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The Pragmatics and Metapragmatics of Intervention: A Focus on Morality and Politeness

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<p>Keywords: -Metapragmatics -impoliteness -im/morality -intervention -Religiosity -National Identity</p> <p>Article Info</p> <hr/> <p>Article history: Received:15 -10-2021 Accepted: 3-12-2021 Available online 23-1-2022</p>	<p>Abstract This research offers a perception of understanding the metapragmatics of politeness and morality through intervention by examining peoples' reaction to certain aggressive acts. The relationship between im/politeness and morality was explored in terms metacommunicative voicing by observers and participants. The analysis in this paper focuses on certain cases in which aggressive behaviours are committed in public. This investigation aims to contribute to the current research on im/politeness and morality by examining the borders of im/politeness and the moral order in the arena of conflict between an abuser and intervener. The data of this study are naturally occurring as they were yielded without the participants' awareness of the situation displayed on a TV-show. This paper adopted Kadar & Marquez Reiter (2015) as a model of analysis in the field of impoliteness. It contributed to such a model in terms of examining intervention in Arabic Pranks. This could be a motivation for cross cultural studies of impoliteness in general and intervention in particular. It was found that the metapragmatics of im/politeness through the act of intervention was affected by means of certain scales measuring attributes that are central to Arabic culture including national and moral identity, religiosity, collectivism and humanity.</p>
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تداولية التدخل وما وراءه: التركيز على الأخلاق والتهديب اللغوي

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<p>الخلاصة: يقدم هذا البحث تصورًا لفهم ما وراء التهذب اللغوي والأخلاق من خلال سلوك التدخل من خلال اختبار ردود فعل الأفراد على بعض الأعمال العدوانية . حيث تم كشف العلاقة بين التهذب اللغوي والأخلاق من حيث التعبير التواصلية من قبل الناس الذين يشاهدون الحدث والمشاركين فيه.</p> <p>يركز التحليل في هذه الدراسة على بعض الحالات التي يتم فيها ارتكاب السلوكيات العدوانية في الأماكن العامة. إذ يهدف هذا التحليل إلى المساهمة في إثراء البحث الحالي عن التهذب اللغوي والأخلاق من خلال اختبار حدود التهذب اللغوي والنظام الأخلاقي في مجال الصراع بين المعتدي والمتدخل لإيقاف الاعتداء. إن البيانات المستخدمة في هذه الدراسة هي بيانات طبيعية حيث تم تقديمها دون وعي ومعرفة المشاركين بالموقف المعروض في برنامج تلفزيوني. اعتمدت هذه الدراسة على طراز (كادار وماركيز رايتز، ٢٠١٥) كنموذج للتحليل في مجال عدم التهذب اللغوي و اللامبالاة.</p> <p>تمثل الدراسة الحالية دافعًا للدراسات المقارنة بين الثقافات المختلفة للبحث في عدم التأذب بشكل عام وظاهرة التدخل بشكل خاص. توصلت الدراسة الحالية الى ان دوافع التأذب (المتمثل بالتدخل) قد تأثرت ببعض المقاييس التي تقيس الصفات التي تعتبر مركزية للثقافة العربية بما في ذلك دوافع الهوية الوطنية والأخلاقية والتدين والدوافع الإنسانية.</p>	<p>الكلمات الدالة:- تداولية التأذب- اللامبالاة - الأخلاق -التدخل (التطفل) ، -ما وراء التدخل -الهوية الوطنية</p> <p>معلومات البحث تاريخ البحث: الاستلام:15-١٠-٢٠٢١ القبول: ٣-١٢-٢٠٢١ التوفر على النت 23-1-2022</p>
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1. INTRODUCTION:

This paper offers a metapragmatic account for some situations of what is known in Arabic as “violating privacy”. By this, I show the relationship and interface between morality and impoliteness; specifically how people perceive moral rules as evidenced by their metapragmatic understanding. The analysis in this paper focuses on some scenarios yielded from a prank TV show called “The Shock” displayed on the famous Arabic channel MBC. This TV- show involves performing fake camera situations where two actors are involved in: one represents an abuser whereas the other is a victim. The abuser pretends to offend the victim in public while a bystander tries to stop him/her.

