A Pragmatic Analysis of Impolite Interruptions of Selected Debates in the Opposite Direction of Al-Jazeera Channel

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Abstract The present paper draws a conversational sketch of impoliteness strategies as employed by interlocutors in the "Opposite Direction" presented by Al-Jazeera satellite channel. In the heat of discussion, interlocutors resort to certain aggressive strategies to attack each other's face in an attempt to get the floor and instigate the other interviewee to react in a more offensive manner. This situation is usually triggered and intensified by the interviewer who is supposed to be neutral and works into managing the interview. The more offensive the debate is, the more interested the viewers will be. The study collates a corpus consisting of one translated episode into English [25] of the 'Opposite Direction' covering the topic of 'The Clash of Civilization and the Class of Religions' in which the interviewer Faisal Qasim (FQ), a famous journalist on Al-Jazeera Channel invites Wafa Sultan (WS), a writer and a researcher in Los Angles and Ibrahim Al-Khouli (IK), a lecturer at Al-Azher University. The paper adopts Culpeper's Model of impoliteness (1996) in the analysis of impoliteness instances in the selected corpus. Results show that the most common strategies of impoliteness interruptions employed by interlocutors include bold on record impoliteness, mock impoliteness, negative impoliteness, ignorance, showing disinterest and unconcern, using imperatives and direct sarcastic questions that do not seek answers, accusations and ridiculing and using profane language. They also show that the interviewer (FQ) has played a role in instigating the interviewees to resort to impolite interruptions.

Keywords: *impoliteness, viewers, conversation, interlocutors, face threatening acts, mitigate*

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1. Introduction

The way people converse with each other has been the main concern of many linguists, ethnomethodologists, psycholinguists, sociolinguists among others [28], [20] and [9]. They have approached this notion from different perspectives in an attempt to set forth a structural organization for any act of conversation, yet they all acknowledge the difficulty of establishing solid mathematical rules for the description of conversation organization as the creativity of the man is insurmountable. Some have seen conversation as a game, others as a dance, yet others as a traffic crossing an intersect or a scarce commodity. [31]. Conversation has been differentiated from other types of discourse that have been constructed and analyzed. Thus, conversational analysis (CA) has been established as distinct and/or a subcategory of discourse analysis (DA). In line with this view and in contrast with DA, [24] believes that "[…] the strength of the CA position is that the procedures employed have already proved themselves capable of yielding by far the most substantial insights that have yet been gained into the organization of conversation". In comparison with other types of discourse, conversation has the privilege of having interlocutors coming face to face in real life situations. Hence, the effect of other linguistic and paralinguistic parameters such as facial expressions, rising–falling intonation, juncture and body movements, come to the floor. These might communicate shades of meaning more influential than the words themselves.

In any act of conversation, we normally have two or more interlocutors. According to [24], "[…] it [conversation] is the outcome of the interaction of two or more independent, goal-directed individuals, with often divergent interests." These individuals have certain shared maxims to follow when initiating conversation, handling its substance and closing it. They understand that there are certain rules that should guide their act of conversation. That is when speaker A greets speaker B, the latter should greet him in the same way, or when A asks a question, B should provide an answer for that question and so on. These are usually referred to as adjacency pairs which are formulated by the cooperative principle [6]. The general rule is that interlocutors engaged in an act of conversation should cooperate with each other in order for their conversation to go on smoothly. Any violation or flouting

of those maxims, it is asserted, would result in breakdown in conversation or a failure of communication between participants unless intended to constitute a conversational implacture.

In normal situations, interlocutors are said to observe these rules and maxims. They should know that each interlocutor has to have a share in the conversation. No interlocutor is entitled to monopolize the floor. S/he should take his/her due turn and stop to give chance to the other interlocutor to take his/her turn. If speaker A initiates the conversation, speaker B should wait until his turn comes. This is known as turn-taking in conversation which should be smooth and, if not observed, sometimes causes overlap, where interlocutors are simultaneously speaking. Nevertheless, it is not uncommon to have interlocutors breaking these politeness rules. Conflicts are often seen particularly in debates when the discussion becomes so hot and one of the interlocutors wants to monopolize the floor. Such a circumstance might characterize a speaker as being rude especially when s/he appears to cut in on another speaker.

The main objective of the present paper is to sketch instances in political debates where interlocutors impolitely violate the standard conventions of conversation and interrupt each other in their vigor to dominate the floor. To achieve this objective, a reference will be made to the cooperative principle and the maxims underlying any act of conversation. Then, Culpeper's model (1996) as well as other models of impoliteness will be reviewed. Also, face threatening acts, solidarity and interruption in conversation will be highlighted. Finally, the corpus for analysis of the instances of impolite interruptions is taken from "The Opposite Direction" brought by Al-Jazzera satellite channel.

