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Original article

**Multimodal investigation of Egyptian Politeness in Relation to
Gender, Social Distance, and Power**

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Abstract: As how it is to be said is as important as what is said, being polite does not depend only on polite uttering but more on behaving politely. To argue for this regard, this study investigates the influence of speech-behavior matching on the perception of politeness in Egyptians' social interactions. By multi-modally analyzing the verbal expressions and their synchronous nonverbal behaviors in relation to the social variables of gender, social distance, and power in 165 scenes collected from three Egyptian television series, this study aims at fulfilling a multimodal attitude of politeness through covering its linguistic and non-linguistic manifestations in the light of Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory. With respect to the disparity of the social variables of gender, social distance, and power among Egyptian interlocutors, the attitude of politeness is appeared to be highly influenced by matching the verbal expressions with their co-nonverbal behaviors. The results reveal that perceiving positive



social attitudes of politeness are only checked on speech-behavior matches. Nevertheless, not all mismatches are impolite. Considering some consolation attitudes, the interlocutors are found to mismatch their speech-behavior to save the other's face.

Keywords: verbal politeness, nonverbal politeness, co-occurring behavior-speech matching and mismatching, gender, social distance, and power.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background on the verbal and Nonverbal Politeness

Dating back to the 1970s, conceptualizing definitions, developing theories, and examining standards of politeness in different cultures have been the focal point of consideration for a tremendous number of studies in linguistics to the extent that politeness has been recognized as a sub-discipline of pragmatics (Thomas, 1995). The focus of attention in most of these studies has tended to deal with politeness as mostly a linguistic performance. Moreover, the term "politeness" has been identified mainly to refer to "linguistic politeness". In this respect, Lakoff and Ide (2005) claim that "politeness is largely, but by no means exclusively, linguistic behavior" (p. 3). Furthermore, the most elaborated theoretical frameworks in pragmatics (e.g. Lakoff, 1975; Leech, 1983; Thomas, 1995; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Gu, 1990; Holmes, 1995; Watts, 2003) have tackled politeness from a linguistic perspective. These frameworks have advocated the verbal investigation of politeness in interpersonal interactions with distinctive rules and norms according to the contexts.

Otherwise, in spoken discourses, words do not act on their own since there are several types of nonverbal activities as gestures, facial expressions, body orientations and postures, and



voice tones that usually and relevantly accompany any social discourse. These two means of communication are closely related and mutually complementary; while words represent the primary means of exchanging thoughts and ideas, nonverbal behaviors speak volumes about intentions and emotions. That is exactly what Wharton (2009) reveals when affirming that:

Sentences are rarely uttered in a behavioral vacuum. We color and flavor our speech with a variety of natural vocal, facial expressions and bodily gestures, which indicate our internal state by conveying attitudes to the propositions we express or information about our emotions or our feelings. (p. 1)

In the same vein of arguing for the role of nonverbal behaviors in communication, Calero (2005) confirms that “a person’s behavior when interacting with others can tell you as much as the words he or she uses”, and concludes that “how you act is more important than what you say” (p. 5). Consequently, in interpersonal interactions, nonverbal behaviors can be distinguished as appropriate or not to either the uttered words or the contextual attitude or both of them. Therefore, realizing politeness as exclusively a linguistic performance is inadequate as (im)politeness has been manifested much more in nonverbal aspects of communication than in verbal aspects. In such a context, communicative politeness has been divided into linguistic politeness and non-linguistic politeness (Haverkate, 1987; Ambady, Koo, Lee, Rosenthal & 1996; Márquez Reiter, 2000).