Previous research revealed that it would be necessary to explore the extent to which metacommunication is activated in different cultures based on different perceptions. This research therefore, is considered as a metacommunicative approach for investigating the place of im/politeness and morality in the arena of intervention as a sociolinguistic phenomenon within the post-modern approach of politeness.

The today's approach concentrates on research participants regarding them as a metapragmatic part of the methodology adopted in a research. This kind of methodology can be resilient and solid in getting to the members' views and insight of knowledge about social issues. This can be cultivated by asking post-hoc questions identified with what was said. The members' commitment in the research data analysis could be supportive and informative in deciding the sensible comprehension of discourse; yet such a procedure overlooks the role of the analyst as an observer (Terkourafi, 1992; Grainger, et al., 2011). The discursive approach of im/politeness deals with politeness as a concept that can only be defined by the lay- person's understanding with its less emphasis on the context of situation in conveying and realization of impoliteness (Culpeper et al 2003). The discursive approach also does not adhere to the idea that impoliteness can be creative, subtle and able to be engaged logically for both direct and indirect aggressive motivations (Culpeper 1996, 1998, 2001).

However, in this paper, I aim to examine morality and impoliteness through intervening by relating them directly to the prank situations, which have been selected for analysis. Intervention as intended to be a corrective device, might address specific aspect within those prank situations. However, the role of the offender, offended and evaluators should be examined as they could play an important role in understanding the borders of impoliteness when intervention takes place. Therefore, this could be empirically helpful to validate whether intervention is necessary, polite or impolite, or to reveal the real motive behind it as well as to determine the place of intervention in the moral order perspective.

Metapragmatics and Moral order

When we were taught at school and home to say thank you, please, sorry ...etc., we had the first lesson in morality. Starting to say those words to our teachers, parents and friends, and so on, we have been evaluated by others polite students. Thus, politeness is the actual application of morality so as not to offend others or to show intimacy, respect and empathy.

In terms of morality, there is a set of traditions, values and conventions which serve to maintain societal order. This set has been used in psychology, philosophy and linguistics under the name moral order.

However, in the research of impoliteness and morality, the moral order has been excessively examined in producing politeness and impoliteness. In terms of discursive approach, it leads us to consider a new area of pragmatics, which is metapragmatics that is concerned with the post-speech acts behaviour. It refers, in pragmalinguistics, to the description of what speech does in a particular context. The meaning in terms of metapragmatics is transferred as actions so that it is also called as metacommunicative voicing, which has recently been the focus of

extensive research (Kadar and Haugh, 2007; Caffi, 2016; Culpeper and Haugh, 2017; Kadar, 2017; YaoSu, 2019).

The moral order according to Kadar and Marquez-Reiter (2015) is closely connected with social norms of individuals and groups, but the relationship between metapragmatics and moral order was not fully explored. For instance, there are certain questions that need to be empirically answered: what underlying factors influencing the moral order of participants and what similarities and or differences might be there in moral order across different types of norms? It is, thus, important for us to highlight such questions if we aim to deepen our understanding of whether politeness is not always good or not- through examining impoliteness and moral order by examining intervening in a social interaction.

2. EVALUATING IM/POLITENESS AND MORALITY

Some researchers are concerned with differentiating between morality and impoliteness to offer a hypothetically vigorous epistemological explanation of impoliteness (Haugh, 2013). While it is significant to examine impoliteness from the perspective of speakers' and hearers' social behaviour, there is an essential balanced focus which is the judgmental behaviours that interlocutors make. In this respect, Cialdini (2012) claims two types of norms that affect evaluating (im)politeness and morality. These are descriptive norms- referring to what stereotypically done and injunctive norms which usually involves accepted or condemned by a member of society.

Accordingly, it is an injunctive to evaluate (im)politeness due to injunctive norms form the moral order of the community. It is not consistent that people always follow these norms because other contextual factors can affect how individual obey norms. Thus, in line with Cialdini's (2012) injunctiveness, Spencer Oatey and Kadar (2016) bring out two issues that need to be considered in the process of evaluating impoliteness: (a) The types of norms which can be drawn on and (b) on what bases on which the judgment of (im)politeness and morality depend? It is argued that the norms of small and large groups can act as a frame of reference of evaluation. The localized norms in these types of norms can reflexively be interwoven with each other. This interrelatedness brings out culture into impoliteness evaluation. The role of norms in impoliteness evaluation gives rise to the expectations and suppositions appeal to a moral order.

