

Culpeper's Impoliteness Strategies in Selected British Actors' Interviews: A pragmatic Analysis

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Abstract:

This research examines impoliteness that is employed in selected British actors' interviews by using pragmatic approach. The research aims at pinpointing the most common impoliteness strategies and showing the types of impoliteness in the data of the current study. Culpeper's (1996) model of impoliteness is used to achieve the aims of the present study. The research employed the qualitative method. The study has come up with certain concluding remarks. The study has revealed that some of impoliteness strategies and all types of impoliteness are used in selected British actors' interviews.

Keywords: Politeness, Impoliteness, Issues of impoliteness, Culpeper's model of impoliteness

الخلاصة:

اصبحت قلة الادب في الكلام موضوعاً للاهتمام من قبل العديد من الباحثين لما تمتلكه من دور مؤثر في مختلف مناحي الحياة. اذ يلجأ بعض الناس لاستعمال قلة الادب لاسباب عديدة ومختلفة مما يؤثر سلباً على الحوار وبالتالي يؤدي الى الغضب والاستياء. قامت الدراسة الراهنة بالتقصي عن الاستراتيجيات المستخدمة بقلة الادب والتي جاء بها كولبير عام ١٩٩٦ في مقابلات مختارة مع ممثلين بريطانيين. كما تحاول الدراسة ايضا التعرف على نوعها فيما لو كانت مستخدمة من اجل التسلية او من اجل اظهار القوة في الكلام او من اجل التعبير عن حالة انفعالية سلبية كالغضب الذي سببه المتكلم. ان من اهم ما وصلت اليه الدراسة الحالية من نتائج هي ان جميع انواع قلة الادب قد استعملت في المقابلات المختارة مع ممثلين بريطانيين وبرزها ما استعمل من اجل التسلية.

1. Politeness

Language plays an important role in social interaction. People almost use language to express their ideas, thought and feeling in a direct or an indirect conversation.

Generally speaking, there are certain rules that govern social interaction in which politeness is one of these rules. Many researches have been made in the field of politeness phenomenon and there are a great amount of books and articles on it. Politeness has been given different definitions. Politeness means how to behave politely with other people. It is not something natural, but something that is learned or required and human beings are socialized into it. It is the basic key by which human beings maintain interpersonal relationships (Marquez, 2000). Lakoff (1975) introduces politeness as kind of behavior used in societies in order to minimize friction in personal interaction. Similarly, Leech (1983) identifies politeness as behaviors utilized to establish and maintain comity. Brown and Levinson (1987) defined politeness as the use of communicative strategies designed to maintain hearer's face (Brown and Levinson, 1987). They add that it is a form of interaction because it urges people to be co-operative and strengthens the relationship between them. Mills (2003) thinks of politeness as the intention of the speaker's expressions used to reduce face threatening acts towards the hearer. Thus, he gives similar view to that of Brown and Levinson's. Moreover, Spolsky (as cited in Al- Husseini, 2007) thinks of politeness as the practical implementation of good manner or etiquette. However, politeness can be regarded as a set of social skills whose purpose is to make every person avoid conflict and have a pleasant communication in social interaction. Liu and Allen (2014), state that to define politeness is not an easy task and it is ongoing debate.

In spite of the fact that there are different definitions of politeness, yet, it is very difficult to pin it down and give a precise definition. To date, scholars who are interested in politeness have not come to an agreement on how to give an accurate definition to politeness because what is polite is different from culture to culture, from language to language and from community to community (Mills, 2011; Kadar and Haugh, 2013).

2. From politeness to impoliteness

Lakoff (1975), Leech (1983) and B & L (1987) are considered the instituted father of researches in politeness because their theories provide the researchers with a systematic scheme of the developing and analyzing politeness (Eelen, 2001). However, they are not free from criticisms. One side of the criticisms is that they neglected impoliteness and considered it as the absence of politeness (Mills, 2009). The criticism and the limitations of traditional studies have resulted in invention new studies in which impoliteness is the main interest (Bousfield, 2008; Locher and Bousfield, 2008). In sum, the lack attention of politeness approach to elucidate richly the confrontational interaction in impolite discourse has resulted in the recent interest in impoliteness (Bousfield, 2008).

