

## Indirectness in Cameron's Speech in the Defeated Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant: A Pragmatics Study

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### Abstract

This study investigates indirectness in David Cameron's speech about ISIS by using Brown and Levinson's theory of indirectness as well as Grice's theory of Politeness. "Indirectness is a common occurrence. People attempt to express their meanings without articulating them explicitly or move around the subjects under debate in this phenomenon. People have a desire to take advantage of indirectness while talking with people since it allows them to acquire a variety of practical benefits. When it comes to politics, politicians use indirectness extensively in a variety of situations, particularly during interviews with politicians. Because of the crucial function of indirectness in political interviews, they have become a space where a pragmatic inquiry can be conducted. Politicians could reach their objectives in political interviews without even being clear, definite, precise, or sincere."

**Key Words:** Indirectness, Political language, Politeness, Brown and Levinson's theory, Grice Maxims, ISIS, Evasion, Innuendo, Name-calling.

الكلام الغير مباشر في كلام ديفيد كامرون حول هزيمة داعش في العراق والشام

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### الملخص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في أسلوب الكلام غير المباشر في خطاب ديفيد كامرون حول داعش باستخدام نظرية براون وليفنسون عن الكلام غير المباشر وكذلك نظرية غرايس عن أسلوب التهذيب. الكلام غير المباشر أمر شائع الاستخدام حيث يحاول الناس التعبير عن افكارهم بصورة غير صريحة أو الالتفاف حول الموضوعات قيد المناقشة في هذه الظواهر. يرغب الناس في الاستفادة من الكلام غير المباشر أثناء تحدثهم مع بعض لأنه يمكنهم من الحصول على تواصل افضل. عندما يتعلق الأمر بالسياسة، يستخدم السياسيون الكلام غير المباشر على نطاق واسع في مختلف المواقف، لا سيما

خلال المقابلات. وقد أصبحت المقابلات السياسية ساحة يمكن فيها إجراء دراسات عملية بسبب الدور الهام للكلام غير المباشر فيها. يمكن للسياسيين تحقيق أهدافهم في المقابلات السياسية دون أن يكونوا واضحين أو محددين أو دقيقين أو صادقين.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الأسلوب غير المباشر (المراوغة) ، اللغة السياسية ، التأدب، نظرية براون وليفنسون ، مقاييس غرايس تنظيم الدولة الاسلامية (داعش) ، التهرب ، التلميح ، استدعاء الاسماء

### **Aim of the Study**

The aim of the study is to figure out how Cameron accomplishes indirectness in his speech. Determining whether or not he violates the four Grecian maxims in his speech, as well as the purpose of these violations.

### **Hypotheses**

It is hypothesized that the Politicians used various strategies of indirectness during their speech, and violate Grice maxims frequently. They use indirectness not only for the purpose of politeness.”

### **Introduction**

According to Supturo (2015: 1), indirectness is considered as an important aspect of pragmatics. It represents as one of the more practical options that people use in their interactions. One of the important features of the conversational style, according to Tannen (2006: 361), is indirectness. It relates to the speakers' capacity to convey their thoughts without saying them exactly, according to her. She thinks that speakers are unable to explain all of their meanings via the terms they use.

Different meanings should not be stated in the same way. Receivers must “read between the lines” and evaluate prior talks as well as “expectations about what will be said” in an attempt to comprehend such meanings. They should also be aware of the “culturally accepted upon meanings connected with specific idioms.” As a result, there must be an “imbalance between the stated and implicit meaning” in order for indirectness to occur (Thomas, 1995: 119).

Politicians avoid making outright pronouncements about candidates and instead choose to engage indirectly, especially when the subject of the discourse is sensitive. In general, major politicians speak in vague and indirect manners to secure and further their own careers, as well as to achieve

both political and interactional benefit over their political rivals. Indirectness is driven by political interests and necessities, as well as personal face savings (Obeng, 1997: 49).