Consequently, different people and groups could have different moral order which may differ from the natural and broader social norms and orders. Therefore, Kadar and Marquez-Reiter (2015) state that the moral order can involve the participants as either insiders in the form of members or as outsiders in the form of non-members who do not directly involved in the process of evaluation. Combining both insiders and outsiders perspective can be highly important for understanding im/politeness.

Concerning the second issue (b) which is on 'what bases impoliteness evaluation depends? There has been a very little interest in exploring the foundations of impoliteness evaluation. This area, according to Kadar and Marquez-Reiter (2015) is a fundamental for theorizing impoliteness under the scope of pragmatics, yet they have rarely addressed such perspective. Researchers in psychology and social justice most notably, Haidt (2007) proposed five universal bases to morality: in-group/loyalty, authority respect, harm/ care, fairness/ reciprocity and purity/sanctity.

Accordingly, people may have different normative evaluations so that a certain possible behaviour could be perceived differently across individuals, groups, or cultures. For example, being encountered in an academic situation, a female colleague asking for a bit of sugar, her colleague who is a young man replied to her 'the beautiful does not need sugar. I (the researcher) believed that such compliment was very polite, but others viewed it as

impolite because they thought that such an utterance might involve harassment in terms of perceiving morality in Arabic culture. Thus, it can be argued that im/politeness evaluations are unavoidably closely linked with the sociocultural values and beliefs. Thus, from personal view, compliment could be classified as a polite social behaviour regardless to the misunderstanding that might be encountered. In our research we offer moral evaluation of an ongoing act. In this regard, the intervener is not subjected to an objective evaluation process, but the interveners' initial reaction and natural emotion about certain violation is based on their culture, personal attitudes or religion or psyche.

3. INTERVENTION

Being the basic phenomenon for investigation in this paper, intervention is generally, defined as the act of intentionally and unintentionally involvement in someone's privacy. Research in psychology showed the reason behind intervening for repairing situation is the moral responsibility and empathy towards an offended and abused person. On the other hand, the lack of moral responsibility and other psychological factors may cause to non-responding to intervening when someone face an offence. (Darley and Latane, 1986). Moral intervention is more related with rituals since rituals represent performance, which can be a reflection of beliefs, values in interpersonal and relational interaction.

Intervention according to Culpeper (2011) involves two conflicted aspects: social duties and moral duties. Similarly, Kadar and Marquez-Reiter (2015) divide intervention into positive and negative intervention. The former refers to a social behaviour to restore what the intervener regards as morally appropriate behaviour whereas negative intervention involves an aggressive social behaviour that challenges the conventional norms (of being non-conflictive with others).

Previous research found that intervention is a noteworthy phenomenon to examine in the arena of politeness and impoliteness research since it is a multi-faceted phenomenon as aggressive social behaviour that challenges the social norms, and it could be regarded as a necessary behaviour aiming to reinstate what the intervener and bystanders regard as morally polite behaviour (Kadar and Marquez-Reiter2015).

Previous research has also shown, although relatively little, that intervention leads to a clash between politeness and morality. Kadar and Marquez-Reiter (2015) showed the conflict between morality and impoliteness through the participants' views and perceptions as evidenced by their metapragmatics and metacommunicative evaluation. It has been concluded that morality is a folk theoretical whereas impoliteness is a social practice- based interactional notion. (Kadar and Marquez-Reiter 2015:246).

Culturally speaking, intervention is necessary to restore violation or to stop an offence. In the Prophetic Tradition the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) says: "*Whoever of you sees an evil (violation) must then change it with his hand. If he is not able to do so, then [he must change it] with his language (verbally). And if he is not able to do so, then [he must change it] with his heart. And that is the slightest [effect of] faith. (Narrated by Abu Saeed al-Khudri Hadith 34: Muslim).*" In this prophetic tradition, there is an indication that intervening to change the social violation is an essential Islamic ought. Specifically, when there is an open violation that a Muslim is witnessing; it is then obligatory to intervene to change it if he has the ability to do so. It is clear that removing anevildeed is an essential characteristic of the Muslim faith. Thus, changing the social violation can be changed by two ways: non-verbal behaviour- the physical ability to carry out repairing, stopping offences in a safer custom - and the verbal and spiritual behaviour that is related with knowledge, perception and morality. Further, the Islamic order to change the social violation by non-verbal behaviour is conditioned by the person's ability to do so.

