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Gender and Politeness Negotiation on the Net: A Case Study of the Facebook

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Statement of Originality

I, Cherifa Benkaddour, declare that my thesis entitled ‘Gender and Politeness Negotiaon on the Net: Acase stdy of Facebook’, has not been previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any academic degree or diploma except where due references are made. This thesis is my own work.

June11th, 2021

Mrs. Benkaddour Cherifa

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Abstract

The general aim of this thesis is to investigate how (im) politeness is negotiated in relation to gender in online forum communications bearing in mind the fact of anonymity. In particular, this study looks at the way in which male, female, and neutral nicknamed participants use language (im) polite forms according to online setting they find themselves in. In this attempt in to investigate the negotiation of (im) politeness according to gender online, we employed the Computer Mediated Discourse Analysis in relation to politeness theories. So we had to take into consideration the online setting, the participants' meta discourse, and other contextual factors such as anonymity. We utilized the analytical framework of discursive approaches to politeness research and interactional approach by Arundale (1999, 2006). This research study shows that (im) politeness use online has a tight relationship with the context of situation of the online setting the participants find themselves in. So, politeness use can dominate even when the participants are anonymous, unlike previous literature claims such as Herring (2004). Thus, in cases of profitability from their own forums or blogs, the participants find themselves sticking to politeness use where they have to ignore the impolite language directed to them in public. Also, this fact has no relation to gender in the sense that gender plays no role in politeness online when the participants' first goal is to improve his profitability. By contrast, in other forums such as those of delivering news, impoliteness dominates the comments of the participants of both male and female nicknamed participants. This is due to the factor of anonymity which reduces social accountability. Also, confirming previous literature, it has also been found that males use a lot of impoliteness whenever a problem of gender inequality is raised. In this study, the gender inequality problem is mostly discussed with reference to religion and not gender identity differences between the two sexes. This thesis proposes further research in the methodology of research in politeness studies especially in the elicitation of first order politeness of a certain community practice.

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General Introduction

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The focal point of this study is to investigate politeness and impoliteness negotiation at the level of discussion boards, namely a news forum and a technical one. The technological development and progress in the Internet have facilitated the problem of communication for people of different parts of the world. Computer mediated communication has reduced the long distances and times making communication easier than ever before via the development of various communication methods such as e-mail, instant messenger, weblogs, Internet forums, Facebook, and Twitter. Although voice-over-Internet protocol (VoIP) seems more interesting, Herring (2010) claims that text-based computer mediated communication remains more popular.

Computer mediated communication (CMC) comprises both modes of communication; the synchronous and the asynchronous. Forum communication belongs to the latter mode of communication. Discussion board communication serves for multiple things. It generally gathers people, mainly of the same interest, to discuss and exchange information, etc. In online forum communication, people have got the opportunity to express their views, feelings either through texting or nonverbal language use such as (animated pictures), videotapes, emoticons, etc. In this respect, users' content of posts or comments on discussion boards might be in a verbal form (using words), non-verbal (pictures, emoticons, videos, etc.), and para-verbal (e.g., using italic or bold letters, word lengthening, etc.). This is referred to as *multimodal* content since the given information is based on different codes (cf. Weidenmann 2002, p.47).

One of the general characteristics of computer mediated communication and forums specifically is anonymity and hence less politeness use. News forums are mostly featured by impolite behavior and this phenomenon is "not only common to newspaper comments but is in line with what researchers have discovered as feature of many scenes of CMC in the use of disrespectful and aggressive behavior in the cyberspace (Doring, 2003). However, the moderators have got the option of eliminating non appropriate comments before publishing and usually there is a limit with regard to the length of the post.

In forum communication, users have to fill in a box of dialogue with some of their information such as name, sex, date of birth, post code and email and accept terms of use of the forum. Some of the users opt to enter their own information but most of them opt for using unreal nicknames which reveal nothing about their true identity. Under this kind of nicknames, Internet users feel safe with being anonymous and can express their

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feelings and opinions freely; something they would probably not dare to say in public. It also conceals other problems such as lack of precision in content and form. Users of the internet can bring false information, post it, and can be less caring about the writing form and style. In most cases, as researchers claim, some users hide behind their nicknames to attack their addressees. If the real names of these users appeared, they would change their verbal attacks considerably. Also, if they think their benefits would be affected, as I will demonstrate in the last chapter, they would not use impoliteness carelessly even being anonymous and with no respect of being a male or female user.