3. Impoliteness Definitions

In past, impoliteness has not been given sufficient treatment in traditional model. It was ignored and referred to as absence of politeness (Eelen, 2001). However, some scholars who are interested in impoliteness studies inform that impoliteness is a matter of communicative strategies which are oriented to attack face. In this regards, Culpeper (1996, p. 350) defines impoliteness as "communicative strategies designed to attack face and thereby cause conflict and disharmony". Culpeper (2005, p.) revised the definition of impoliteness to include the rule of the hearer, informing the imminent role of the hearer in assessing impoliteness. He states that "Impoliteness comes about when: (1) the speaker communicates a face attack intentionally, or (2) the hearer perceives and/or constructs behaviour as intentionally face-attacking, or a combination of (1) and (2)". Two things have been taken into account in Culpeper's definition:

1. The role of the hearer.
2. The intention of the speaker.

In other words, intentional face- attack is constructed by the hearer, but the speaker's intention is not to attack the hearer's face or in contrast, the hearer does not perceive a behavior as a face- attack, though the speaker's intention is to attack face. However, the typical use of impoliteness includes

both (1) and (2).i.e. when the speaker communicates face attack in intentionally and the hearer perceives it (Mullany, 2008). Impoliteness also can be regarded as unfavourable attitude towards a particular manner occurring in particular contexts (Culpeper, 2010).

Culpeper (2011a) reveals that it is not an easy task to give a precise definition to impoliteness because it relates to context and to the social values arguing that some verbal behaviour are interpreted to be polite in one situation and impolite in another situation. In this case, impoliteness concept is based on the hearer's perception of what the speaker does, more than the speaker's actual behavior

Based on the definitions of impoliteness which proposed by Culpeper (1996) and revised by Culpeper (2005), the researcher investigates the impoliteness strategies and the types of impoliteness in the data of the current study.

4. Culpeper's model (1996), (2005)

The first name to come into account when one talks about impoliteness is Culpeper (1996) and his model of impoliteness he is one of the first who systematically deals with impoliteness (Orthaber, 2017). Moreover, Culpeper's model is flexible and applicable to different context (Mullany & Stockwell, 2010).

Adopting B and L's (1987) notion of face, Culpeper (1996) presents his framework of impoliteness in which the notion of face is the core of his work. Culpeper's model of impoliteness is speaker-based since it relies on the speaker's use of impoliteness strategies to realize impoliteness (Isik, 2008). His model is considered not only an extension to B and L's (1987) politeness theory but also parallel to it (Culpeper et al., 2003). Though Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategies were modeled on B and L's (1987) politeness strategies, they were different because they were utilized to attack , not maintain face (Toddington, 2015). Moreover, they cause conflict and disharmony (Goro, 2014).

The choice of analytical framework for this study is Culpeper (1996, 2005) model of impoliteness because it is based on different kind of written and spoken data taken from real life which makes the model more applicable, reliable and flexible to different context (Bousfield, 2008 ; Mullany &

Stockwell, 2010). Culpeper (1996) proposes the following impoliteness strategies:

1. Bald on –record impoliteness: this strategy is used where there is much face at stake, and where there is an intention on the part of the speaker to attack the hearer's face. Thus, the face threatening act is officiated in a direct clear, unambiguous and concise way in circumstances where face is not irrelevant or minimized (Bousfield, 2008) e.g. "your dress is ugly
2. Positive impoliteness: this strategy is designed to damage the addressee's positive face want (his want to be acceded) (Bousfield & Locher, 2008). Culpeper (2005) introduces a list of sub strategies of positive impoliteness strategies such as: ignoring, disassociating from the other, showing disinterested, seeking disagreement, using taboo words and calling the other names.
3. Negative impoliteness: the purpose behind it is to damage the addressee's negative face wants (Culpeper 2005), e.g. Stop wearing that ugly dress. Culpeper suggests the following output strategies of negative impoliteness: frighten, scorn, ridicule and invade the other's space- literally or metaphorically.
4. Sarcasm or mock politeness which refers to the situation where politeness strategies are used insincerely and remain surface realization. In this case, the speaker says polite things, but he does not mean them (Culpeper 1996), e.g. your dress is really nice (when in fact it is ugly).
5. Withhold politeness: it is utilized when the absence of politeness act takes place in the time it is expected to display (Culpeper, 2005). It means to remain silent when politeness is expected, e.g. not greeting someone back, or not saying thank you (Culpeper, 1996).

