Iraqi EFL Learners' Production of Impoliteness Strategies

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Abstract

This study attempts to investigate Iraqi EFL learners' production of impoliteness strategies according to their gender, age, and place of residence. For the sake of achieving this aim, the study hypothesizes that there is no statistically significant difference between the calculated value and the tabulated value of the production test of impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners according to their gender, age, and place of residence. A test, which is the source of the data, is used to test the hypotheses of the study. A sample of (140) Iraqi EFL college students at the fourth year stage, Department of English, College of Education of Human Sciences, University of Tikrit, participated in responding to the test. The data collected from the test is analyzed according to Culpeper (1996). The results of this study indicate that gender, age, and place of residence affect Iraqi EFL learners' production of impoliteness strategies.

Keywords: Iraqi EFL learners, Impoliteness strategies, Production, Gender, Age, Place of Residence.

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انتاج الطلبة العراقيين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية لاستراتيجيات عدم اللياقة

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الملخص:
تُحاول هذه الدراسة التحقق من انتاج الطلبة العراقيين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية لأستراتيجيات عدم اللياقة وقم بمراجعة الفرق في انتاج النماذج بين البيئة المحسوبة والبيئة المجدولة لاختبار انتاج الطلبة لأستراتيجيات عدم اللياقة المستخدمة من قبل الطلبة العراقيين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية حسب الجنس والعمر ومكان الإقامة. تم استخدام اختبار فرضيات الدراسة التي هي مصدر البيانات. شارك في الاختبار عينة مكونة من 140 طالباً عراقياً في الصف الرابع قسم اللغة الإنجليزية ، كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية ، جامعة تكريت. وتم تحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها من خلال الاختبار وفقاً لمنهج كولبير (1996). أشارت نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى أن الجنس والعمر ومكان الإقامة تؤثر على انتاج الطلبة العراقيين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية لأستراتيجيات عدم اللياقة.

الكلمات الدالة: الطلبة العراقيين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية، استراتيجيات عدم اللياقة، انتاج، الجنس، العمر، مكان الإقامة.

1. Introduction

Impoliteness involves a new and fascinating area of study next to and complementing politeness studies. It is a common phenomenon in all cultures, but its appearance may vary from one culture to another. Even within the same culture, impoliteness may appear differently depending on social background. This is due to the fact that there is no potential impolite behaviour until a specific society judges the language utterance. It may be observed when someone emerges from a line and may not follow the interaction order of the social activity (Watts, 2003:130). This study focuses on the production of impoliteness strategies as used by Iraqi learners learning English as a foreign language. It attempts to achieve the following aims:

1. Examining Iraqi EFL learners’ production of impoliteness strategies according to their gender.
3. Detecting Iraqi EFL learners' production of impoliteness strategies according to their age.
5. Discovering Iraqi EFL learners' production of impoliteness strategies according to their place of residence.

As a result, there is a need to answer the following questions:
1. Is there any statistically significant difference among the impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners at the production level according to their gender?
2. Is there any statistically significant difference among the impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners at the production level according to their age?
3. Is there any statistically significant difference among the impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners at the production level according to their place of residence?

At the Alpha level of significance (0.05), it is hypothesized that:

1. There is no statistically significant difference between the calculated value and the tabulated value of the production test of impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners according to their gender.
2. There is no statistically significant difference between the calculated value and the tabulated value of the production test of impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners according to their age.
3. There is no statistically significant difference between the calculated value and the tabulated value of the production test of impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners according to their place of residence.

2. Impoliteness Theory

According to Leech (2014:219), "the best way to start theorizing about impoliteness is to build on the theory of politeness, which is clearly the polar opposite of politeness". Impoliteness is most often referred to as "the other side of the politeness coin" (Mills, 2011:40). Therefore, impoliteness theory builds upon the existing knowledge of politeness. It is a continuum of speech acts that is "costly to the hearer", whereas politeness is "beneficial to the hearer". A theory of politeness is inevitably also a theory of impoliteness, since impoliteness is non-observance or violation of the constraints of politeness (Leech, 2005:18).