This study aims at investigating politeness and impoliteness negotiation in online forums in relation to the social parameter of gender. Since communication via discussion boards is online, then anonymity plays a vital role in shaping the linguistic (im) polite behavior of the users. In this respect, I am going to see the extent to which the use of impoliteness and politeness is related to the context users find themselves in whether being male or female online.

This research aims to gain understanding about how politeness and impoliteness are negotiated in discussion boards in relation to gender. The interplay between computer-mediated communication, gender and language is explored by unpacking the use and meaning of (im) politeness carried out in the discourse between the participants.

The use of (im) politeness in this research is explored by means of such qualitative data as content analysis of documented pages of the two forums under study. By carrying out a computer mediated discourse analysis of the participants' comments online, this research tries to "look beyond the texts of interaction to the broader contextual dynamics that shape and are shaped by those texts" (Warschauer & Kern 2000, p. 15). In this respect, this study intends to explore politeness use in the participants' comments not only by analysing the syntactic construction of the sentences, but it also looks at the relevant factors which come to influence and/or form the (im) polite linguistic behaviour, such as the interactants' goals and benefits, and what they expect from the use of politeness.

The aims of the research are stated below:

- 1- To see the reasons behind the use of both politeness and impoliteness in the comments.
- 2- To see the relationship between politeness and gender online.

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3- To get clearer picture on anonymity online and language use.

In light of the above cited aims, the specific questions addressed by the thesis are presented below:

1- To what extent is language impoliteness present in forum communication because of anonymity?

My first hypothesis is to that one could use impoliteness in fora without being punished thanks to anonymity, however, when he needs information about blogging or whatever his/ her aim should be, he/she is found to use a lot of politeness cues.

I observed some politeness use in forums although anonymously by some users. Some online participants continue to behave politely even when they are distant and unknown. This comes to subtract from the general view claiming for impoliteness prevalence and dominance in online community practices due to the unknown backgrounds of participants (Herring, 1994; Kleinde & Bös, 2015). What is specifically focused on here is the detection of politeness and impoliteness linguistic use in the comments in response to the different posts in the technical forum. By contrast to the technical forum, the news one is characterized by offensive verbal attacking language on the part of its commentators.

2. How is gender related to online politeness and impoliteness in discussion boards?

The second hypothesis of this is that context is central. In this respect, gender does not play a role in polite and impolite behaviour if the aim of the user is to make profits online.

This question is worth studying since participation behind a screen using textual type of communication deprives others from recognizing the participants to be male or female. The addition of this parameter to online discussion board examination is quite complicated and needs thorough analysis to understand. In the first case of technical forum, profitability is central to the bloggers who participate in this forum and this makes these choose to be polite for their own benefit with no respect of being male or female. Concerning the news forum, gender has been approached differently since the situation is different.

3. When do users opt for politeness although being anonymous?

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My hypothesis here is the relevance of the context of situation also. That is to say, any anonymous user online who has aims like money making, publicizing, etc has to use a lot of politeness behaviour though unknown to other participants.

This question is also worth of analysis since I observed that anonymity cannot only be related to impoliteness use but to politeness use too. This, as will be later seen in the last chapter, is due to the nature of the online context the users find themselves in. In this respect, I observed that some unknown participants of the technical forum choose to use politeness cues to publicize for their own blogs in the forum. So, even unknown and anonymous through just nicknames, the profitability they can get from the other users of the forum induces them to select better polite linguistic forms to get their benefits. So, the question is to see the negotiation of politeness use in the discussion board on the part of the participants to attain certain aims.

4. To what extent are females attacked in anonymous forum community practices?

The last hypothesis is that females can be attacked verbally as exactly as in offline situations.

This question is worth analyzing because gender is a social parameter that cannot be ignored whether online or offline. This is due to the sensibility of this social factor that shows radical differences between the two genders. Attacks, whether verbal or other, from one gender to another is a normal fact that happens between the two sexes. Hence, any problem raised because of the fact of gender inequality, attacks from one gender on another is expected. Thus, due to gender inequality, offensiveness and impoliteness in verbal attacks is a normative way of linguistic behavior.