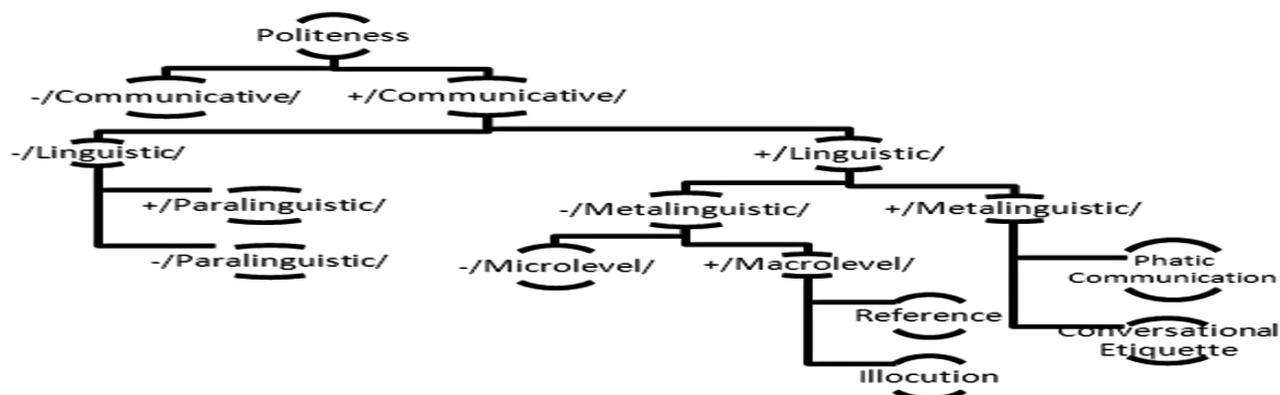


Figure 1. The different manifestations of politeness

Considering this diagram, Márquez Reiter (2000) illustrates, furthermore, two main kinds for each type of politeness. Non-linguistic politeness is divided into paralinguistic politeness which is expressed through gestures combined with verbal signs, and non-paralinguistic politeness which is merely expressed through gestures and no verbal signs. Similarly, linguistic politeness is distinguished into metalinguistic politeness which aims at establishing and maintaining social contact by avoiding any kind of social tension and non-metalinguistic politeness which is commonly understood as linguistic politeness. However, by considering the abundant literature available on politeness, nonlinguistic politeness has been surprisingly overlooked.

At the time that social interaction functions as the primordial means through which the business of social world transacted, the identities of its participants are affirmed or denied, and its culture is transmitted, renewed, and modified (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990), no politeness attitude is needed without social interacting; for being polite or impolite, in such a case, is unrecognized. Moreover, on recognizing that verbal and nonverbal interactions are two parts of an intricate system working together in a symbiotic manner to create meaning (Knapp, Hall, &



Horgan, 2014), there is still a need to examine the extent of politeness in these interactions non-linguistically as well as linguistically.

Thus to effectively handle social interactions in a way that establishes social relationships and maintains harmony between people; at the time in which language use is a matter of probabilities, either verbal language or nonverbal language (Jumanto, 2014), interlocutors do not only have to handle both languages but rather have to match what they say with how they say it. Accordingly, this study aims at investigating the phenomenon of politeness linguistically as well as non-linguistically by measuring the extent to which the co-occurring of verbal expressions and nonverbal behaviors (mis)matches affect perceiving a complete attitude of (im)politeness in relation to the three social variables of gender, social distance, and power

2. Review of the Literature

In social discourses, a great deal of interpersonal interactions has been more likely accomplished through nonverbal means of communication that allow for messages to be conveyed, emotions to be expressed, and fruitful relationships to be established and maintained (Calero, 2005; Wharton, 2009). However, on misemploying these nonverbal aspects of communication or mismatching them with what has been intended to be said and expressed, they can, contrarily, misinterpret the semantic meaning and reverse the pragmatic effect of the uttered speech (Ambady et al., 1996; Culpeper, 2011; Beattie & Sale, 2012; Brown & Winter, 2018). It is hypothesized that co-speech nonverbal behaviors, those nonverbal behaviors that co-occur with speech, can be performed in a way through which they minimize, soften, and beautify the force of the speech to save H's face and hence maintain social relationships or, on the contrary,



can be performed in a way through which they maximize or even reverse the force of that speech to threaten H's face and hence break-down those relationships.

Taking this hypothesis into account, some studies have been found to tackle various means of nonverbal behaviors, whether on their presence with the verbal means of communication or not, to feature their influence on the interpretation of the uttered speech and consequently on the perception of politeness or impoliteness attitudes. To mention, Ambady et al.'s (1996) study is the first to judge the validity of investigating politeness non-linguistically through examining some nonverbal channels as gaze, facial expressions, and tone of voice to find that these nonverbal means can manifest politeness, both when co-occurring with speech and when isolating from it. Similarly, Culpeper's (2011) findings reveal how prosody functions in evoking on-record impoliteness and in recalling off-record impoliteness. Beattie and Sale (2012) find that the speaker's integrity and likeability are influenced largely by the matches and the mismatches of the verbal expressions and their co-occurring metaphoric gestures. Additionally, through the nonverbal cues of facial expressions, body orientations and positions, manual gestures and touching, Brown and Winter (2018) outline the non-verbal features of doing deference and performing intimacy regarding Korean context.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory



In spite of being one of the most controversial theories in the field of pragma-linguistics, Brown and Levinson's (1978/1987) Politeness Theory (PT) remains the most influential, most known, and most extensive approach to the study of politeness, as Goldsmith (2013) argues that Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory is universally praised for its excellent heuristic value and broad scope. Leech (2005) identifies it as "the most frequently cited publication on language and politeness" (p. 2). According to Harris (2003), Politeness Theory "has attained canonical status, exercised immense influence, and is still the model against which research on politeness defines itself" (pp. 27-28). Furthermore, Mazid (2008) recognizes Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory to be "the most fully elaborated work on linguistic politeness, as it provides a systematic description of cross-linguistic politeness phenomena which is used to support an explanatory model capable of accounting for any instance of politeness" (p. 26).