5. Issues Related to Impoliteness

5.1 Factors influence people's response to impoliteness

There are essential variable factors that determine response to impoliteness. People respond to impoliteness or to the face attack according to certain restrictions because: First, understanding of the communicative behaviour is determined by social and situational factors (Leitner, 2015). Second, social and situational factors influence the form of language used in interaction (Holmes, 2013).

Concerning social factors, power and social distance are the key factors that should be taken into account in any social interaction (Culpeper, 2008). Power is one of the restrictions of one's choices to response to impoliteness (Bousfield & Locher, 2008). Impoliteness is likely to occur in a situation where there is an imbalance power because the more powerful person can be more impolite than the less powerful person (Culpeper 1996).

In other hand, social distances such as degree of familiarity, difference of status, role, age, gender, social class and education are the main contextual factors that affect the form of the language used in interaction (Holmes, 2013). Holmes also reveals that people's choice of language is influenced by the social relationships between them. Impoliteness is more likely to occur in intimate relationship because " the more intimate once becomes, the more impoliteness one employs " (Culpeper, 1996, p.354). Thus, talking with friends is quite different from talking with superiors because talking with friend means using nick name and informal language, but talking with superior requires using title plus last name and being more polite. Culpeper also explains that impoliteness can occur among friends though they have equal power because they know it is unreal since it is mock impoliteness which remains on the surface.

Mohammed and Abass (2016) refer to education level as one of the contextual factors that influences response to impoliteness explaining that if the hearer is highly educated, he may neglect the speaker or may give him only a pejorative look.

Al-katib (2006) confirms that social distance affects people's responses to impoliteness, e.g. if the hearer is younger than the speaker, he will be less aggressive in conversation.

Lakoff (1973) in his book, *Gender differences in language*, points out that women tend to be more polite than men. Tannen (1990) agrees with Lakoff's view clarifying that men look to the world as a battle field and to them conversations are parleys in which they seek to obtain the upper hand, whereas women see conversation as parleys for convergence in which they search for support consolidating. Eckert and Ginnet (2003) reveal that responses of women and men to a particular behaviour are also influenced by the expectation of the society. Accordingly, gender is one of the factors that influence people's responses to impoliteness.

Besides these factors, Isik and Ruhi (2010) add that the psychological states of the participants also influence the form of language used in interaction because participants often tend to be impolite not because of their reactions towards an acceptable behavior, but because of their negative psychological state such as being exhausted. Thus, emotion is not a response to impoliteness, but the reason behind it or the source of impoliteness. As a result, negative psychological state should be taken into account when theorizing and analyzing impoliteness. The other factors which influence people's responses to impoliteness are the situational factors which refer to the degree of imposition and the setting of the interaction. In formal setting, people tend to be more polite than in informal setting (Holmes, 2013). Concerning the degree of imposition, the less imposition made on the hearer, the more impoliteness will have to be used (Culpeper, 1996).

To sum up, it is difficult to know how people respond to impoliteness, but taken into consideration the social and the contextual factors makes it easier to determine the nature of responses expected from people who receive impoliteness.

5.2 The purpose of impoliteness usage

. Culpeper (1996) explains that some people use impoliteness when they communicate due to different purposes that can be summarized as following:

1. The speaker may have different opinion with others and wants to defend his/her argument.
2. The speaker may be impolite to reflect his/her negative psychological state.
3. The participant may be impolite for the sake of entertainment.
4. To show power in interaction and emphasize their ideology.
5. To ridicule or make identity of a person.
6. The speaker sometimes tends to be impolite to make a listener perceive his/ her opinion.