For this research project, a number of 75 participants who commented were put under analysis in the technical forum and a number of 318 comments have been analyzed from the news forum. In this the project, quantitative data was collected, namely content analysis. The data was analyzed primarily on the basis of the theoretical frameworks of interactional approach (Arundale, 2006) of politeness theory and discursive research to politeness study. The investigation of discussion boards' interactions also considered issues such as the role of this particular mediating technology (forums), the aims of participants and other contextual factors.

This research investigates how politeness linguistic behavior is formed in interactions via the online setting of forums. It is my view, according to previous

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literature that gender and language behaviour are interrelated elements. They are of equal importance in this communication research. In this sense, gender and politeness involve the embedded values which may or may not influence people's online communication and language performance. Thus politeness negotiation is absolutely related to the context of situation in online community practices the participants find themselves in. On the basis of these given facts, the only way to gain more in-depth understanding of the negotiation of politeness is through the investigation of documents which is based on content analysis approach of research method. In line with this fact, I want to unpack the process of politeness linguistic formations through the investigations of the male and female participants' comments in online forum communication.

This model of communication puts more emphasis on the sociological aspect. Grainger (2011) claims that the 'interactional approach cannot be said to contrast with either the postmodern approach or the Gricean approach since it overlaps with both'. That is to say, the interactional approach includes both the classic and postmodern viewpoints in their analysis of (im) politeness. With regard to the ways of (im) politeness analysis, Haugh (2007) proposes that we should focus on the ways in which participants interpret, understand, analyze, negotiate and evaluate one another's verbal conduct while shown in the details of what they say when they respond. This should be done in taking into consideration the perspective of first-order politeness (politeness1, i.e., interpreted by the interactants /interlocutors) in the interpretation and evaluation of politeness and then have them cross-checked by an analyst. The researcher can further consult the participants for post facto evaluations and interpret them in terms of an analytical framework.

So as to understand what goes on concerning politeness at a first order level, Kleinde and Bos (2015), suggest that the researcher should take into consideration the metapragmatics of politeness at the level of the forum. The notion of met a pragmatics, as explained by Herring, has the meaning of the way politeness is spoken about by the community practice. By adopting the discursive approach where politeness norms are seen and analysed constantly as constructed in discourse, we must put in mind that linguistic behavior which might be considered as rude by outsiders of certain communities could be understood as perfectly appropriate by the participants themselves; that is 'politic behaviour' in Watts' sense (2003). Hence, discursive researchers suggest follow up interviews with participants to see politeness from a first order level. Nevertheless and as Culpeper (2011) claims, we assume that there exist a

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set of conventional norms which allow people of an outside context to make judgments about certain expressions. These often coincide with categories of impoliteness established in theoretical models by researchers of politeness. However, the question of how 'politic or polite behaviour' and 'offensiveness' can be verified in the conversational context of an anonymous public online discussion, where participants do not always respond to an interpreted linguistic behavior as offensive.

Computer mediated communication has given the opportunity to people to communicate across reduced time and space (Iivonen et al., 1998). CMC has got a variety of activities such as email, twitter, facebook, and forum communication. Discussion boards, as an asynchronous method of communication has enabled people from different geographical areas to discuss different subjects with one another across space and time. With the emergence of this developed means of communication of forums, a lot of researchers have attempted to analyse its language and a significant amount of research has been done on it (e.g., Largier, 2002; Marcoccia, 2004; Maricic, 2005; Tanskanen, 2007; Angouri & Tseliga, 2010; Kleinke, 2010). What makes discussion for a particularly interesting is their dynamic nature as self-organising communities where individual and group identities as well as communicative norms are displayed and negotiated. Rudeness and offensiveness figures prominently in many of these for a characterize most of them. Especially in online fora on political topics and those news forums, the subjects published are open to public discussions. Not only are these asynchronous, polylogal, and usually anonymous in character, they are also broad and show a high degree of emotional involvement. For the reason of sparking debate and discussion, topics are mostly intentionally controversial and thus attract and inspire weak to strong forms of disagreement (Kleinke 2012; Angouri & Tseliga, 2010).

Other cases of forum discussion boards, as the first case of this study shows, have proved the reverse in the sense that politeness linguistic behavior is a remarkably dominating feature of this online discussion context.

In order to gain more in-depth and comprehensive understanding of politeness negotiation and gender via discussion boards, analysis should focus on the nature of the online context that is put under study and explore how male and female individuals adapt their language use to suit this online context.