Through their 1978 firstly published framework and its 1987 modified version, Brown and Levinson (henceforth B&L) propose a new perspective of politeness; politeness as a face saving. B&L center their theory on that of Goffman's (1967), in favor of whom the theme of 'face' is adopted in indicating politeness. Through defining face as "an image of self, delineated in terms of approved social attributes" (p. 5), Goffman (1967) is given the credit for being the first to introduce the concept of face and to declare its weight and necessity in any particular social interaction (Brunet, Cowie, Donnan, & Douglas-Cowie, 2012).

For a start, after Goffman's face being extended into their politeness framework, B&L redefine that notion into "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (p. 61). Furthermore, in arguing for the role of face in cooperating interactions, and maintaining



relationships, they confirm that “face is something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to interaction” (p. 61).

In this respect, B&L distinguish two types of faces and hence two types of politeness: *Negative Face* and *Positive Face*. They identify negative face as “the want of every ‘competent adult member’ that his actions be unimpeded by others” (p. 62), in other words, “it is the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction – i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition” (p. 61). Trying to simplify it, Brown (2015) reintroduces negative politeness as that kind of politeness that arises whenever “what is about to be said may be unwelcome, prompting expressions of respect and restraint avoidance” (p. 326). On the other hand, they view positive face as “the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others” (p. 62). Similarly, positive face is “the positive consistent self-image or ‘personality’ (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants” (p. 61). In a similar way, Brown (2015) re-identifies positive politeness as that kind of politeness which arises from “the fact that long term relationships with people can be important in taking their feelings into account, prompting expressions of social closeness, caring, and approval” (p. 326).

3.1.1 Strategies for Doing FTAs

Emphasizing on the importance of ‘face-saving’ as “it is the traffic rules of social interactions” (Goffman, 1967, p. 12), B&L feature some certain speech acts that inherently and intrinsically threaten that ‘face-saving’ of either the hearer (H) and/or of the speaker (S) by acting in opposition to the wants and the desires of the other throughout social interactions. These acts are termed as *Face-Threatening Acts* (henceforth FTAs) and defined as “acts which



run contrary to the addressee's and/or the speaker's positive or negative face" (p. 65). These FTAs are "intrinsically threatening to face and thus require 'softening'" (p. 24). Although these acts are verbal, they can also be expressed or conveyed nonverbally through tones and inflections or in any nonverbal forms of communication. Consequently, B&L indicate that "by 'act' we have in mind what is intended to be done by verbal or nonverbal communication, just as one or more 'speech act' can be assigned to an utterance" (p. 65).

B&L claim that any speech act has the potential to threaten the face of either S or H. Accordingly, FTAs are categorized in regard to which and whose face is threatened. Hence, there are two ways for classifying FTAs: by whether S's face or H's face is mainly threatened, or by whether it is mainly positive face or negative face that is at stake (p. 68). By putting pressure on H, there are acts that threaten H's negative face which include ordering, requesting, suggesting, advising, reminding, threatening, warning, daring, offering, promising, complimenting, expressing envy or admiration, and expressing strong negative emotions. Acts threatening S's negative face include accepting an offer, accepting thanks, and promising unwillingly. (pp. 65-66).

Similarly, B&L distinguish speech acts that threaten the positive face of both S and H. The acts threatening H's positive face encompass the expressions of disapproval, disagreements, accusations, interruptions, criticism, contempt or ridicule, complaints and reprimands, insults, contradictions or disagreement, challenges, expressions of violent emotions, irreverence, mention of taboo topics, bringing bad news about H or good news about S, raising of dangerously emotional or divisive topics, interrupting H's talk, and use of address terms and



other status-marked identifications in initial encounters. The acts that threaten S's positive face include apologizing, accepting compliments, and confessing. (pp. 67-68)

Circumstances determining choice of strategy:

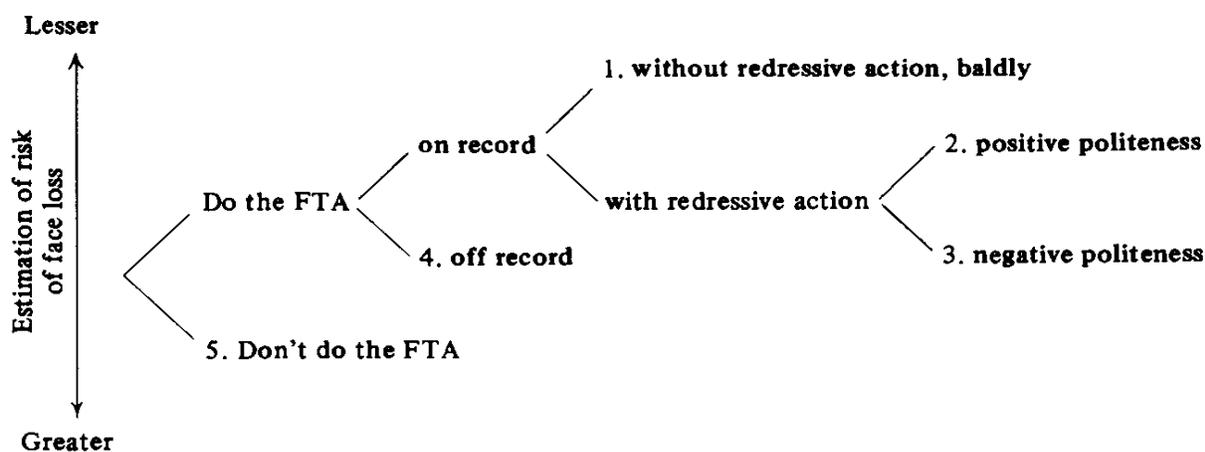


Figure 2. Possible strategies for doing FTAs

For dealing with FTAs, B&L suggest five possible strategic choices which Mazid (2008) features them as:

a continuum ranging from the least polite, least formal and most friendly to the most polite, most formal and least friendly- the less power, less distance and less imposition, the less polite; the more power and distance, the more polite. (p. 24)

Furthermore, Márquez-Reiter (2000) outlines that these five linguistic strategies “are ordered in terms of the degree of politeness involved. The risk of the loss of ‘face’ increases as one moves up the scale from 1 to 5; the greater the risk the more polite the strategy employed” (p. 14). B&L arrange them as follows:

1. Bald on-record: through this strategy, the risk of losing face is provided as nothing is taken to minimize the threat of the hearer's face. No redressive action is needed but rather S



approaches H in “the most direct, clear, unambiguous, and concise way possible” (p. 69). There is just “one unambiguously attributable intention with which witnesses would concur” (p. 69). Normally, an FTA is carried out in this way only if S does not fear retribution from H. This strategy is adopted in certain acts such as offers, requests, and suggestions where the danger to H’s face is very small and which are clearly in H’s interest and do not require great sacrifices of S (e.g., ‘Come in’ or ‘Do sit down’); and where politeness considerations are not of high weight when “S is vastly superior in power to H” (p. 69).

2. Positive politeness: No such intended or desired face threat is clearly indicated in this strategy. It is oriented toward the positive face of H, and the positive self-image that he claims for her/himself. Through this “approach-based” strategy, S recognizes that H has a desire to be respected and approved of (p. 70). Positive face redress appeals to solidarity to reduce the potential for criticism or rejection. This strategy, therefore, confirms the friendly and intimately relationship and expresses group reciprocity. B&L (1987) indicate that:

Positive politeness utterances are used as a kind of metaphorical extension of intimacy, to imply common ground or sharing of wants to a limited extent even between strangers who perceive themselves ... positive-politeness techniques are usable not only for FTA redress, but in general as a kind of social accelerator, where S, in using them, indicates that he wants to “come closer” to H. (p. 103)

Among the strategies used to achieve positive politeness are the use of in-group identity markers, compliments, seeking agreement, avoiding disagreement, joking, offering and promising, giving (or asking) for reasons, expressing sympathy, assuming or asserting reciprocity, and giving gifts to H.



3. Negative politeness: with attention to very restricted aspects of H's self-image and self-determination centering on H's want to be unimpeded, negative politeness "is oriented mainly towards satisfying and redressing H's negative face" (p. 70). This "avoidance-based" strategy allows S to express recognition of H's "want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded" (p. 129). By employing linguistic and non-linguistic deference, using hedges on the illocutionary force of the act, and impersonalizing and softening mechanisms, face-threatening acts are redressed keeping in this way H's face-saving.