From the other hand, there is another social norms in the Islamic culture that is one should avoid intervening in others' affairs. This is specifically more related to the social privacy of the Arabic families, personal relations and kinships relations. The violation of social interactive privacy like domestic privacy- intervening in one's own home, bodily privacy- intervening in one's appearance or body- are all received by less indecisive views than other current facets of privacy (Al Azami, 2002). However, with the escalating proliferation in the information exchange, the domain of privacy has been broadened rather than constantly understood especially in the intervention occurring in the social interaction. Posner (2008) referred to privacy as a spiritual phenomenon that can be seen in cases like contractual harms, defamation, breaches of confidence and intervening in one's personal affairs. Consequently, as the capabilities to violate one's privacy increased, the need for respecting privacy becomes much more essential.

Accordingly, we are left with two apparently contrasted views: intervening to repair/reconcile between debating individuals and not to intervene to respect others' privacy. The first view suggests that intervention is a necessary act for showing morality. The second claims that intervention is socially a negative behaviour in terms of disrespecting others' privacy. This overlapping paves the way to the study of metapragmatics of (im)morality and (im)politeness through intervention as a common negative and positive social behaviour. This can be considered as a significant shift that relates politeness 1 with the social interaction and the ways in which interlocutors, consciously or not, exercise social behaviour.

Thus, the following questions are the main concern of this paper to answer:
What is the nature of interface between (im)morality, (im)politeness and metapragmatics within the scope of interactional process of intervention?
What are the types of intervening encountered in our data?
What are the motives behind intervening in the examined situations?

4. METHODOLOGY: CONTEXT, METHOD AND PARTICIPANTS

The data examined in this paper are extracted from a TV show displayed on the MBC. The TV show involves making fake camera situations where two actors are involved: one acts as an abuser and the other is a victim. The abuser pretends to offend the victim severely in public and the bystander tries to stop the offence by intervening. The focus is often on the participants who intervene and those who do not, as side-participants. The bystanders and participants are often unaware that they are monitored so that their behaviour comes naturally.

The situations were video- recorded in different Arabic countries: Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The situations involve different types of offences: (a) abusing father, (b) abusing mother, (c) abusing immigrant, and (d) abusing wife. The TV show finishes, when achieving the intended purpose, with a follow up unstructured interview by an Iraqi anonymous actress interviewing the people who intervened and the other bystander- apathy who did not take an action. Thus, this unstructured interview offers an insight on the people's justification for their interventions.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.1 INCIDENT ONE: ABUSING FATHER

The first example involves a tension between morality and social privacy. The interveners privilege the morality while the abuser initiates what is considered in his view to be the prevalence over the latter.

The first incident involves an argument between a young boy and his father in the pharmacy. The son bought some items and his father was requesting him to buy a specific item, but the son refuses angrily, abusing and offending his father by certain immoral¹ verbal and non-verbal behaviour.



The intervener, who is a young man, warns and advises the abuser with “he is your father” in (6). Another intervener in (14) rejected the abuser’s behaviour by “No way. [the intervener holds the father and kissed his forehead]: he is your father, pray on the prophet. These two interventions indicate the refusal of treating the father harshly whereas the abuser’s utterance in (16) he is my father and do not intervene” shows his appeal to the social privacy. More significantly, the potential abuser challenges the act of intervention by resorting to respecting his social privacy by adopting a routine footing (Zimmerman 1998).

This is illustrated by using the possessive pronouns “he is your father” by the intervener and “he is my father” by the abuser. The pronoun your” here does not really give the abuser the right to have badly with the father, but instead it has been used ironically that father must be respected in Arabic culture while “my” is an inclusion of appealing not to violate one’s privacy.

However, the interveners in this incident reject treating father impolitely by invoking morality traits and reminding the abuser of being so guilty. After bringing to the fore morality, one intervener (4) resorted to non-verbal behaviour “severely slapping the abuser’s face”.