### **Indirectness**

Haugh (2015: 21) states that this does occur in the subject of pragmatics, as Östman and Verschueren (2018: 119) the as “the relationship between sentence meaning and speaker’s meaning”. Grice’s Cooperative Principle, Brown & Levinson’s face and politeness theory are both tied to indirectness. Individuals achieve indirectness by blatantly breaking Grice’s maxims, and they sometimes use indirectness for politeness.

Indirectness has a purpose. It is one of the most effective communication abilities that individuals use for certain goals. When a person speaks or acts in an indirect manner, there is no doubt that he or she is pursuing a variety of goals and objectives (Zhang, 2009: 102). The most important benefit of people using indirectness, according to Achibe, is politeness (2003: 7). Consider the following example:

“A: *Can you lend me some money?*”

“B: *It’s sunny today, isn’t it?*”

In this case, politeness is achieved through indirectness. To put it another way, B employs deception to deny A’s request for a loan. If B refuses A openly, A’s face may be threatened. As a result, B violates the relevance maxim because his/her response is unrelated to A’s demand (Chen, 2010: 149). One of the proponents of the relationship between politeness and indirectness is Searle (2012: 36, 46). He claims that the main reason for indirectness is courtesy. He goes on to say that phrases like “can you” convey politeness in requests because speakers don’t aim to know whether or not their listeners are capable. However, when such expressions are employed, listeners are given the opportunity to reject them. Indirectness, according to Haugh (2015: 16, 18), “is not limited to being ‘polite’ through any way.” He goes on to note that one of the reasons indirectness isn’t always regarded as polite is that it can have a variety of interpersonal consequences, one of which is politeness.

According to Tannen (2006:361), indirectness can result in misunderstandings. When interlocutors are unfamiliar with assumptions of

indirectness, misunderstandings occur. Nonverbal indirectness, which occurs when listeners do not comprehend the intended meaning behind the speakers' use of nonverbal tactics such as signals, can also cause miscommunication, according to Tannen (2011:60-61). Furthermore, when listeners are unable to understand what speakers are saying due to their indirectness, they are more likely to seek for clarification. People are “challenged” and “uncomfortable” by these types of questions.

### **Political Language and Indirectness**

Language is the essential means of interaction and one of the aspects of individuals' daily life which can't be separated. Since language is such a powerful tool, it is an important issue to investigate (Justova, 2006: 6). In politics, political terminology is extremely important. Plato and Aristotle both highlighted the importance of language in politics (Chilton and Schaffner, 2002: 1). Political language is now studied in a variety of academic domains including different fields in linguistics. Particularly, as Martin J. Ball states: “An increasing number of studies pertaining to the pragmatics of political discourse” (2009: 18).

Chilton (2004: 6) states that Politicians also employ language to achieve their goals. It is the most important device that politicians use. It is more frequently employed than physical coercion. It plays such an important part in politics that political engagement would not occur without using language. The difference between this device and the first is that it does not require the use of physical force (Jones and Peccei, 2004: 37-38). Politicians employ rhetoric to attain their objectives. The ability to persuade others is referred to as rhetoric (Wardy, 2005: 1). Rhetoric is one of the most important tools employed by politicians in the arena of politics, according to Obeng (2002: 8). according to Jones and Peccei (2004: 39), Politicians have built a reputation for themselves through their mastery of rhetoric, in which they attempt to persuade their audience of the legitimacy of their beliefs by the careful use of eloquent and convincing words.

Obeng (1997: 58, 80) acknowledges that indirectness plays a significant role in political discourse. One of the most important aspects of any political discourse analysis is verbal indirection. He argues that

politicians favor indirectness, obscurity, vagueness, and obliqueness in their communication because of the deceptive and/or dangerous nature of politics, and particularly the power of the spoken word. Politicians use indirectness in a variety of settings, such as presidential addresses, debates, and press conferences. Indirectness, on the other hand, is frequently used in political interviews. An evidence of a difference of political interviews is that interviewees do not provide clear or accurate responses to the interviewers' questions (Furco and Abuczki, 2014: 46).