Basically, as reported by Bousfield and Locher (2008:82), there have been three main theories of impoliteness, namely: Lachenicht (1980), Austin (1987), and Culpeper (1996). Both Lachenicht and Culpeper conform the role of the speaker in interpreting the impolite behaviour. By contrast, Austin neglects the role of the speaker and emphasizes the role of the hearer in how s/he interprets a sentence as polite/impolite (Esmaeel, 2016:27). These theories will be elaborated in the following subsections in more detail.

2.1 Lachenicht (1980)

Lachenicht (1980: 607) introduces his model of impoliteness in a study he calls "Aggravating Language: A study of Abusive and Insulting Language". He argues that aggravating language is a "rational attempt to hurt or damage the addressee". The grade of aggravation varies according to the 'intention to hurt' (ibid:613). Hence, he presents four aggravation strategies:
1. Off-record: this strategy is designed to enable the insulter to meet an aggrieved challenge from the injured person. Therefore, it is of much the same kind as the politeness strategy in which it can be used against powerful addressees and that it is used indirectly. For example, ambiguous insults, institutions, hints, and irony.
2. Bald on record: here, the FTAs and impositions are performed directly, e.g., shut the window, do your homework, don't talk, etc.
3. Positive aggravation: in this strategy, the addressee is shown that he is not approved of, esteemed, belong, and it can be used against friends.
4. Negative aggravation: is designed to interfere the addressee's freedom of action, to impose on the addressee, and to attack his social position and the basis of his social action. It is used against those who are more socially distant (ibid).

2.2 Austin (1987)

Austin (1987) never uses the word 'impoliteness' in his work, but he does use the term 'dark side of politeness' which reinforces the notion of face attack. He (ibid:14) indicates that this dark side of politeness could be more clarified in terms of Face Attack Acts (henceforth, FAAs). He states that FAAs are those acts which are introduced in a context where they can be avoided, but the speaker does use them and understand them as intentional. It is important to note that not all acts are deliberate FAAs.

Furthermore, Austin asserts that the existence of impolite FAAs can be seen as a subclass of the phenomenon of FTAs. His model is more concerned with the factors that lead to the FAAs' choice, which can be illustrated as follows:
1. Attacks on the positive face: it works in two ways: (a) the S recognizes the H's face but pays no attention, so he does FAA baldly without redress to insult the H, and (b) the S orients the H's positive face where this act is inappropriate, so the S will go off record. Both ways are seen as strategies for humiliation.
2. Attacks on the negative face: also, there are two ways: (a) the S directly ignores the H's needs and impingements, making impositions without redress, and this is coercive behavior; and (b) the S orients the H's negative face where familiarity would be appropriate, and this is distancing behavior(ibid:19-25).

2.3 Culpeper (1996)

In 1996, Jonathan Culpeper, the originator of the most notable model of impoliteness, laid the foundation for the systematic investigation of impoliteness in language. His studies from 1996 to 2011 have shed light on defining and modeling linguistic impoliteness. He (1996:355) believes that the phenomenon of impoliteness has developed around the concept of politeness, that is to say, it is the parasite of politeness. He (ibid:350) originally investigates it as "the use of strategies that are designed to have the opposite effect that of social disruption". The purpose of such strategies is to attack the face, which is an emotionally sensitive concept of the self.

In this investigation, impoliteness has been given its own systematic framework, which is introduced as certain strategies used to damage face and cause disharmony. It embodies a mirror of Brown and Levinson's description of politeness in which Culpeper, in his investigation of impoliteness, retains the term 'strategies', which was used by Brown and Levinson for constructing, regulating and reproducing forms of cooperative social interaction (Watts, 2003: 267). In other words, he uses their model to present the set of strategies of uncooperative social interaction.
Besides, Culpeper (2005:36) clarifies that impoliteness is a phenomenon that deals with how offense is communicated and takes place in the absence of politeness. According to him, impoliteness is not:
(a) incidental face-threat.
(b) unintentional activity.
(c) banter,
(d) bald-on record politeness (BOR).