4. Off-record: No risk of losing face is involved in such a strategy since the communicative act is done in such a way that it is not possible to attribute only one clear communicative intention to the act (p. 211). Through off-record option, S is out of committing himself to just one particular interpretation of her/his act since all kinds of hints "as to what a speaker wants or means to communicate, without doing so directly, so that the meaning is to some degree negotiable" (p. 69) are available. Accordingly, S avoids responsibility for the FTA as all hints and their interpretations are left to H.

5. Do not do the FTA: No thing is said or performed in such a strategy due to greatness of the risk of losing face. This option prevents S from performing the FTA and thus the threat of the H's face-losing is avoided.

3.1.2. The Social Variables

B&L (1987) suggest that the seriousness or the weightiness of an FTA is assessed with reference to some contextually dependent social factors. They distinguish the following three social variables that influence S's choice of a redressive action which in turn prevents or at least mitigates face-threats.



- 1. The social distance (D) of S and H.**
- 2. The relative power (P) of S and H.**
- 3. The absolute ranking (R) of imposition in the particular culture.**

For B&L, there is no need for handling any other factors as gender, age, status, ethnicity, friendship, or situational factors for identifying the redressive action since, for them; D, P, and R “subsume all others” (p. 80). Based on the assessment of the frequency of interaction and the exchanged material or non-material goods between S and H, they define the ‘D’ variable as “a symmetric social dimension of similarity/difference within which S and H stand for the purpose of this act” (pp. 76-77). Accordingly, D is measured by the degree of stability in social relationships. Thus, the more the relationship is close and stable, the more positive politeness is reciprocated.

The ‘P’ variable is viewed as “the degree to which H can impose his own plans and his own self-evaluation (face) at the expense of S’s plans and self-evaluation” (p. 77). In this regard, P is depicted for being either the material control over economic distribution and physical force, or the metaphysical control over the actions of others.

In the same vein, the ‘R’ variable is “a culturally and situationally defined ranking of impositions by the degree to which they are considered to interfere with an agent’s wants of self-determination or of approval (his negative- and positive-face wants)” (p. 77). Consequently, the impositions of acts can be ranked in proportion with the scale of service (including the provision of time) or the scale of goods (including non-material goods like information, and the expression of regard and other face payments).



Correspondingly, B&L (1978) argue that the higher P, D, and R values are distinguished, the more politeness is needed and the less FTA is assessed. In this regard, they suggest that negative strategies are more polite than positive ones. In spite of checking the validity of the social factors P and R in determining politeness assessments in many studies (e.g. Falbo & Peplau, 1980; Lustig & King, 1980; Cody, McLaughlin & Schneider, 1981; Baxter, 1984; Holtgraves, 1984) support in this way B&L's claim, the factor D has received argumentative debates in checking its effect on assessing politeness. As B&L (1987) themselves argue, the results of Holtgraves's (1984), Baxter's (1984), and Slugoski's (1985) studies reveal that the more familiarity and closeness between the participants are checked, the greater politeness is encoded. Therefore, B&L (1987) sum up that "P, D, and R are composite categories which are compounded of culturally specific factors" (p. 16).

4. Methodology

This study aims at investigating the phenomenon of politeness linguistically as well as non-linguistically by measuring the extent to which the co-occurring of verbal expressions and nonverbal behaviors (mis)matches affect perceiving a complete attitude of (im)politeness through analyzing the social interactions of offering and responding to congratulations, condolences and consolations in relation to gender, social distance, and power. The study under investigation takes up three of the most rated and popular social Egyptian television series, namely *Al Du:ʔ El-Shaarid* (Stray Light, 1998), *Lann Aʕi:sh fi Gilbab Aby* (Falling Far from My Father's Shadow, 1996), and *El-Watad* (The Wedge), as its sources for collecting data. Through adopting the participant observation technique by which "the researcher observes a particular aspect of human behavior with as much objectivity as possible and records the data" (Williams,



2007, p. 67), 248 televised Egyptian verbal and nonverbal interactions are analyzed through Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory.

It is worth noting that movie and television industry is a highly recognized genre of art that is shaped by and shapes the society which in turn affects and is affected by such an industry. Recently, televised shows have been marked as an area of rich data for using in investigating verbal and nonverbal (im)politeness (e.g. Culpeper, 2005; Bousfield, 2008; Barke, 2010; Brown, 2013; Brown & Winter, 2018) since these televised shows deliberately arrange symbolic elements that invoke, influence and affect one or more of the viewers' emotions, senses and intellects. In addition, these kinds of shows broadly feature "a rich range of (im)politeness-related contexts...which can be difficult to capture in recordings of authentic interactions" (Brown & Winter, 2018, p. 31).