2. Review of Related Literature

Reviewing the literature conducted on impolite interruptions in political debates in TV programs reveals a paucity of scholarly in this domain. Nevertheless, several studies have focused on the analysis of aggravating or face threatening questions and replies and the mitigating techniques accompanying in parliamentary discourse. For instance, [17] carried out a study with the aim to analyze the face threatening acts (FTAs) triggered by the questions raised by members of the parliament (MPs) to the prime minister (PM) and the strategies to attenuate the force of these acts. He argues that MPs intentionally intensify their discourse with the use of FTAs to embarrass the PM and get the floor. Nonetheless, since the conventions of parliamentary discourse prohibits MPs from using insulting or impolite language, MPs utilize certain mitigation strategies to water down the force of the FTAs. Such strategies might include distancing techniques represented by not directly addressing the PM, using third person pronoun instead and using honorific titles.

Dealing with the same genre, [4] attempted to build a conceptual framework to analyze the prime minister's questions (PMQs) hypothesizing that PMQs are expected to be void of insulting and adversarial discourse. For that aim, they analyzed 18 sessions of PMQs; nine raised by the PM and nine by his opponents, to identify the FTAs ensuing from these questions and the replies they elicit. They found six FTAs in the questions of the leader of the

opposition and five countering FTAs in the PM's replies. As strategies for attenuating the full force of the FTAs, the authors refer to the use of third party language, humorous discourse and opponents' mistakes. They conclude that aggravation is sanctioned and rewarded in parliamentary discourse whereby MPs can enhance their status.

In the same vein, [27] analyzed six sessions of PMQs in an attempt to categorize the impolite strategies in the questions and responses contained in such a type of discourse and the employed attenuating techniques to decrease the degree of offense. The author found that PM uses FTAs on par with the opposition, yet s/he employs toning down techniques to lower the level of face-damage. The opposition, on their part, retaliates in a rather harsher manner. Among the used impolite strategies are unanswerable questions and personalizing negative characterization. The attenuating strategies may include praising another aspect of the government policy, that the negative action was unintended minimize criticism and make supportive comments.

Focusing on the performance of interviewers managing political debates, [16] studies verbal aggression and face aggravation in political interviews. He argues that it is necessary for the interviewer aiming at maintaining his professional reputation to display skilled performance in such debates. This is likely to include tactic face-damaging acts to the interviewees. On adopting this approach, Hanlon encourages interviewers to face threat their interviewees while employ techniques that protect their own face. One of the important techniques for that end is ambiguity in the proposition of the asked questions which skews the intent of the interviewer from doing harm to the interviewee.

The previous account of the studies focusing on impolite interruptions in political discourse shows that the majority of such studies had been carried out on highly conventionalized discourse particularly on the parliament genre. In genres like these interlocutors normally abide by certain rules of discourse and turn taking rituals which restrict their creativity. Other genres and TV programs displaying confrontational debates that represent authentic platforms which enhance the creativity of interlocutors were very little researched, notwithstanding Arab political debate programs that exhibit high instances of impolite interruptions. Hence, the present study attempts a contribution to fill this gap in the literature.

3. The Cooperative Principle

One of the most powerful contributions to conversation organization and its spontaneity of flow is introduced by the cooperative principle (henceforth CP) proposed by [6]. It is stated as follows: "Make your conversational contribution such as required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange at which you are engaged". The strongest side of the CP is that speakers of a community engaged in an act of conversation unconsciously cooperate with each other to contribute something to their conversation and get something out of it. That is, the conversation has to be purposeful and should achieve the interlocutors' interests. Yule (1996: 144) believes that "[O]ne of the most noticeable features of conversational discourse is that it is

generally very cooperative. This observation has, in fact, been formulated as a principle of conversation." The CP helps interlocutors arrive at any plausible interpretation of what is stated. It guides both the speaker and hearer to hold a successful conversation. When adhering to the CP, they use only appropriate and/or proper tacit to exchange conversation and discover intended meanings. The most remarkable role of the CP comes when a speaker intends to communicate much more than what is actually stated. That is when dealing with instances of presupposition, entailment, inference, implacture and so on. Yule (1996: 145) gives a good example to illustrate this point;

Carol: Are you coming to the party tonight?

Lara: I've got an exam tomorrow.

A hasty reading of Lara's answer would indicate that what she provides has nothing to do with Carol's question. Put it another form, a yes, no question, usually elicits an answer with yes or no. That is to say, Lara is not cooperative. But because she asserts that she has got an exam tomorrow and she should prepare for that exam during the night, and because the party will be held tonight, the implication is that Lara cannot come to the party, i.e. she is cooperative but by providing an indirect answer. She obliges Carol to depend on her background knowledge to get something from Lara's answer. The inference should be spontaneous otherwise there will a conversation breakdown.

The CP works within a framework of four maxims namely;

Quantity: Make your contribution as informative as is required, but no more, no less, than is required.

Quality ; Do not say that which you believe to be false or for which you lack evidence.

Relation : B e relevant.

Manner ; Be clear, brief and orderly.

These maxims represent guild lines for any successful act of conversation and interlocutors have to observe them if they want to be cooperative. Nevertheless, on many occasions interlocutors might flout, violate, opt out, infringe or suspend any of the maxims for one reason or another. A corollary of a full understanding of the CP and its maxims is that as long as a speaker is relevant, s/he is said to be cooperative.