Culpeper (1996: 356) takes Brown and Levinson's politeness super-strategies and inverts them to describe impoliteness superstrategies, which are means of attacking face instead of saving it. He distinguishes five super strategies by which impoliteness can be created and received. These strategies are illustrated as follows:

1. Bald on record impoliteness: the FTA is performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous, and concise way in circumstances where face is not irrelevant or minimized.
2. Positive impoliteness: the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants. Culpeper (1996: 357) adds a range of sub-strategies to positive impoliteness including:
   ❖ Ignore, snub the other.
   ❖ Exclude the other from an activity.
   ❖ Disassociate from the other.
   ❖ Be disinterested, uninterested, unsympathetic.
   ❖ Use inappropriate identity markers.
   ❖ Use obscure or secretive language.
   ❖ Seek disagreements – select a sensitive topic.
   ❖ Make the other feel uncomfortable.
   ❖ Use taboo words.
   ❖ Call the other names.
3. Negative impoliteness: the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants. Negative impoliteness involves the following sub-strategies:
   ❖ Frighten.
   ❖ Condescend, scorn or ridicule.
   ❖ Invade the other's space
   ❖ Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect.
   ❖ Put the other's indebtedness on record.
4. Sarcasm/Mock politeness: the FTA is performed with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere, and thus remain surface realizations. Sarcasm is unlike the other strategies in the sense that it is a meta-strategy, using politeness for impoliteness (Culpeper, 1996: 356).
5. Withhold politeness: the absence of politeness work where it would be expected. For example, failing to thank someone for a present may be taken as deliberate impoliteness (Culpeper, 2005: 42).

3. Functions of Impoliteness
Culpeper (2011:220) introduces three main functions of impoliteness: (1) affective, (2) coercive, and (3) entertaining. In the following sub-sections, each function will be introduced and elaborated on below, respectively.

3.1 Affective Impoliteness
According to Culpeper (ibid :223), "affective impoliteness is the targeted display of heightened emotion, usually anger, with the implication that the target is to
blame for producing that negative emotional state”. In this respect, when the speaker imposes his/her anger towards the hearer in some way, it consequently generates negative emotions inside of the hearer. Culpeper stresses that though this kind of verbal behaviour may be envisioned as “impulsive due to a bubbling over of negative emotions, it is still used strategically and within the bounds of certain social norms”. Kadhum and Abbas (2021:151) state the example below, which shows the impoliteness of a girl toward a boy:

Girl: How dare you go too far on me! That's not the way you should handle me! Who the fuck are you thinking?
Boy: I have to go. I've to do some things.

In this example, the girl uses impolite utterances to show her anger and frustration toward the boy.

3.2 Coercive Impoliteness

This function is concerned with how speakers attempt to exercise their power and hegemony over hearers by utilizing socially inappropriate interactional sequences (Culpeper, 2011: 230). It is more likely to occur in contexts where there is an imbalance of social structural power, i.e., the position that the speaker is in is higher than the hearer's position. It can, however, also be used in equal relationships as a means of gaining social power and dominance, as in the following example:

Shut up, or I’ll smash your head! (Huang, 2014:150).

Here, the speaker commands the hearer to end what he is saying, showing himself to be more powerful due to his higher social level. Therefore, he ends the role of the other participant by warning him not to go further in his speech, or otherwise he will behave badly.

3.3 Entertaining Impoliteness

Culpeper (2011:233-234) mentions that entertaining impoliteness involves entertainment at the expense of the target (or potential target) of the impoliteness, and is thus always exploitative to a degree. In other words, it occurs when one of the participants badly makes use of another's feelings by making fun of him in order to amuse himself and others, as follows:

Hey, idiot, come in!

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Respondents

The study involves one hundred and forty EFL undergraduate fourth-year students chosen randomly from the Department of English, College of Education for Humanities, University of Tikrit during the academic year (2020-2021). The EFL learners comprised males (n = 70) and females (n = 70), and their ages ranged from 21-38 years old.