### Strategies of Indirectness in Political Language

There are many different strategies by which indirectness could be accomplished such as;

evasion	The manner politicians reply to the questioners' queries, as well as the questioners' reactions to the politicians' reactions, influence the prevalence of evasion in political discourse (Obeng, 2002: 13).
Hedge	A hedge is a special feature of political jargon. Politicians use hedge for a variety of purposes, including minimizing accountability for what they say, avoiding criticism (Schaffner, 1998: 185, 188), defending themselves, reducing the impact of their words, demonstrating politeness, concealing the truth, and avoiding potential arguments (Fraser, 2010: 205-206).
Euphemism	Euphemism is one of the tactics used to achieve indirectness (Bakhtiar, 2012: 8). Euphemism, according to Mihas (2005: 129), is comparable to metaphor in that it "deals with the replacement of one meaning for another, resulting in favorable conceptual and connotative connotations." The face of politicians is preserved by euphemism.
Circumlocution	Circumlocution is another pragmatic indirectness technique (Agyekum, 2008: 82). It's the act of speaking around the topic, using an excessively vast amount of words, or vague language. Circumlocution is known by a variety of names, including

	"periphrasis, ambages, and pleonasmus" (Hirsch, 2014: 110).
Innuendo	Innuendo, according to Obeng (2002: 13), has pragmatic value. Politicians use innuendo to criticize their opponents, demonstrating that they are politically right, avoiding responsibility from their speech, and providing them with "some sort of political society" (Obeng, 1997: 72).
Name-calling	The audience is influenced to reject name signifiers on the premise of the negative symbol, rather than looking at the relevant data, which might be dangerous (Collins et al., 2011: 176). Politicians use name-calling to accomplish the following goals: warning name referents, mocking certain politicians, condemning and offending name referents, and persuading the public to judge name referents "with or without examining the evidence on which an argument or a claim should be based," causing the public to form both negative and positive impressions about name referents (Obeng, 2012: 299).
Metaphor	In order to keep one's face, metaphor is sometimes used in political speak. One of the strategies used by off-record performers is a metaphor (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 69). Politicians might use metaphors to speak to matters that generate dangers to face indirectly since they are understood by the audience (Obeng, 1997: 76).

### **Brown and Levinson's theory and Grice's theory of Politeness**

Numerous articles and books have been written about it, and many scholars have suggested many models and ideas. Here, two pragmatic theories are used; both the Brown and Levinson's proposal for face and politeness is the first (1987). The second principle is Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975). The connection between these theories and indirectness is what prompted to the adoption as analysis models. Indirectness is achieved by deviating from Gricean maxims and implicatures. It's occasionally used to save face. The study of politeness has gotten a lot of consideration in the last five decades. Brown and Levinson's (1978/ 1987) is the most important (Abdul- Majeed, 2009: 509). Both of Brown and Levinson's politeness

theory offers a breadth of knowledge about human conduct that no other theory has hitherto supplied, according to the authors (Locher and Watts, 2005: 9).

Face, according to Goffman (2005: 5), is “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is a representation of oneself that is defined by socially acceptable characteristics”. Brown and Levinson’s (1978/1987) theory of politeness relies heavily on the face. They used Goffman’s face perception as a basis (1967 [2005]). It is defined by them as “Every member’s public self-image that he want to claim. They say the face is “emotionally invested,” that it can be lost, preserved, or increased, and that it “must be constantly paid attention to in speech.” “ (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 61).

Brown and Levinson distinguish positive and negative face expressions. Every “competent adult member’s wish for his or her behaviors to be unconstrained by others” has a negative face, whilst positive face belongs to every individual’s desire for his or her aims to be acceptable to at least some others (1987: 62). When a person gets requests from others to undertake particular tasks, for example, his or her negative face is threatened, because such requests restrict his or her free will. While his/her positive face is threatened while other dispute with him/her because dispute indicates that others do not approve of him/her (Bull, 2012: 84).