According to [23], the CP and the politeness principle (PP) should work hand in hand "to account for the relation between sense and force". He believes that maxims of the CP "are not universal to language, because there are linguistic communities to which not all of them apply". He asserts that "It is for this reason that the PP can be seen not just as another principle to be added to the CP, but as a necessary complement, which rescues the CP from serious problems". That is, interlocutors might flout a CP maxim to create an implicature, "the indirectness of which is motivated by politeness". A corollary of this is that although the CP maxims regulate our conversations, the PP maxims maintain the social equilibrium and the friendly relations that show that interlocutors are cooperative in the first place. In normal circumstances, interlocutors are not only cooperative, but also want to be polite. In others, they might violate maxims of politeness, whereby an impoliteness act such as interruption, overlap, rudeness ensues.

4. Models of (Im)Politeness

Politeness is culture specific and context sensitive. Usually, speakers within a speech community acquire politeness strategies from their continual exchanges with each other in everyday face to face contacts. That is why what is polite in on speech community might not be considered polite in another and what is polite in a particular context might be impolite in another.

The first presentation of politeness strategies is proposed by [22]. She depends on Grice's Cooperative Principle to set forth pragmatic rules for politeness. These rules are introduced as follows;

1. Formality: do not impose/keep aloof.
2. Hesitancy: allow the addressee his option/give options.
3. Equality or Camaraderie: act as though you and the addressee were equal/make him feel good/show sympathy.

The most elaborate and systematic theory of politeness is that of [2]. Their main concern in this theory is with "face" as a public self-image speakers in a society claim for themselves. For them, face consists of two basic wants; positive face and negative face. Positive face reflects the desire of the individual to be liked or approved of, while negative face refers to the desire of the individual not to be imposed on. Therefore, they treat politeness as the manifestation of respecting another's face. Positive politeness involves strategies that let the addressee know s/he is liked and approved of. It signals to the addressee that s/he is considered a friend or a member of the speakers' in-group. Negative politeness, on the other hand, involves a show of difference and assurance that the speaker does not wish to disturb or to interfere with the other's freedom. According [2] certain communicative acts (ordering, requesting, asking, demanding) inherently threat another person's face and refer to these acts as face threatening acts (FTAS), while those which are targeted towards diminishing or mitigating threat (offering, inviting), are called face saving acts (FSAS). In terms of threatening or saving the other's face, they propose the following strategies;

1. Bald-on-record strategies: the FTA is performed 'in the most direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way possible'.
2. Positive politeness – the use of strategies designed to redress the addressee's positive face wants.
3. Negative politeness – the use of strategies designed to redress the addressee's negative face wants.
4. Off-record – the FTA is performed in such a way that "there is more than one unambiguously attributable intention so that the actor cannot be held to have committed himself to one particular intent". In other words, perform the FTA by means of an implicature. [6]
5. Withhold the FTA. [2].

The third most influential theory of politeness is introduced by Leech (1983). This theory emphasizes the complementary relationship between [6] CP and [23] PP to account for instances where interlocutors deviate from the CP. Leech believes that there are degrees of politeness which are normally context sensitive; each coincides with the illocutionary act to be performed for the sake of maintaining comity. He classifies these illocutionary functions into four types as follows;

1. Competing: the illocutionary goal competes with the social foal, e.g. ordering, asking, demanding and begging.
2. Convivial : the illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal, e.g. offering, inviting, greeting, thanking and congratulating.

3. Collaborative: the illocutionary goal is indifferent to the social goal, e.g. asserting, reporting, announcing and instructing.

4. Conflicting: the illocutionary goal conflicts with the social goal, e.g. threatening, accusing, cursing and reprimanding. [23].

The most powerful of Leech's theory of politeness is his postulation of maxims of politeness. He argues that politeness should be established between two interlocutors engaged in an act of conversation whom he calls "self" to refer to the speaker and "other" to refer to the hearer. He summarizes these maxims in pairs as follows;

1. Tact Maxim (in impositives and commissives)
   a. Maximize cost to other [(b) Maximize benefit to other].

2. Generosity Maxim (in impositives and commissives)
   a. Maximize benefit to other [(b) Maximize cost to self].

3. Approbation Maxim(in expressives and assertives)
   a. Minimize dispraise of other [(b) Maximize praise of other].

3. Modesty Maxim (in expressives and assertives)
   a. Minimize praise of self [(b) Maximize dispraise of self].

4. Agreement Maxim (in assertives)
   a. Minimize disagreement between self and other [(b) Maximize agreement between self and other]

5. Sympathy maxim (in assertives)
   a. Minimize antipathy between self and other [(b) Maximize sympathy between self and other]

It is noticeable that the greatest amount of attention has been directed towards politeness, impoliteness, on the other hand, has not gained much attention. [29] highlights this point and argues that this is so surprising since it is impoliteness that deviates from the accepted and expected norms of social behavior in interaction and should be focused on. [13] treats impoliteness as "the opposite of politeness" or "the parasite of politeness" (Culpeper: 2005:355). For him, impoliteness is intended to damage the person's identity and face. In an attempt to draw a sketch of the occurrence of an act of impoliteness in an actual exchange, [14] asserts that "Impoliteness comes about when; (1) the speaker communicates face-attacking intentionally, or (2) the hearer perceives and/or constructs behavior as intentionally face-attacking or a combination of (1) and(2)".