The abuser is still muttering as an attempt to arise the bystanders' feeling by saying: come on! When you die and get rid of you'. This sentence culturally indicates that the father is a heavy or difficult task for some immoral people. Intervener (3) reminds the abuser that the father has taken care of him when he was a child. This indicates to the abuser that his behaviour does not align with the Islamic rules that ought that parents should be highly respected.

Intervener (4) holds the son from his collar and started slapping him on the face very severely (2). At this point, some people try to stop him while the program team stopped him, revealing it was a prank camera situation.

The last intervener (4) was seen in the video very angry and wiping his sweat out of his face. He was trying to intervene, but his intervention was very violent. His question that starts with the pronoun `You` and ending with serious intonation `why do you talk to your father like this?` indicates his anger and displeasure with the son's behaviour. After the abuser's appealing to social right and privacy 'don't intervene', intervener (4) could not help it so that he hold the son from his collar and started beating him violently on the face and shoulders. After this violent action, the TV show team revealed to the interveners and bystanders, as it was a fake camera situation. The program presenter approached quickly to manage that:

The first incident illustrates that impoliteness represented by intervention conflicts with the apparent social rights and privacy. It is also evident that morality principles take the precedence of social privacy. In terms of metacommunicative voicing, we noted that the main motivation behind the intervention is the religious factors as well as the emotional perspective.

It is worth referring here to the careful treatment of the parents is over-emphasized in Islam and Arabic culture in general that people must always try to please their parents and avoid deeds or behaviour that hurt their feeling. This is highly recommended in the Holy Qur'an: *"Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor rebel them but address them, in terms of honor."* (Qur'an 17:23). Thus, using religiosity in the Arabic discourse reveals the significant role that belief plays in the people's evaluation and perception of politeness and social behaviour.

Further, the bystanders and interveners' comments show that their intervening comes because of emotiveness and religious reasons. Religious factors, which ought parents, should be highly respected, made them intervene. Humanity also played an important role in stirring their willingness to interfere in such situations. The interveners and bystanders' comments

show that religion, humanity and inner feeling affect people's behaviour. The abusing actions perforate human relations – specifically the treatment of other people. However, violent behaviours, flooding into tears might give priority of humanity, religious rules over morality if people appealed to social rights and privacy.

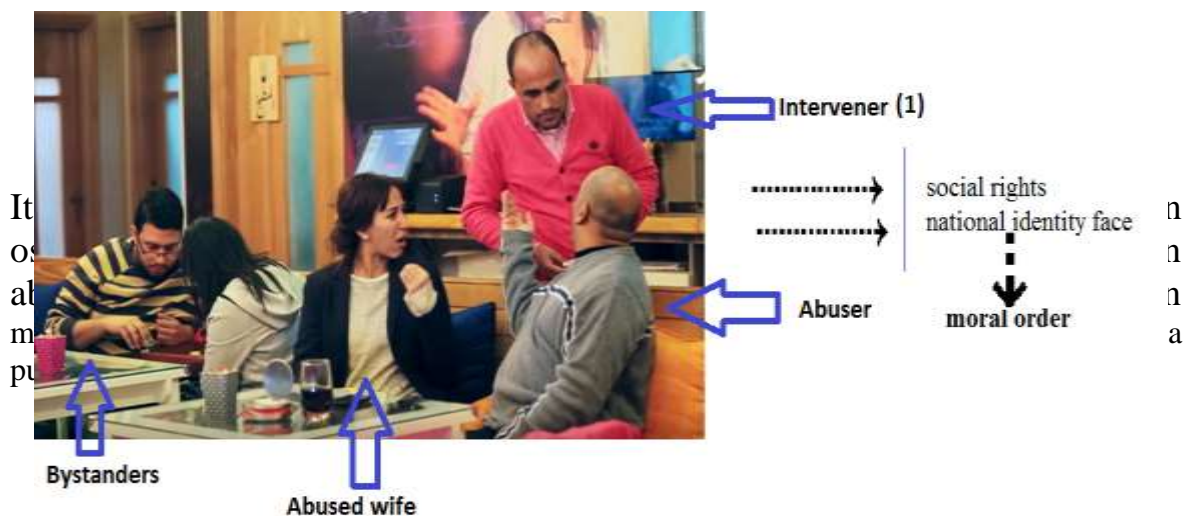
It is worth referring here that the use of violent behaviour has been evaluated by the participants and metaparticipants as an acceptable, humanitarian, brave, and natural because the nature of the offence was seen very severe and unexpected. As such, the employment of such violent verbal behaviour (by intervener 4) did not form an overt surprise to the bystanders/ metaparticipants in such situation where most of the metaparticipants would have done the same or more if they were in his place. Although the violent behaviour is pointed out to be deviant from the social norms of being polite and moral in a public place, it becomes a primary goal to be apparently impolite to attack face. Thus, the facework and face attack in this situation seems to be only a subsidiary concern