Negative face-threatening acts are those that restrict interactants’ flexibility of activity. There are certain instances where hearers’ negative faces are threatened by negative face-threatening acts: When they pressurize them to perform or refrain from performing specific acts, such as orders, requests, suggestions, advice, reminders, threats, warnings and dares, and when they force them to accept or reject positive future acts directed at them by speakers, like offers and promises. Face-threatening acts, like expressing gratitude, making excuses, accepting offers, and making hesitant promises and offers, all threaten the speaker’s negative face. While Positive face-threatening acts demonstrate that individuals are unconcerned with other people’s wants and emotions, or that they do not concern about other people’s desires. The following are some of the activities that put the

listener's positive face in threat: acts that reflect that the speaker does not value the hearer's positive face, Acts that threaten the hearer's positive face include "expressing disapproval, criticism, disdain or derision, praises and reprimands, accusations, and insults," as well as acts that suggest the speaker is careless with the hearer's positive face, such as gestures of violence (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 65-67).

Grice (2008: 3) summarizes his idea of the Cooperative Principle as "make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged". In an attempt to influence cooperation, Grice has recommended the following four conversational maxims. People want to follow them around while they're dealing with others, he explains. According to Grice, such maxims help interlocutors cooperate when chatting. The four Grice maxims are depicted in the diagram below:

Maxim of Quantity	1-Keep your contribution as detailed as possible 2. Don't go into more detail than is necessary in your contribution.
Maxim of Quality	1. Never mention something you know to be false. 2. Don't make claims for which you don't have sufficient evidence.
Maxim of Relation	1. Be relevant.
Maxim of Manner	1.Avoid vague expression. 2. Don't leave any room for uncertainty. 3. Be concise. 4. Maintain a sense of order.

Individuals do not always follow conversational maxims. The terms "violation," "opt out," "clash," and "flout" are all used to describe instances in which the maxims are not followed (Grice, 2008: 3-4). Individuals disregard conversational norms in order to gain different benefits, such as demonstrating their politeness (Finegan, 2008: 289). As a consequence, the four conversational maxims operate for both observation and non-observation scenarios (Darighgoftar, 2012: 269).

## David Cameron

David William Donald Cameron is a British politician who now serves as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. In December 1966, he was born in London to a privileged family. In 2010 and 2016, he was twice elected Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. He served as Prime Minister for six years as a result of this (2010- 2016). From December 2005 to July 2016, he was the leader of the Conservative Party. From June 2001 to September 2016, he served as the Member of Parliament for Witney. His administration's primary international initiatives include intervening militarily in Libya to depose Gaddafi and attacking ISIL, as well as signing the nuclear deal with Iran. He was a staunch supporter of the UK's membership in the EU (European Union) and opposed the country's exit. Following the success of the Leave the Eu vote in 2016, he resigned as Prime Minister" (Kellner, 2020).

## Data Analysis

The data of this study have been taken from an Interview (THE ANDREW MARR SHOW) with David Cameron was held on September 28, 2014, six months before the general election in the United Kingdom. Cameron's ideas to battle ISIL, members. of the Conservative Party leaving and joining other parties, leaving the EU, Scottish devotion, and utilizing welfare cuts to increase the number of apprenticeships are all discussed in this interview."

Question NO.	Interviewer: Andrew Marr	Cameron
1	"You told the House of Commons interestingly two things: you said that you wouldn't go into Syria, ... Now if ISIL is pushed into Syria, we could very quickly see a humanitarian crisis there, so is it the case that you could order the RAF as part of the coalition into Syria without	"Well, the point I was making didn't just apply to Iraq or Syria. Frankly, it applied to anywhere in the world. If as prime minister I feel there is ... I was trying to say to the House of Commons it's important that this convention that's grown up of a vote before premeditated action, I believe that's right, but that doesn't mean a government shouldn't act if there's something it needs to act urgently over."