Mill (2003: 124) takes a different yet albeit elusive position towards impoliteness. She believes that impoliteness is not the opposite of politeness since an interlocutor can handle politeness and impoliteness using the same analytical concepts.

Impoliteness encompasses many concepts that signal breaches of the norms interlocutors expect to be followed in a particular context within a social setting. The most important of these concepts are overlap, rudeness, aggression, interruption, each representing a face-threatening act.

Influenced by Brown and Livenson's model of politeness, [21] presents a model of impoliteness of four aggravation strategies on the basis of the degree of threat as follows;

1. Off Record: This strategy covers threats like ambiguous insults, insinuations, hints, and irony. It is adopted from. The attacker expects an aggrieved challenge from the attacked person who is usually powerful.

2. Bald on Record: Directly producing an FTA.

3. Positive Aggravation: The attacked is treated as being disapproved of, not esteemed and does not deserve to be cooperated with.

4. Negative Aggravation: The attacked is imposed on, his freedom of action is interfered with and his social position is impaired.

Strategies (1) and (2) are copied from Brown and Livenson's model of politeness. [21] stresses that the speaker builds a communion channel with the hearer to assess the risk he/she might take in aggravating his/her hearer and to choose the suitable aggravation strategy in context. Nevertheless, there is no sound reference to the hearer's reaction or the strategy s/he adopts to counterattack.

Probably, the most widely common model of impoliteness is that of Culpeper (1996-2003). Once more, this model shares some of the strategies of Brown and Livenson's model of politeness. It is based on a corpus where the settings of the exchanges are quite tensed such as military training, exchanges between car owners and traffic wards and exploitative TV programs. Culpeper believes that any communication act usually undermines informational as well as interpersonal domains. Sometimes, the interpersonal platform to communicate information is as important as the information itself. This platform might signal a polite or impolite social behavior. The most important working force in this respect is the type of relationship that holds between interlocutors whether being of solidarity (equal) or power (unequal). He (1996: 354) has plainly stated this point of view;

A powerful participant has more freedom to be impolite because he/she can (a) reduce the ability of the less powerful participant to retaliate with impoliteness, e.g. through the denial of speaking rights and (b) threaten more sever retaliation should the less powerful participant be impolite.

It is normally more difficult to study impoliteness in equal relationships (among friends) since each verbal attack can lead to a counterattack or even a physical attack. To reiterate, equal participants have more freedom to retaliate than unequal participants.

The model consists of five strategies as follows;

1. Bald on Record Impoliteness: This strategy is exploited when the powerful speakers has the intention to attack the face of the less powerful and the latter does not have the power to retaliate. In such situations, impolite utterances are usually direct, unambiguous and concise.

2. Positive Impoliteness: The speaker uses this strategy to damage the hearer's positive face want.

3. Negative Impoliteness: strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants.

4. Sarcasm or mock politeness: performing the FTA with politeness strategies that are obviously insincere.

5. Withhold politeness: Not performing politeness work where it is expected.

5. Turn-Taking

Procedures of turn-taking in TV political interviews lead in most cases to disruptive impolite interruptions of speech turns and a loss of balanced communication between participants. The behavior of turn-taking in speech goes smoothly in normal speech interaction among interlocutors, while interruption of a speaker before

finishing an exchange deviates from the norms and strategies of interaction and is normally regarded as an act of impoliteness. In politeness situations, each speaker speaks according to his/her own turn. However, when more than one speaker tries to speak at the same time, one of them stops talking (in normal politeness situations) to give the other participant an indication that his exchange has finished. Yule (2006: 128) believes that in a conversation only one person should talk at a time; there is no silence until one of the speakers indicates the completion point of the conversation. The completion point is expressed in various ways: by asking a question or pausing at the end of a phrase or a sentence. Also one of the speakers utters particular sounds to indicate that he wants to participate in the conversation or by making some gestures or other paralinguistic features expressing his/her intention to resume the speech interaction.

In TV interviews, normally three parties are involved in running a debate session: the interviewer (henceforth, IR) and two or more interviewees (henceforth, IEs). In normal TV debates, two interviewees and one neutral interviewer are involved in each session. TV interviews give certain roles to both the IR and the IEs according to general constrains and limitations that determine the management of the turns. The role of IR in the interview turn-taking system is to manage the TV turns and to indicate the opening and the closing time of the interview. In many cases IEs do not follow the regulations of TV interviews and they may violate the norms of standard turn-taking system. [21]. The IR is a professional journalist who manages successfully the TV interview by raising questions about central ideas that signal the initiation of the TV debate. The IEs may represent prominent political figures in society, journalists or government officials. The discussion is formal and the subjects of discussions are related to recent political or social issues. In many TV debates produced every Tuesday by Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel in Qatar, it has been observed that the role of IR represented by the famous journalist Faisal Qassim is supposed to be neutral. However, he usually supports one of the parties of the IEs by adopting indirectly their opinions or by asking provocative questions to either participant in the interview.