5. Data Analysis and Results

5.1. Gender and politeness: Speech-Behavior Matches and Mismatches

In the 248 interactions under investigation, whether in congratulating or condoling/consoling contexts, these verbal expressions and nonverbal behaviors of giving and responding to congratulations and condolences/consolations are exchanged between either male to male (MM), female to female (FF), male to female (MF), or female to male (FM). It is found that the distributions of the interactions among these four pairs of gender are uneven. As shown in Table 1, the dominance is for the interactions between MM (54.9%), then FF (18.5%), then MF (15.7%), and lastly FM (10.9%).

On measuring speech-behavior matches and mismatches in the given interactions regarding these four pairs of gender, the highest percentage of matches (87.5%) and the lowest



percentage of mismatches (12.5%), are found in the interactions between MM interlocutors. On the contrary, the lowest percentage of speech-behavior matches (76.6%) and the highest percentage of speech-behavior mismatches (23.1%) are recognized in MF interactions. Meanwhile, in the interactions between FM and FF interlocutors, speech-behavior matches and mismatches are found on average considering the previous percentages with (85.2%, 14.8%) and (82.6 %, 17.4), respectively.

Table 1: Matches and Mismatches Distribution Relating to Gender

Gender	Interactions		Matches		Mismatches	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
MM	136	54.9%	119	87.5%	17	12.5%
FF	46	18.5%	38	82.6%	8	17.4%
MF	39	15.7%	30	76.9%	9	23.1%
FM	27	10.9%	23	85.2%	4	14.8%
Total	248	100%	210		38	

5.1.1. Matches and Mismatches Frequency in Male and Female Interactions

In accounting for the male to female (MF) interactions against the interactions of female to male (FM) as declared in Table 8, female interlocutors in their dealing with male interlocutors are more realized for the importance of matching their verbal speech with the accompanied nonverbal behaviors (85.2%) than the male interlocutors do when interacting with female interlocutors (76.9%). Accordingly the matches of the speech-behavior are realized more in the female interactions than in the male interactions when interacting with cross-gender.

Table 2: Matches and Mismatches Frequency in Males and Females Interactions

Cross-Gender	Interactions		Matches		Mismatches	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
MF	39	15.7%	30	76.9%	9	23.1%



FM	27	10.9%	23	85.2%	4	14.8%
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5.1.2. Same-Gender versus Cross-Gender in Conducting Politeness

On comparing the verbal and nonverbal expressions of congratulations and condolences /consolations given to and/or received from the same gender with those which are given to and/or received from the opposite gender, it is found that the percentage of speech-behavior matching is higher in the interactions between same-gender interlocutors than in those between cross-gender interlocutors rating 86.3%: 80.3% respectively.

Table 3: Matches and Mismatches in Same-Gender vs. Cross-Gender Interactions

Gender	Interactions		Matches		Mismatches	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Same-Gender MM + FF	182	73.4%	157	86.3%	25	13.7%
Cross-Gender MF + FM	66	26.6%	53	80.3%	13	19.7%
Total	248	100%	210		38	

5.2. Social Distance and Politeness: Speech-Behavior Matches and Mismatches

Of the chosen scenes, congratulating and condoling/consoling attitudes are exchanged either between close interlocutors as relatives, friends, and colleagues or between distant acquaintance interlocutors. As shown in (Table 4), the more closeness and intimacy found between interlocutors are checked, the more speech-behavior matches are to be revealed, and the less speech-behavior mismatches are realized; since the percentages of matches and mismatches in the interactions involving close interlocutors are respectively (81.1%), (18.9%) while the percentages of matches and mismatches in the interactions involving distant interlocutors are respectively (76.3%), (23.7%).



Table 1: Matches and Mismatches Distribution Relating to Social Distance

Social Distance	Scene Clips		Matches		Mismatches	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Close	127	76.97%	103	81.1%	24	18.9%
Distant	38	23.03%	29	76.3%	9	23.7%
Total	165	100%	132		33	

5.3. Power and Politeness: Speech-Behavior Matches and Mismatches

Through the extracted scenes, the interlocutors interact with either equal-status, superior-status, or inferior-status interlocutors. Consequently, the distributions of speech-behavior matches and mismatches are affected by the degree of social power these interlocutors have upon others. Accordingly, as (Table 5) shows, the highest percentage of speech-behavior matches (93.2%) is scored in the interactions of inferiors when interacting with superiors. On the contrary, the highest percentage of speech-behavior mismatches (23.8%) is realized in the interactions of superiors when dealing with inferiors, whilst the percentages of verbal and nonverbal matches and mismatches in the interactions carried out between equal-status interlocutors are found to be with an average level from the mentioned percentages.