	<i>another vote?"</i>	
2	<i>"Andrew Marr: So we could go into Syria without another vote?"</i>	<i>"I think I've answered. I'm not ... But I think what people are worried about ..."</i>
3	<i>"Marr: Okay now one of the other things that were talked about, again in the General Richards interview but again in the House of Commons as well ..., they hide where civilians are quite deliberately. And that, therefore, an air campaign is bound to kill lots of civilians by accident without necessarily degrading ISIL as much as you hope."</i>	<i>"Well I don't accept that because there are occasions, indeed there have been occasions when ISIL are out in the open threatening Christian communities, Yazidi communities, ... rejecting these extremists and saying we want to be part of a democratic, pluralistic Iraq, yes, of course, we do need that... This is one part of a comprehensive strategy to build an Iraq that has a democratic inclusive government for everyone and in time Syria needs exactly the same thing."</i>
4	<i>"Alright. Let's move on to something else ..., you said that English devolution should happen at the same pace as and in tandem with Scottish devolution. Do you still agree with that?"</i>	<i>"Yes, absolutely. Let me be clear. We must keep our vows and we will keep our vows to the people of Scotland that they will have a stronger Scottish Parliament with stronger powers over taxation, over welfare, overspending. That will happen. And that agreement we set out was no ... it was nothing ... it wasn't even a new departure for the Conservative Party..., you don't just get Scottish devolution; you get properly English votes for English laws – the English question properly answered, so that MPs in Scotland ... "</i>

5	<p><i>"Okay, that's very clear. Thank you very much indeed for that. And speaking of which, do you now favour an English Parliament as such and where would it sit?"</i></p>	<p><i>"No, I don't. I don't think ... Look I think the last thing frankly this country wants is another expensive parliament building with another expensive group of politicians with salaries and expenses and all the rest of it. That is not what we'll be proposing. I think it is perfectly possible to make changes in the Westminster Parliament, so that when issues that are exclusively about England or ... I suspect it will be the Conservative Party ... "</i></p>
6	<p><i>"Forty-eight per cent of these people ... 48 per cent of these people have children, so my question to you is: are you not going to put ... the country into dire poverty quite quickly with this?"</i></p>	<p><i>"We're not talking about those people with children. This is about single people aged 18 to 21 who at the moment you can leave home..."</i></p>

In the first question, Marr asks a straightforward question. It has an interrogative form and a questioning function. He asks Cameron if he thinks sending PAF to Syria without a second House of Commons vote is possible. Cameron is well aware of the repercussions that a definitive answer might have. He may suffer difficulties, dangers, or be punished and condemned if he responds with a yes or no. Furthermore, any precise response may result in threats. As a result, he uses circumlocution to avoid all of these bad implications. By avoiding the subject of Marr's question, Cameron accomplishes circumlocution.

Then in the second question that Marr recognizes Cameron's use of circumlocution to avoid replying the question, so he asks the same question again. Cameron, moreover, refuses to give a definitive answer. He uses deception this time. He achieves deflection by asserting, "I suppose I've answered," that he has already responded to the inquiry. Because he is untrustworthy, Grice does not follow the quality maxim of Grice's maxims.

“With respect,” he says, “you haven’t.” He claims to have addressed the question, but Marr thinks he hasn’t because Cameron doesn’t respond. He also violates the relevance rule by responding in a way that is unrelated to the question.

In the third question, Cameron employs name-calling by referring to ISIL in Syria and Iraq as “extremists.” Because he is enigmatic, he disregards the rule of manners. He claims that ISIL espouses radical governmental or sacred “religious” views and promotes unlawful, violent, or other extreme actions. ISIL engages in a variety of terrorist operations, including murder stealing, shelling, and even rapping. He employs this tactic in order to discredit ISIL. He intends to raise people’s unfavourable emotions toward these groups, causing them to reject them. In addition to calling people names, Cameron uses a metaphor when he says “build an Iraq.”