6. Neutrality of the IR

During normal TV interviews, the IR tries to be neutral by avoiding the projection of personal judgments, opinions or giving any personal assessments. The main job of the IR is to manage the turn-taking flow between IEs during the whole political interview. For [5], the IR has to maintain a collaborative effort with the IEs in order to show credibility and neutrality during the TV interview. The IR should not support or take into consideration only one side of the IEs if he wants to ensure neutrality and credibility during the TV debate. In order to arouse strong objections on the part of one member of the IEs, the IR may project particular assertions or support an opinion presented by one of the speakers. Thus, neutrality of the IR is usually violated, and s/he may interfere when there is an excessive use of overlapping between IEs.

7. Impolite Interruptions

In the model of turn-taking conversations, one speaker is normally talking at a time. Sometimes, overlaps or interruptions are likely to occur when all parties do not abide by the rules of turn-taking. For [33], the term interruption implies impolite connotations as it denies the rights of one of the IEs who has not reached a completion point in the conversation. They claim that an overlap may not disrupt the flow of conversation and therefore it may not have any negative connotations.

Speakers interrupt each other when they do not abide by the turn-taking mechanism. Interruption may prevent the first speaker from finishing his/her viewpoint intentionally or unintentionally. According to [1] there are three types of interruptions: turn-competitive, cooperative and misprojectional interruptions. A turn competitive interruption refers to one of the interlocutors who insists on taking the floor without allowing the other speaker to finish his/her turn. Interruption of this kind results in confusion and hinders the flow of interaction between interlocutors. According to [31], speakers who try to hold the floor are termed "long winded" who are not ready to reach a completion point easily. These speakers are normally represented by politicians and university professors who think that they are authorized in certain situations to have superiority whether in political or classroom settings.

The cooperative interruption which is referred to as supportive or overlapping is used by the IR to support an idea presented by a speaker in the TV interview. Interruptions of this kind are normally carried out by means of certain expressions or words that indicate agreement. They are usually used in formal situations such as TV debates and political interviews. Misprojectional interruptions, on the other hand, are mainly related to a failure in the interpretation of the message by participants. When there is no mutual intelligibility or successful communication between participants, interruption may occur and the main subject of the conversation is diverted. Thus disagreement and clarification is needed to resume the normal flow of speech. [1].

In the words of [18], interruptions during a TV interview setting contribute in manifesting and intensifying disagreements. The IR usually elicits disagreements by asking questions, therefore the IEs forward their answers and disagreements to the IR to ensure preserving the question-answer format during the whole Interview context. According to [3] interruptions are more frequently found in political interviews than ordinary conversations. This high frequency of interruption is related to politicians who deliberately refuse to answer questions by the IR. Politicians may give extensive talk and long unnecessary elaborations so as to avoid giving an accurate answer to the IR who is obliged to reformulate the question or by asking follow up questions by interrupting the speaker. IEs may interrupt each other when they disagree on a particular issue. One of them may not wait for the other to reach a possible completion point in the conversation. Yemenici (2001:318) states:

Interruptions in political interviews are generally regarded as impolite and require mitigation. When one party interrupts the recent speaker, the interrupter is

expected to minimize the impolite belief inherent in the act of interruption or mitigate the illocutionary force of the interruptive utterance.

8. Offensive Language

Offensive language is a relatively new term that has been recently introduced in spoken and written discourse to refer to objectionable speech used by speakers to cause a moral harm to people in a spoken discourse. In the words of [10], the term refers to unacceptable, immoral, indecent, dirty and coursing connotations. With regard to TV interviews, the use of offensive language is mostly related to social and cultural background of participants in a particular conversation. According to [11], televised swearing and the increase in the use of taboo and impolite expressions in TV interviews may result in a big moral harm to children who may imitate the language they hear. Therefore, it is possible that a large number of people are influenced by the aggressive language and vulgarities reflected in their everyday conversation. Impoliteness is shown in the behavior of individuals verbally and non-verbally. It could be reflected non-verbally by certain hand movements or other paralinguistic features. Aggressive and impolite words are manly expressed verbally by uttering words and speech acts to do a psychological harm to the hearer's face such as abusing, cursing, reproaching, insulting, or threatening. [26]. Impoliteness is usually interpreted in terms of the social interaction by using words and some utterances that signal impoliteness. According to [12], the boundaries between politeness and impoliteness are sometimes difficult to be drawn or accessed. Impoliteness is viewed to be congruent to aggression, and there has always been a mixture of impoliteness and rudeness. Anger is regarded as another form of aggression which is used as a face threatening act and thus, is regarded as part of impoliteness. For [15], the excessive use of interruptions may cause damage to the turn-taking process. The IR frequently interrupts the IEs when there is a deviation from the main subject of the interview or when one party intentionally tries to use taboo words in order to cause an insult or underestimate the talents of the other party involved in the conversation. The IR usually utters polite words such as "yes"," please", "proceed", etc. when s/he interrupts the IEs, but when they refuse to cooperate, s/he may interrupt them rudely to preserve the unity of the subject and to stay within the time limit allocated for the TV program.

9. Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study consists of two stages; the first focuses on the way used in collecting all instances of impoliteness interruptions incurred in the selected episode of the 'Opposite Direction'. The second concentrates on the approach used in the analysis of these instances of interruptions in accordance with the model employed for that purpose.

9.1. Data Collection

An interruption is defined as an inappropriate breakthrough in the course of another interlocutor's turn in a speech event. Any utterance that does not give an interlocutor whose speech turn is still going on sufficient time to complete what s/he intends to convey is taken as an interference act into the speech right of that interlocutor. This is based on the convention that such an interruption will not lead to a complete meaningful content or that what is produced will be grammatically incomplete. The interrupter aims at taking the floor or extending the duration of his turn. These interruptions are viewed as aggressive, disruptive or impolite.

9.2. Data Analysis

Impolite exchanges are analyzed within the framework of Culpeper's model (1996) and its revised version in (2003). Usually impoliteness strategies in this model are pertinent to physical interaction among participants in an exchange to signal their negative relationships seen via their verbal overlap. This is exactly what happens in "The Opposite Direction".

The analysis of the corpus has been conducted by highlighting an excerpt containing an act of impolite interruption. Then the strategy of impoliteness is assigned in the exchange to that particular act with an explanation of its significance to the flow of the exchange and the type of relationship between the two interlocutors. To facilitate reference to the intended impolite act, exchanges have been numbered and long discussions and explanations by a particular interlocutor have been ruled out.

10. Analysis and Discussion

The account that follows will be devoted to an analysis of some typical excerpts that display blatant violation of polite turn-taking identified in the corpus with an in depth discussion of the impolite interruption strategy adopted and its consequences on interlocutors and the discourse in general.

Excerpt (1):

FQ: 1. Right Doctor, you have been listening, please proceed…

WS: 2. I understood from what was said that civilization according to the professor is man.

IK: 3. (Interrupting) Not true.

WS: 4. (Continuing) A simple comparison between….

IK: 5. I did not say that.

WS: 6. Islamic societies….

IK: 7. That is not what I said…

WS: 8. He said…

In excerpt 1, a few impoliteness acts have been employed. While (WS) was speaking, (IK) interrupted her in an aggressive way. The bold on record strategy was used by (IK) twice; on the one hand he interrupts (WS) before she finishes her turn, on the other, he attacks her face by accusing her of telling lies. On her part, (WS) counterattacks (IK) by ignoring his double attack strategy and continuing her speech. The instances of interruption have led to the use of examples of discontinuity. As a result, no genuine act of communication between interlocutors could be accomplished. Put it differently, a breakdown in conversation takes place. Normally, short incomplete sentences and ideas lead to an inventible failure of successful communication according to the

cooperative principle. In addition, this will result in successive overlaps and interruptions.

Excerpt (2):

FQ: 9. One minute, proceed (to WS)

WS: 10. Then...

IK: 11. No, no. Do not put words in my mouth…

FQ: 12. OK, he did not say that…

WS: 13. Then what is civilization…

FQ: 14. Proceed.

IK: 15. So that my ideas my ideas are not sabotaged.

FQ: 16. Yes.

IK: 17. When others listen…

FQ: 18. Proceed (to WS).

WS: 19…..how do you want me to understand your definition of civilization when you say that Muslims are not backward on a human level?...

IK: 20. I said that Muslims are backward in the fields of material advancement and in material terms but civilization and humanity have different yardsticks.

FQ: 21. Fine Doctor, go ahead, it is your turn, please go along so we do not spend too much defining civilization, let's delve into the subject…

The exchanges in excerpt 2 show that (FQ) has used certain strategies to ensure the continuity of the conversation by means of continuers such as 'good', 'yes', ' proceed', ' fine', etc. In addition, he has also used direct questions to maintain a shift of the current subject of the debate when he realizes that the argument between the IEs has reached a climax. Also (FQ) utters certain interruptions to put an end to the speech of the IEs who try to hold the floor as "Doctor, you have heard what is said', in addition, he intends to alter the course of conversation in an attempt to avoid tautology so as to stay within the duration of time allocated for the program as in exchange (21) above.

Excerpt (3):

IK: 22. If you don't know the verse, don't recite it.

WS: 23. Read me this verse and explain it and tell me how to explain it…

IK: 24. You read it…

WS: 25. Explain this…

IK: 26. You bear responsibility for what you say, or you are an ignorant person speaking out of ignorance…

WS: 27. Why it isn't necessary…

IK: 28." Fight those who do not believe"…

WS: 29. I read more than you did, and understand more than you do…

IK: 30…understand first before you speak.

WS: 31. If you have…

FQ: 32. One minute. Please proceed.