Table 2: Matches and Mismatches Distribution Relating to Social Power

Power	Interactions		Matches		Mismatches	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Inferior-Superior	73	29.4%	68	93.2%	5	6.8%
Equals	91	36.7%	78	85.7%	13	14.3%
Superior-Inferior	84	33.9%	64	76.2%	20	23.8%
Total	248	100%	210		38	

6. Discussion

6.1. Gender and Politeness: Speech-Behavior Matches and Mismatches



To a large extent, politeness attitudes perceived from speech-behavior matching in the previously tackled interactions are found to be highly influenced by the disparity of the social variables of gender, social distance and power among Egyptian interlocutors. Concerning the gender variable, politeness in Egyptian context is recognized differently between, on the one hand, same-gender and cross-gender interlocutors, and on the other hand, in males and females interactions. As related to the frequency of speech-behavior matching between same-gender versus cross-gender interlocutors, the results show that on interacting with the same-gender (MM or FF), the interlocutors are found to be more likely matching their verbal speech with the co-occurring nonverbal behaviors than when interacting with the cross-gender (MF or FM). This case can be justified in relation to the socio-cultural considerations of the Arab Islamic culture, that according to which, the social intimate nonverbal interactions are highly codified among the members of the other cross-gender (Mazid, 2006; Al-Marrani & Sazalie, 2010; Ahmed & Ghaffori, 2019). With reference to the Arab Islamic identity of the Egyptian contexts exhibited in the provided data, this codification is evidenced initially in the distribution of the interactions between the two genders. As shown in (Table 3), (73.4%) from the interactions occur between interlocutors of the same-gender while only (26.6%) from the interactions occur between interlocutors of the cross-gender that are mostly relatives. In addition, the frequency of speech-behavior matches is found more in the interactions occurred between the interlocutors of the same-gender as they have more freedom to interact in intimate nonverbal behaviors. Meanwhile, many of these nonverbal behaviors as direct eye-contact, touching, and close body postures are avoided in the cross-gender social encounters. Therefore, they appear to be mismatched with the verbal expressions. On comparing males with females in cross-gender interactions, female



interlocutors are found to be more polite (Lakoff, 1975; Holmes, 1995) as they are more carefully to match their speech with the culturally allowed nonverbal behaviors than males when interacting with cross-gender interlocutors. Again, on regarding the cultural considerations, this is can be justified in the light of Arabic social traditions that restrict males' nonverbal interacting with females unless they (females) begin (Mazid, 2006).

6.2. Social Distance and Politeness: Speech-Behavior Matches and Mismatches

Concerning the social distance between S and H in the analyzed interactions, the results prove an inverse proportion between the variable of social distance and the social politeness attitudes perceived from speech-behavior matching among Egyptian interlocutors. As it is shown, the more the interlocutors are close and the less social distance is distinguished between them, the more speech-behavior matches are to be exchanged and thus more politeness attitudes are to be conceived. This result conflicts with that claim of B&L (1987) in which politeness is more required whenever the social distance between the interlocutors extends. On the other hand, this result is in agreement with many of Holtgraves's (1984), Baxter's (1984), and Slugoski's (1985) (cited in B&L, 1987) findings in which they display different reviews to B&L's settled model of politeness for the variable "D" when revealing that interlocutors are more polite when being more intimate and close. Additionally, for the purpose of her "Bulge Theory", Wolfson (1986) argues for the role that D carries out for maintaining relationships in a speech behavior community when she states that "of all compliments, no matter what their topic, the great majority occur between status equals among whom the potential for lessening of social distance exists" (p. 75). Furthermore, great weight is put on the values of solidarity and group belongings in the Arab speech behavior community (Al-Samarra'i, 2015, 2017). Hence, according to the



Egyptians' social interactions dealt with, it is found that the perceived politeness attitudes are more related to the degree of familiarity and solidarity that the interlocutors have with each other. This is characterized by the frequency of speech-behavior matches in the interactions between close interlocutors, whether they are relatives, friends, neighbors or colleagues to maintain social relationships, more than in the interactions between strangers.