In the fourth question, the topic of Scottish devolution is introduced by Marr. If his party wins the election, Cameron offers devolution to Scotland. He also says that “English votes for English laws” will be granted to British citizens. Cameron, on the other hand, hedges his promise. Using the modal adverb “properly,” he obtains this hedge. He can reduce his promise by using this hedge. It allows him to defend himself and his party, as well as the Conservative Party, if he fails to keep his pledge and the public begins to blame him. As a result of his use of He is breaking the quality maxim by using this hedging, which states that people should be certain of what they say. With the fifth question, Marr is curious about Cameron’s thoughts on the English Parliament. Cameron’s opinion is conveyed in a deceptive manner. He accomplishes this through insinuation. When Cameron says, “Look, I think the last thing this country wants is another expensive parliament building with another expensive group of politicians with salaries and expenses and all the rest of it, that is not what we intend to propose”. He is innuendoing. Members of the English parliament are the targets of this innuendo. Innuendo is used by making conclusions and not naming specific people. Due to his vagueness, Cameron does not follow the maxim of manners. Cameron, on the other hand, is a team player. The innuendoes are assumed to be English parliamentarians by the audience, Marr, and members of the English Parliament. They are also aware that members are expensive to

the government. Cameron has promised to change the inefficient and costly parliament if he wins the general election in 2015. Cameron's inference is that members of the English Parliament are being openly criticized. Cameron mocks the existing British legislature. It's an "expensive parliament," he declares. He keeps making promises to the British public in the hopes of persuading them to vote for his political party. Hedging approaches include the epistemic verb "think" and the modal adjective "possible." If his party wins and the legislature remains unchanged, he and his party will be safe from any constituent attacks. To put it another way, this hedge keeps Cameron and the Conservative Party in the public spotlight.. Cameron's hedging violates the quality principle since he is unsure of what he is saying. To be polite, indirectness is used.

Finally, Cameron has stated that his government has decided to use "*money from welfare cuts to boost the number of apprenticeships.*" Marr asks Cameron if this choice will cause about half of British young families with children to become impoverished. Because this is a face-threatening issue, Cameron employs evasion to avoid confronting it. He is aware that discussing this subject could result in threats to his personal face. The technique by which Marr evades the question is a stumbling block. Marr's query is "inaccurate," he says. He claims that the determination is not "about those with children," as Marr claims, but "*about single people aged 18 to 21 who at the moment you can leave home*". He defies both the manner and the relevance maxims.

## Conclusion

When responding to journalists' questions, Cameron frequently uses indirectness in the analyzed political interview. In fact, he rarely gives a direct response. This indirectness manifests itself in a variety of methods. That is, they may appear evasive and avoid problems without delivering a clear solution; they may also provide additional unclear meanings that listeners can draw from presumption and anticipation., alongside background knowledge; and he leaves his view and attitude open-ended or uncertain. Cameron uses innuendo and hedge techniques to his advantage. He also employs various indirect strategies through the use of others. Cameron uses name-calling to achieve innuendo. He also uses metaphor and name-calling for the purpose of evasion.

Politicians' use of indirectness has been proven to be influenced by the questions asked during the interviews. When the interviewees' questions are confronting, Cameron uses indirect methods, such as being vague, evasive, imprecise, and unsure of what he says. He tries to use these types of queries to portray himself and his political area in a positive way. Cameron, as a politician, makes use of indirectness for politeness. He avoids directly answering face-threatening queries and speaks to face-threatening matters in an indirect way. However, he employs indirectness for purposes other than politeness, such as influencing the public, attacking enemies without being held accountable, and safeguarding himself and his political domains.

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