4.2 The Test

In order to test the respondents' production of impoliteness strategies, a test of fifteen situations have been designed. It is used to elicit information about the students' abilities to use certain types of impoliteness strategy according to certain contextual factors. In addition to the evaluation role of the production ability of the learners, this test will show which type(s) of impoliteness strategy is/are used more frequently than others. The participants are asked to write their responses to each of the situations in the provided blank space.
5. Data Analysis

The data is analyzed in light of the study's results, hypotheses, and aims as follows:

5.1 The First Hypothesis

The first hypothesis statement is:

"In terms of Iraqi EFL learners’ gender, there is no statistically significant difference between the calculated T-value and the tabulated T-value of the production level of impoliteness strategies used by the learners."

This hypothesis aims to investigate Iraqi EEL learners' production of impoliteness strategies according to their gender. In order to prove this hypothesis, the results will be displayed in Figures (1) and (2) below.

![Figure 1](image1.png)

**Figure (1): Frequency and Percentages of Impoliteness Strategies used by Iraqi EFL Male-Learners at the Production Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bald on Record</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>31.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Impoliteness</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>25.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Impoliteness</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>25.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarcasm</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>17.62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 2](image2.png)

**Figure (2): Frequency and Percentages of Impoliteness Strategies used by Iraqi EFL Female-Learners at the Production Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bald on Record</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>29.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Impoliteness</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>23.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Impoliteness</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>24.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarcasm</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>22.54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As displayed in Figures (1) and (2) above, the results of this hypothesis show that there is a difference between males and females in using impoliteness strategies at the production level. It is obvious from Table (1) below that there is a difference between the mean scores of males (30.25) and females (26.74). Therefore, to check whether there is a statistically significant difference between the means of males and females, an independent sample T-test is used. The results of the T-test analysis indicates that the calculated value (2.83) is higher than the tabulated one (1.994) at the Alpha level of significance (0.05) and degree of freedom (138). This means that there is a statistically significant difference between the calculated value and the tabulated
value of the production test of impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL males and females learners. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table(1): Mean Scores of the Production Test for Males and Females of Iraqi EFL Learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>No. of students</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD.</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>26.74</td>
<td>7.87</td>
<td>Calcu</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mal es</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30.25</td>
<td>6.72</td>
<td>Tabul</td>
<td>1.994</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alpha level of significance = 0.05

5.2 The Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis statement is:

"In terms of Iraqi EFL learners' age, there is no statistically significant difference between the calculated T-value and the tabulated T-value of the production level of impoliteness strategies used by the learners."

The purpose of this hypothesis is to scrutinize Iraqi EFL learners' production of impoliteness strategies according to their age. The results, which will be displayed in Figures (3), (4) and (5) below, show that there is a difference between age categories (21-26, 27-32, and 33-38, respectively) in using impoliteness strategies at the production level.

Figure (4): Frequency and Percentages of Impoliteness Strategies used by Iraqi EFL Learners whose ages range between (27-32) at the Production Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bald on Record</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>36.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Impoliteness</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>24.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Impoliteness</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>21.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarcasm Politeness</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>17.56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure (3): Frequency and Percentages of Impoliteness Strategies used by Iraqi EFL Learners whose ages range between (21-26) at the Production Test
Table (2) below displays the rates of Iraqi EFL learners' use of impoliteness strategies according to their age. The mean of respondents whose ages are between 21-26 (29.65) is higher than the mean of those whose ages are between 27-32 (25.86) and those whose ages are between 33-38 (24.20).

Table (2): Rates of Iraqi EFL Learners’ Use of Impoliteness Strategies according to their Age at the Production Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>No. of students</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
<th>Mean score</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-26</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1.082</td>
<td>29.65</td>
<td>7.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-32</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>25.86</td>
<td>5.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33-38</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>24.20</td>
<td>4.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A one-way ANOVA analysis is employed to check if there is a statistically significant difference between the calculated T-value and the tabulated T-value of the production level of impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners according to their age. Below, Table (3) presents the results of the one-way ANOVA test.