6.3. Power and Politeness: Speech-Behavior Matches and Mismatches

With regard to social power, and despite the religious and collective nature of Arab culture that places great weight on equality, solidarity, and group values, Arab societies exhibit an unequal distribution of power (Al-Omari, 2008; Al-Samarrai, 2015). As related to the current Egyptian contexts, the results reflect a kind of hierarchical distribution of social power among interlocutors that comes up with three statuses of relationships in the provided data: inferior-superior, equals, and superior-inferior statuses, and that further shapes differences in conveying and receiving politeness among these statuses. To begin with, the perceived verbal and nonverbal politeness attitudes, whether in congratulating or condoling/consoling contexts, are found to be intimately reciprocated through the frequent speech-behavior matches of the interlocutors with equal power statuses. Even in distinguishing some speech-behavior mismatches, H's face is noticed to be not highly threatened by virtue of the subsistence of deep solidarity and intimacy among equal-status interlocutors. The results also show that the inferior-status interlocutors are the more who frequently employ politeness attitudes whether by their verbal expressions, or nonverbal behaviors, or both by speech-behavior matches when socially interacting with superior-status interlocutors. Inferiors, either as speakers or hearers, have less freedom to threaten the superior-status H's desires of being respected and appreciated and so have less



opportunity to mismatch their verbal expressions with the co-occurring nonverbal behaviors in the tackled data contexts even if, in inferior-status Hs' cases, they have not experienced such speech-behavior matches in superiors' actions. As (Table 5) shows, only 6.8% from inferior-status interactions are found to convey speech-behavior mismatched attitudes whereas the percentage of mismatches is found to be increased in superior-status interactions (23.8%). According to what B&L (1987) outline for power as being "the metaphysical control over the actions of others" (p. 77), it is normal for inferiors to be influenced by the superiors' social power and for their verbal and nonverbal interactions to appear in non-threatening and non-mismatching patterns in the case of this study. On the other hand, by being engaged in posing social power nonverbally (Carney, Hall, & LeBeau, 2005), superiors have more freedom in using nonverbal behaviors that may sometimes conflict with the inferiors' desires and wants. This case is marked in the provided findings in which, in spite of uttering the expected verbal expressions, the nonverbal behaviors of the superior-status interlocutors in (23.8%) of their interactions with inferior-status interlocutors are realized to be inappropriate and employed to be mismatched with the verbal expressions and with the overall contexts of whether congratulation or consolation. Consequently, they threaten the perception of politeness attitudes in such contexts.

Conclusion

This study aims at identifying the influence of speech-behavior matching on the perception of social politeness attitudes through the investigation of some Egyptians' social interactions. The main result is that the perception of social attitudes of politeness associated with Egyptian context is characterized in the multimodal realization and manipulation of the relevant patterns of nonverbal politeness together with the forms of verbal politeness.



Based on the multimodal quantitative and qualitative analyses of the verbal expressions and their co-occurring nonverbal behaviors associated with the speech acts of congratulation, condolence, and consolation in three Egyptian social television series, the results indicate that positive politeness can only be accomplished in offering and responding to congratulations by speech-behavior matches. In such contexts, any mismatch in the speech-behavior, regardless of the verbal politeness implied in the uttered speech, can be negatively interpreted as a sign of jealousy or dissatisfaction that positively functions in realizing impoliteness which on its part destroys the maintenance of social relationships and thus conflicts with the essential social goal of congratulation as a speech act. Similarly, in condolence and consolation interactions, as in congratulation, a complete attitude of politeness is perceived in the interactions at which the verbal expressions of sharing sympathy match with the sad co-occurring nonverbal behaviors drawn by S and/or H. In this respect, a complete positive attitude of politeness will be achieved when matching the verbal speech with the nonverbal behaviors. However, not all mismatches are impolite. In relation to Egyptian context, expressing empathy for consolation attitudes can be positively accomplished by speech-behavior mismatches when uttering consoling verbal expressions in cheerful, instead of sorrowful, nonverbal behaviors that are not only non-threatening for H's face but rather, thanks to these mismatches, H's face is saved.

Moreover, the perception of politeness, when matching its verbal forms (speech) with its nonverbal patterns (behaviors), is recognized to be highly influenced by the disparity of the social factors of gender, social distance, and power among the Egyptian interlocutors in the provided contextual interactions. On regarding the socio-Islamic cultural aspect of Egyptian society, speech-behavior matches are more broadly realized in same-gender social interactions



than in cross-gender social interactions. In relation to the factor of social distance in Egyptian context, the more the interlocutors are close and intimate, the more speech-behavior matches are to be distinguished and thus the more politeness attitudes are to be perceived. Again, the unequal distribution of social power among the Egyptian interlocutors appears to highly influence the distribution of speech-behavior matches and mismatches among them where the more the interlocutor has social power over the others, the more likely S/he conveys speech-behavior mismatch. However, the opposite is completely true that the less the interlocutor has power over the others, the more likely S/he is keen to match what S/he says with how S/he says it.

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