WS: 33. You, sir, claim that you…

In excerpt 3, conversation moves away from the normal turn-taking process. On the one hand, there is the use of imperative sentences by both interlocutors which subsidies impolite sub strategies used together. First, it shows that each interlocutor tries to ignore the other, exclude him from activity and/or show disinterest or unconcern. The use of imperative sentences coupled with conditional and interrogative sentences reveals the absence oh harmony between interlocutors. In any equal and well-balanced act of communication, no interlocutor is superior to the other. The use of imperative sentences has pushed interlocutors into using negative impoliteness strategies to damage the other's negative face wants. These

strategies are represented by acts such as; emphasizing relative power and/or linguistically hindering him. Moreover, they breakdown cooperation between interlocutors. In addition to that, IK in exchange (26) uses a warning speech act when he says "You bear responsibility for what you say". Moreover, he insults WS by suing insulting words like "you are an ignorant" or "speaking out of ignorance". WS counterattacks IK by accusing him to be more ignorant than she is. She says "I read more than you did, and I understand more than you do". Finally in exchange (33), she uses the word "claim" to falsify IK's assertions. The use of all these strategies has established disharmony in the interlocutors' way of conversation and it reflects the tensed relationship between them. As a result, there has not been a smooth turn-taking process in their exchanges.

Excerpt (4):

WS: 34. You, sir, should not call others by names they haven't chosen.

IK: 35. I assume that when you wrote a book you listed it with these books. What goal is this for humanity?

WS: 36. You are the people of the Book…

IK: 37. In all its heritage and values…

FQ: 38. And of those who initiated its corruption?

IK: 39. Those that initiated this corruption are the aggressors. And the one aggressed upon has the right to defend with all their capabilities.

FQ: 40. Very good Doctor (to WS) please proceed.

WS: 41. .A simple examination and comparison of Islamic societies and other societies allows one to see the extent of extremism in these (Islamic) societies…

IK: 42. Don't you think..?

IK; 43. There are TV channels in America that you are familiar with do not have any mission apart from targeting Islam, insulting Islam and offending all Islam's sanctities. This to you is not aggression against the religion or the freedoms and sanctities of others?

WS: 44. I said and repeat that Muslims are the ones who initiated this conflict…

IK: 45. An atheist? But...

WS: 46. But I respect the right of others to believe…

IK: 47. You mean an atheist…

WS: 48. You can say what you wish…

IK. 49. I am asking you…

WS: 50. I am a secular individual and do not believe in the supernatural…

IK: 51.I am asking you in order to deal with you using your own system of logic. If you are an atheist then there is no censuring you if you curse Islam. Islam's prophet and Islam's Quran…

WS: 52. This is a personal matter that does not concern you.

Excerpt 4 goes in line with the Culpeper's sub strategies of politeness. (WS) accuses (IK) in exchange (34) that he calls others names they haven't chosen. She even tries to ridicule the view produced by (IK) that Muslims are the "people of the Book". (IK) looks at this accusation to be part of self-esteem by which Muslims adhere and follow with all its heritage and values. It should be noted here that the flow of the exchanges goes on rapidly between the two IEs, whereas the IR steps out of the turn- taking provisions. (FQ) tries to give the (IEs) the chance to express their own views over the main theme of the interview. The exchanges show that disagreements

between them are escalated and reached their peak especially, when (IK) accuses the whole western world of adopting a double-standard policy in dealing with disputed issues between the East and West. Exchanges (39, 45, and 51) are examples of (IK) interruptions that are viewed as violations of the turn-taking strategies. Thus, he violates the norms of managing the TV debates taking the role of the (IR) who is supposed to ask questions and the (IEs) give responses. (WS) claims that she is "a secular individual" who does not believe in religion for being 'supernatural'. (IK) , on his part, uses an insulting word 'an atheist' in exchanges(45 and 47) in order to do a moral and psychological harm to (IK) which seems to be a retaliation for the accusations she made about Muslims.

Excerpt (5):
IK: 53. You are the one who should not be overstepping your boundaries
FQ: 54. One moment (long discussion), how do you respond/
IK: 55. In the beginning so that we do not stray…
FQ:56. What the West is doing now…. (long discussion)
IK: 57. Were the towers destroyed in 1980?
FQ: 58. No.
IK: 59. Was there an attack on the United States?
FQ: 60. No.
IK: 61 (talking about missionaries in Africa from 1980 to 1985)
FQ: 62. In brief, yes.
IK: 63. (talking about the fact that the struggle targeted Islam)
FQ: 64. In brief, yes.
IK: 65. (long discussion about attempts to covert Muslims to Christianity and Crusade war)
FQ: 66. Good Doctor (to WS you heard what has been said?
IK: 67. We should raise our hands and cheers?
FQ: 68. Doctor (to WS). I mean, it seems that, what can you say, I just ….
WS: 69. Doctor Ibrahim ….
FQ: 70. Please just allow me to ask a simple question.
IK: 71. Reply to me words not to me.
FQ: 72. (very long elaboration concerning the true nature of the clash)
WS: 73. (long discussion showing that the clash is not between the West and Islam, it is between Islam and the world)