In situations when religious rules are violated especially socio-religious occasions which happen in the everyday life, the sustained use of verbal behaviour comes from the religious norms that encourage positive intervening. It was narrated by (Sahih Muslim: 476): whosoever sees an evil action, he/she should change it in his/her hand; if he/she couldn't, it is better to change it by verbally and if couldn't, then by his heart and this is the least belief. This prophetic tradition teaches people to intervene in a positive way in order to change wrong conceptions, help people, and reform a society and so on. It is however, difficult to say that violent behaviour to change evil and offensive acts is compatible with the religious norms of Islam. Nevertheless, it is more compatible with the social norms of the Arabic human character that is evaluated as angry and uncontrolled in dealing with the social violation and abuse. The exploration of this relationship in Arabic countries especially those affected by wars and violence attacks like Iraqi Syria, Egypt and Libya, to my knowledge, has not been pragmatically taken into account.

The next example represents another incident of intervention of husband – wife relationship. Due to the sensitivity in this relationship, the interveners in this example address both the abuser and abused.

The husband is shouting at his wife asking her to stop talking; and approaching to hit her while, the wife pretends to be obedient with her tears rolling down3.

Husband: Shut up... [trying to hit her].



The second intervener furiously turns to the abuser by asking him ‘can you talk to me as a man?’ This is a rhetoric question implying an additional challenging moral element to justify the intervention. The implication is that it is neither manhood nor bravery to treat woman in public in such rudeness. Moreover, the intervener also brings to the fore the national identity as a justification for his intervention “supposes that people here are not from Egypt, what their attitude towards us would be? “You are not the son of a country” The intervener draws attention to the national identity that contradicts with the politeness. In other word, the national identity is involved in morality that is precedencies over being polite. Thus, there is an evidence of moral identity exerted off due to social violation though such violation deems to social rights and respecting privacy.

However, a very apparent overlapping between morality and impoliteness in terms which precedence over the other. Expressions like “Who are you? She is my wife uttered by the husband. Such expressions do not give others the right to interfere, but behind such expressions, a high degree of impoliteness lies represented by offending the wife in public. Thus, it was natural behaviour for bystanders to show their morality represented by positive intervention. Yet, Intervener’s (3) claim, “you should have a blood” which pragmatically means you should have morals, more importantly a moral appeal. This appeal has been done by bringing to the fore the social and moral responsibility of a man. Intervener (2) reported that “A woman needs the intervening of anybody to stop her being abused; it is our nature, as Egyptians, we should intervene in situations like these. We are accustomed to this as Arabic Egyptians”. Thus, being gentle with women is a noble religious (Islamic and Christian) tradition, which is deeply rooted in eastern and western communities, especially the Arabic communities that are essentially religious.

The social behaviour that involves negative values by the abuser can be actually in a conflict with the social behaviour that involves positive values by the bystanders/ interveners. The social and the national identity are encountered in this incident in the sense that both are associated with the face attack impoliteness because the violation does not fit the desire of the offended person and bystanders. Abusing wife publically draws people’s attention to save her face and others’ own self in order to establish moral identity, i.e. saving the ‘reputation’ face of women in general and to coherent the moral identity by refusing such a violation.

Incident (3) involves a religious incident where an emigrant Sunni person in Baghdad, went out to buy some bread in the district; it was assumed that the baker who is from Shia, refused to sell to the emigrant because the customer is Sunni.⁴

[People were just watching with fear, did not think to intervene]

During this careful interaction, no intervention happened until the whole scenario had finished. This might be assigned to the nature of incident involves potential ethnic conflict⁵.