Table (3): Calculated T-value and the Tabulated T-value of the Production Level of Impoliteness Strategies Used by Iraqi EFL Learners according to their Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>T- Value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Figure (5): Frequency and Percentages of Impoliteness Strategies used by Iraqi EFL Learners whose ages range between (33-38) at the Production Test
### 5.3 The Third Hypothesis

The third hypothesis statement is:

"In terms of Iraqi EFL learners' place of residence, there is no statistically significant difference between the calculated T-value and the tabulated T-value of the production level of impoliteness strategies used by the learners."

This hypothesis aims to identify Iraqi EFL learners' production of impoliteness strategies according to their place of residence. The results in Figures (6), (7), and (8) show that impoliteness strategies are used differently at the production level depending on where participants live.

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**Table (3):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Between Groups</th>
<th>Within Groups</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>510.724</td>
<td>7279.11</td>
<td>7789.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>255.362</td>
<td>54.3217</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculate d</td>
<td>4.700</td>
<td>3.063</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabulate d</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alpha level of significance = 0.05

As shown in Table (3), the calculated T-value (4.700) is higher than the tabulated one (3.063) at the Alpha level of significance (0.05) and degree of freedom (139). This implies that there is a statistically significant difference between the calculated T-value and the tabulated T-value of the production level of impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners according to their age. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

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**Figure (6):** Frequency and Percentages of Impoliteness Strategies used by Iraqi EFL Learners who live in city at the Production Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bald on Record</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Impoliteness</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>22.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Impoliteness</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>29.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarcasm Politeness</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>22.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure (7):** Frequency and Percentages of Impoliteness Strategies used by Iraqi EFL Learners who live in Town at the Production Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bald on Record</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>37.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Impoliteness</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>25.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Impoliteness</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarcasm Politeness</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>16.20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table (4) below presents the overall frequency, mean scores and standard deviation of impoliteness strategies used by the respondents according to their place of residence. The mean of test-takers who live in the town (30.52) is higher than the mean of those who live in the city (28.07) and those who live in the village (26.10).

Table (4): Rates of Iraqi EFL Learners’ Use of Impoliteness Strategies according to their Place of Residence at the Production Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of residence</th>
<th>No. of students</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
<th>Mean score</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>28.07</td>
<td>7.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>30.52</td>
<td>8.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>26.10</td>
<td>5.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A one-way ANOVA test is used to figure out whether there is a statistically significant difference between the calculated T-value and the tabulated T-value of the production test of impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners according to their place of residence. Table (5) below presents the results of the one-way ANOVA test.

Table (5): Calculated T-value and the Tabulated T-value of the Production Level of Impoliteness Strategies Used by Iraqi EFL Learners according to their Place of Residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>423.500</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>211.750</td>
<td>Calculated</td>
<td>Tabulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>7348.600</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>54.8403</td>
<td>3.861</td>
<td>3.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7772.100</td>
<td>139</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alpha level of significance = 0.05

Table (5) illustrates that the calculated T-value (3.861) is higher than the tabulated one (3.063) at the Alpha level of significance (0.05) and degree of freedom (139). This means that there is a statistically significant difference between the calculated T-value and the tabulated T-value of the production level of impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners according to their place of residence. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.
6. Discussion of the Results

The analysis of the data shows that Iraqi EFL learners are intermittent users in using impoliteness strategies at the production level. According to the items of the test, Figure (9) below shows the overall Iraqi EFL Learners' performance of impoliteness strategies at the production Level.

Figure (9): The Overall Iraqi EFL Learners' Performance of Impoliteness Strategies at the Production Level.

The extent of the learners' ability to produce impoliteness strategies can be described in terms of the mean score as shown in Table (6) below.