Excerpt 5 starts with IK warning WS not to "overstep his boundaries"; a face threatening act which, in Arabic, represents the first step into being in quarrel. It represents a bald on record attack to the hearer's face through the use of abusive or profane language. He proceeds to ask FQ sarcastic questions to prove his assertion that it is the clash of civilizations that portraits the situation in the world nowadays not because of the Sept. 11, attacks. He asks "Were the towers destroyed in 1980?" or "Was there an attack launched on the United States?". It is clear that IK uses the mock politeness strategy, implying that the West is always seeking justifications to "stem the Islamic tide". He believes that the West is "financing" whosoever wants to fight Islam, so it is a "Crusade" war. IK goes on using the mock politeness strategy by uttering such expressions like; "We should raise our hands and cheer?". This state of affairs does not allow a perfect exchange of information nor it does present a full treatment of the subject of the

debate to the viewers. What we have here is merely reciprocal attempts by interlocutors to impose their viewpoints or get the floor. WS, on her part, replies using the same technique; several provocative and sarcastic questions. These questions, according to, WS prove that the conflict is between "Islam and the rest of the world", not "the West and Islam". Thus, interlocutors throw questions to each other without providing plausible answers or without one interlocutor convincing the other to accept his point of view.

Excerpt (6)
IK: 74. Are you finished?
WS: 75. I want an answer.
IK: 76. (argues that Saudi Arabia does not represent Islam)
FQ: 77. How so? Its flag raises the slogan God is Great.
IK: 78. Yes, it can raise whatever it wants.
FQ: 79. How?
IK: 80. These practices have nothing to do with Islam, …….
FQ: 81. You mean Islam is not connected with Saudi Arabia ……?
IK: 82. (long discussion to differentiate between religions and behavior of people)
FQ: 83. (mocking the West, historian sent to prison for doubting the Holocaust).
WS: 84. Doctor Faisal ……
FQ: 85. Please proceed, yes.
WS: 86. Respect from others ……
FQ: 87. Proceed.
WS: 88. (long discussion how to get respect; Muslims by explosions and killing others, Jews by inventions).

Excerpt 6 comes at the end of the debate. IK starts his turn by showing negative impoliteness. He is contemptuous towards Saudi Arabia. This is mainly reflected to show disagreement with the other interlocutor in an attempt to damage his positive face wants. Moreover, FQ tries to inflame this view by asking sarcastic questions and referring to the flag of Saudi Arabia as it raises the slogan of God is Great. WS speech is full of references as she accuses Muslims of being murders and terrorists. Her speech reflects double negative impoliteness strategies. On the one hand, she is contemptuous towards the behavior of Muslims and, on the other, she is associating Muslims with negative attributes.

11. Conclusion

The present study has investigated impolite interruptions as employed by interlocutors in a TV political debate of the "Opposite Direction" on Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel. The exchanges produced by participants have revealed a lot of disputed views triggering impolite interruptions and overlaps by all parties involved in the TV interview. The study has also revealed that due to these interruptions the norms of turn-taking strategies have been violated by when each interlocutor tries to assert his/her own view during the escalations of the TV debate. It has been observed that the number of violations of the smooth and normal conversation increases and tends to be rude and aggressive when the rates of disagreement between participants are escalated. These acts of impolite interruptions have led to apparent discontinuity of the flow of the conversation. This state of affairs has hindered the

establishment of genuine communication between interlocutors. Consequently, the communicative effect of what interlocutors attempted to convey has been shadowed by the continuous interruptions and overlaps.

The study has also shown that the (IR) usually interrupts the (IEs) to render follow up questions when they ignore answering previously raised questions during the TV debate. Another goal of the (IR) interruption strategy is to rephrase the responses of (IEs) to maintain either a smooth flow of conversation or to refute or support their viewpoints. The (IR) claims that he remains neutral during the interview, but there are many interruptions which can be used either as instances of supporting one of the participants or challenging them when their views are rude, unreal, aggressive or misleading.

Impolite interruptions produced by the (IEs) are mainly triggered to achieve various goals such as showing disagreement of views, ridiculing opinions, or trying to gain the floor from a co-(IE). Both impolite interruptions of (IEs) and (IR) serve to achieve their goals. The (IR) tries to make the TV political debate more interesting and appealing to viewers, whereas the (IEs) try to make their points of view clear, convincing and compatible with the views of their parties or social groups to whom they belong.

Moreover, the study has ascertained the workability of Culpeper's Model of impoliteness on the corpus under study. The strategies the model encompasses have proved useful in analyzing impolite exchanges. Both interviewees in addition to the interviewer have resorted to various strategies of impoliteness in the model to achieve particular communicative effects. They have made recurrent use of strategies such as bold on record, mock impoliteness, use of imperatives, accusations, negative impoliteness and sarcastic questions in an attempt to emphasize power or steer the discussion in a way more suitable to their interests.

In addition to that, it has become evident that TV programs such as 'The Opposite Direction' that focus on unconventionalized discourse represent a good corpus in depicting impoliteness in conversation because they represent a unique manifestation of face-to-face interaction in real life situations. Evison (2013:1) rightly argues "that robust descriptions of the features of spoken discourse need to be based on […] samples of naturally occurring language".

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