This example demonstrates that the intervener depends on the principle of moral identity and in-group principle. "I am Iraqi; even my wife is Shi'ist, all my friends from Shi'a and Sunna" Unlike previous examples, the abuser does not appeal to anything. By this careful intervention, the abuser is condemned indirectly as being discriminating somebody. The seller keeps refusing to sell 'I cannot... please, go to another bakery'

The same intervener keeps refusing the abuser's immorality by using a variety of strategies. First, the involvement and solidarity with the victim function as a tool of saving the victim's face. "Man, look! We are all suffering. Not only you. Thus, reminding the wrongdoer that all the Iraqi peoples suffer the bad consequences of war and violence. Then, the intervention became severer "Moreover, I will not buy from you. This is wrong. This is the real meaning of sectarianism, we are brothers, and it is not acceptable in Islam. You should sell to him". 'We are all suffering' shows that all Iraqi people have been the victims of violence' I will not buy from you' shows the social solidarity with the poor and immigrant people and finally appealing to the rules of Islam which do not accept discrimination.

The participants' and bystanders' comments and evaluation of the violation indicates some metapragmatics issues: (a) establishing social solidarity through use using expressions of in-group and involvements, (b) religious ties through expressing the belief that such behaviours encounters negatives values. The metapragmatics of politeness in this example reveals that the conventional norms of avoiding conflict and not to engage into people's privacy, is justified by the religious need and national solidarity to stop discrimination, and to establish moral identity⁶.

6. CONCLUSION

Our data analysis in this paper revealed that the interveners who intervened due to the social violation by primarily appealing to some oughts specifically, morality, national and moral identity, religious obligations, social dignity and humanity-based behaviour. The interveners struggled to defend the abused persons to have their national identity established, morality identified, and religious duties to be accomplished and their social dignity or humanity to be revealed. Thus, our data analysis in the three incidents indicate that an overlapping between being polite and immoral can take place mutually in both beneficial ways to save one's own face as an individual, saving a face of religion in terms of establishing good deeds, and a face of national identity. In general, the abusers tend to be refusing the intervention by appealing the intervention to impoliteness by referring to their social rights in general and privacy in particular (e.g. Please don't intervene' in example 1), ('she is my wife' ..and who are you?' in example 2) and 'please don't intervene' in example 3). These discourse elements shows the core of overlapping between (im)politeness and morality. They are typically considered as being impolite but the context of situation triggers its morality. The abusers' responses indicate that the bystanders' intervention represents the aggressive social behaviour that violates the social rights, but if we are going to label intervention, it could be categorized as a natural 'spontaneous' social behaviour that is beneficial in determining the characteristics of impoliteness.

This paper contributes to the metapragmatics research by bringing Arabic cultural understanding of intervention into research. Im/politeness is a social interactive phenomenon that people can produce, think and talk about. Talking and thinking about im/politeness is termed as metapragmatics of im/politeness. This metapragmatics is clarified in this paper through the metacommunicative voice of people when related with other measuring attributing scales. Im/politeness is neither always subject to morality, but there are other attributing factors that are central to Arabic culture such as religiosity, establishing national

identity, humanity, collectivism and emotional aspects. The term morality in the Arabic culture is more general so that it included respect, courtesy, empathy, shyness, generosity, and cooperation and religious norms and principles. Finally, this article may open the door for a future research for perceiving and evaluating verbal and non- verbal im/politeness in different cultures, particularly, the relationship between violence and im/politeness.

¹ This is my own terming (im)moral order refers to all acts that damage face including: rudeness, abusing, harassments, calling names, swearing terms, ignoring, interruption, etc.

² The team presenter explained to the audience that `we did not prepare the situation to be violence generating. We defend human social rights so that we aimed to shake peoples' emotions and humanity to see how they would react towards such abusive actions.

³ It is noted that the abused person in this situations is active; they try to draws the bystanders' attention by making certain gestures like crying, or pretended to be severely offended.

⁴ Due to the last violent events happened in Iraq particularly the west and north east part, so many people were obliged to move to other safe places. The majority of people living in the west provinces belong to the Sunni Islamic ethnicity.

⁵ The intervention degree in this situation seemed low because of the sensitivity of the situation, which is involving a religion apparent conflict.

⁶ It is worth mentioning in this context that there are many religious and ethnic groups in the western countries at play are not even considered because people living in those countries have different views as compared with Arabs' views of stereotypical homogenising views of the world as seen this incident of emigrant.

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