6. Analysis and description of the data

The research is based on analyzing the selected data qualitatively due to different reasons. First, Creswell (2012) reveals that qualitative method is employed to obtain an understanding and deep linguistic explanation to the data analysis. Second, as for Subroto (1992) a qualitative method is employed to examine situations in which the researcher analyses the data in form of words, sentences, pictures, etc. Third, Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009) state that the analysis of language in interviews is involved in a qualitative study. Further, the researcher wants to clarify the data descriptively. So as to be more accurate and more comprehensive, the study covers 21 situations out of 17 different online interviews with famous British actors/actress.

6.1 Analyzing the first extract

Interviewer *What will you say if you're not in a film called The Secret Evidence?*

Kingsley: *Can we just stop it right there. I don't know what you're talking about. This is where there has been an unfortunate invasion on your attempts to be a decent journalist. Because you will get your interlocutor to*

shutting down immediately.

Interviewer: ***Why is it so indecent of me to ask?***

Ben Kingsley (personal communication, November 25, 2017)

The interview is started by violating the cooperative principle. The interviewer violates manner maxim throughout being obscure and not orderly when he says: ***What will you say if you're not in a film called The Secret Evidence?***

This violation for the maxim of manner motivates the hearer to be impolite. Thus, he expresses his angry and his violent reaction to the interviewer saying:

"Can we just stop it right there?"

To Culpeper (1996) the use of direct request is an example of bald on record impoliteness strategies. The actor wants to damage the interviewer's face clearly, directly and unambiguously by using this strategy.

The next utterance by the actor, illustrates his impolite behaviour towards the interviewer when he says:

"This is where there has been an unfortunate invasion on your attempts to be a decent journalist."

Here, the use of declarative speech act denotes an insult meaning to the interviewer especially when the actor says the words: ***"unfortunate invasion"*** which make the effect of bald on record strategies even stronger.

The type of impoliteness that is used in this extract is coercive and affective impoliteness. The coercive is resorted to by speakers who think that they are of a higher social state than their hearers so they attack them verbally to underestimate them. Thus, the actor gains profits at the expense of the hearer. In the other hand, affective impoliteness is also used by the actor because he expresses his angry and negative feeling towards the interviewer.

6.2 Analyzing the second extract

Interviewer: ***Do you have friends?***

Hopkins: ***I don't have any friends at all. They are all bullshit. You are only as good as your last job.***

Interviewer: ***Can you draw me a sketch?***

Anthony Hopkin (personal communication, Jan 31, 2011)

The interviewer starts the interview by violating the cooperative principle when he says: *"Do you have friends?"* He violates relevance maxim because he asks a question that is not related to the artistic work. This question reminds the actor with his miserable childhood. As a result, he replies in impolite way saying:

"I don't have any friends at all. They are all bullshit. You are only as good as your last job."

The use of the word *"bullshit"* is considered impoliteness since it broke the rule of politeness. According to Culpeper (2011b), it relates to taboo words. So, impoliteness is actualized by the positive impoliteness strategy namely using taboo word which carries an insult meaning. In this part of the study, the type of impoliteness is affective impoliteness. Culpeper (1996) reveals that this type of impoliteness is used when the speaker wants to show his emotion where it is unusual to the target. It is obvious that the actor's response to the interviewer is not for the sake of entertainment or to obtain power via language, but he wants to show and express his feeling by despising all people.

7. Conclusions

This study has come up with the following conclusions:

1. Some Culpeper's impoliteness strategies are employed by the speakers: They are: bald on record strategy, positive impoliteness strategy, negative impoliteness strategy and sarcasm or mock impoliteness strategy. Meanwhile, withhold politeness strategy was not employed in the data of the current study. The most dominant strategy used by the speakers is positive impoliteness strategy. Taboo words, name calling and disassociating from the other are sub strategies of the super strategy positive impoliteness. The speaker uses taboo words more than other sub strategy in order to damage the hearer's face as they carry insult meaning. Scorning, associating the other with the negative aspect and personalizing by using the

- pronoun I and you are the sub strategies of the super strategy negative impoliteness.
2. The study has also revealed that all the three kinds of impoliteness are used. Those are: affective impoliteness, coercive and entertaining impoliteness. The most prominent type of impoliteness in this study is entertaining impoliteness. This type is used to amuse the speaker or other people by making the hearer his object of entertainment.
 3. Finally, the model developed by this study proves to be workable.

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