
2	Negative impoliteness	3
3	Bald on record impoliteness	2
4	Withhold impoliteness	0
5	Sarcasm/ mock impoliteness	5

10. Recommendations and Suggestions:

This study could be extended in terms of the use of impoliteness to self-attack in social media, especially on Facebook because it is a broadcast in Iraq, and discussed in terms of other discourses to contribute to the creation of impoliteness theories, according to the suggestion.

It was suggested to use this study as references for understanding the application of impoliteness in Facebook, especially for the people in conveying the opinion to be polite even though in comments someone in social media to build communication between Iraqi people.

11. Conclusion:

The use of impolite or polite language is defined by the goals of interacting. They may use polite words, which involves linguistic techniques that help the other retain or save face. When speakers use impolite words, on the other hand, they are using linguistic strategies to assault or threaten the other's face. The research recognizes and describes the strategies of impoliteness used by Iraqi people in Covid-19 Facebook comments.

In Facebook comments, four impoliteness strategies were realised: 1) bald on record impoliteness, 2) positive impoliteness, 3) negative impoliteness, and 4) sarcasm or mock politeness. In Facebook comments, Iraqi social media users used the strategy of positive

impoliteness the most. Negative impoliteness was the least effective strategy. It was discovered that there was no withhold politeness because withhold politeness appears to keep silent in responding to speaker utterances, which is a strategy used to avoid performing as anticipated politeness strategies in Facebook comments. We find that Iraqi Facebook users do not keep silent in responding to the selected posts on Covid-19. In Iraqi Facebook comments on Covid-19, impoliteness strategies were used to vent negative feelings, show frustration, display disagreement, ridicule the writers of the posts, and explain somethings on their minds.

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