Table (6): The Learners' Ability at the Production Level in Terms of the Mean Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. Of Respondents</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Scale of Learners' Ability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td>28.50%</td>
<td>Intermittent user</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are essential factors in this study that determine Iraqi EFL learners' use of impoliteness strategies. The performance of Iraqi EFL learners for impolite strategies can be influenced by contextual variables, including gender, age, and place of residence. The first factor that influences the respondents' use of impoliteness strategies is gender. It has been observed that previous studies which investigate the relationship between impoliteness and gender indicate that males usually tend to use impoliteness more than females (e.g., Aydinoglu 2013, Tannen 1990, Lakoff 1973, Rassam and Ameen 2020, Ibrahim 2020). Figure (10) shows that the analysis of impoliteness strategies used by males and females at the production level demonstrates that males tend to use impoliteness more than females. So the results of these studies are in line with the findings of the current study.
The second aspect that affects Iraqi EFL learners’ use of impoliteness strategies in this study is their age. Figure (11) below shows the overall performance of the learners according to their age. As seen in the following figure, younger learners use impoliteness strategies more than older learners do. Therefore, this result is similar to the findings of Ibrahim (2020), who discovers that younger users use impolite expressions more than older users do (ibid: 76).

The final factor that influences Iraqi EFL learners' use of politeness strategies in this study is their place of residence. As shown in Figure (12) below, respondents who live in urban areas use politeness less than those who live in rural areas. As a result, the findings of this study contradict the findings of Chen (2019), who finds that urban residents are more inclined to express politeness in general and more subtle in their manner of showing politeness than rural residents.

7. Conclusions
Examining Iraqi EFL learners' ability to use impoliteness strategies at the production level has yielded as follows:
1. As far as the production level is concerned, there is a distinction in the use of impoliteness strategies between males and females of Iraqi EFL learners. The findings reveal that male learners (30.26%) produce more impoliteness strategies than females (26.74%).
2. There is a variance in the impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners according to their age in terms of the production level. According to the study's findings, learners whose ages fall between 21-26 (29.65%) are more capable of
producing impoliteness strategies than learners whose ages fall between 27-32 (25.86%) and 33-38 (24.20%).

3. In terms of the production level, there is a variance in the impoliteness strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners according to their place of residence. The results reveal that learners who live in towns (30.52%) use impoliteness strategies more than those who live in cities (28.07%) or villages (26.10%).

References


Appendix

PRODUCTION LEVEL

Please read through the following situations attentively and respond as realistically and honestly as you can. Respond as though you are in a real-life situation. You are free to write whatever you think is appropriate.

1. You are a boss. Your employee has been coming late to work, leaving early and not doing his/her work well. What will you say to him/her?
2. Some students are talking loudly and using bad language in the library while you are studying there. What will you say to him?

3. At the cafeteria, an older passerby is carrying his meal to his table. When he is walking between tables, he stumbles and his soup spills over your shirt. What will you say to him?

4. You are a solid officer. During military training, one of the soldiers quarreled with another soldier. What will you say to him?

5. You work as an official employee of a large company. You used to save the flies of the company on your private computer. One day, you find your sister is trying to use your computer without your permission. What will you say to him?

6. The bookseller charges you $25 for a book in the bookstore. As you walk to the door, you look at the receipt and notice the price is $20. That is, he overcharges you by $5. What will you say to him?

7. You are a teacher. One of your students comes late to every lesson. Last lesson you told him that he could not come late to your class anymore. Today he is 20 minutes late. What will you say to him?

8. One of your classmates offends you during a class discussion. What will you say to him?

9. You are a judge in a court of law. The criminal in the court wants you to do him a favor illegally and shorten his imprisonment sentence. He wants to tell you that when he gets out of jail, he'll make it up to you. What will you say to him?

10. While you are studying at home, your younger brother is playing the music very

11. Your neighbour’s boy has broken the window of your car. What will you say to him?

12. Your daughter used to leave the kitchen in a mess. What will you say to him?
13. You own a car hire company. One day, you observe that one of your drivers drives very fast and does not obey the signs on the road. What will you say to him?

14. You have a date with your friend. You have been waiting for 30 minutes, and it is not the first time that he/she has been late. What will you say to him?

15. Your immediate superior forgets to give you a recommendation letter for your scholarship. What will you say to him?