This thesis aims to shed light on the negotiation of politeness according to gender in forums and see how the individuals take the context of situation of the forum type

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they use to achieve certain aims by using language forms according to their benefits. This discursive and interactional study could provide some explanations to some ambiguities online, namely the existence of politeness in some forums like technical ones and its absence from other ones such as news forums. Thus, this study takes into consideration the context of situation and sees even the outer factors of this context, as will be demonstrated later in the last chapter. This means that one has to take into concern the met a pragmatics in and out of the forums to understand the language behavior of the users.

For the purpose of exploring CMC communication via forums, the only way to do this was to get a sample data from this kind of communicating system. I studied two discussion fora, one is technical and the second is a news forum. Since gender is a central parameter in the study, I divided, as it was found, the participants into three categories according to their nicknames. The first is the male nicknamed participants and the second is the female nicknamed participants. The third category shows no kind of gender in the choice of their nicks; so I called them neutral nicknamed participants. The language used in these two forums is the Arabic language in relation to a small rate of English. The users of these two forum communications differ from one another. Therefore, the users of the first technical forum under study are mostly bloggers who seek information about how to set up a blog for oneself and develop it in order to work through it. The second news forum gathers participants of different kinds but mostly interested in knowing what happens in the world and their countries.

Since all the interactions took place in computer-mediated discourse, the research site is an online setting, where the participants could contribute with their discussions in interacting from anywhere in the world. The participants in the technical forum commented with a small quantity of posts in every thread in the forum; their posts were mostly confined to only thanking and praising the author of the post giving information about blogging. The number of the responses to the posts studied in the one thread did not go beyond ten comments. Also it was very a synchronic in the sense that the comments were separated with long periods of time surpassing the month sometimes. However, the news forum's comments studied surpassed three hundred posts in a short time which did not go beyond the three days. In light of the research aims to explore politeness negotiation in relation to gender in forums, the investigation emphasizes on the context of computer-mediated communication, rather than the physical context where the participants composed and typed their comments. The environmental and

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physical facts are beyond the scope of this research for the participants as they read and wrote their comments. The objective of the research was to unpack the complex meaning of politeness negotiation in relation to gender in CMC from a discursive and interactional perspective. Hence, along with the comments on the posts in the forums studied, I have the aim of focusing on investigating the negotiation of (im) politeness and gender in the language used by the users of these forums. This should take into consideration the anonymity factor that influences the male and female participants; to what extent; how; etc. So, I designed and conducted the present research with this research focus in mind. In the next section, I give an overview of the thesis, attempting to introduce its structure.

This General introduction has presented the research aims and research questions of the whole study. Generally speaking, this research is concerned with the negotiation of politeness and impoliteness by the male, female, and neutral nicknamed users in a completely anonymous and asynchronous online context of situation which is discussion boards. Specifically, this research aims to investigate how the participants in discussion boards shape their linguistic behaviour in the use of (im) politeness to achieve certain aims. This research developed its analytical framework on the basis of the interactional theory (Arundale 2006) and the discursive theory to politeness research (Eelen 1999). The two approaches formed the structure of the data analysis and are not used discretely. The first chapter is a general introduction to the whole study of language and gender as well as its theorization since the past, moving by feminist theories and viewpoints, to the current developed status of identity and gender identity, etc. that shape most of the theories of language and gender. The second chapter gives a deep literature review and a detailed discussion of the key notions in this research, namely, computer mediated communication in forums, the discursive and interactional theories of politeness and the related empirical research. Following the literature review of the key concepts, the methodological framework and the actual design of the research project are introduced in the third Chapter. The interactional approach of online discourse analysis is used as the main theoretical and methodological frameworks of this research. It is enhanced by the discursive approach to politeness analysis. The research methods are both qualitative and quantitative in collecting the comments. In the fourth chapter, I investigate the participants' comments of both the technical and the news forums so as to see how participants negotiate politeness through the language forms they use. I took into consideration the parameter of gender and anonymity which

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can conceal the gender of the forum participant. As a result of this we find another category of commentators which is neither female nor male, and I called them neutral nicknamed participants. At last, the General Conclusion that might be drawn from the two forums is that politeness negotiation according to gender is context-based. Also, anonymity is not always sufficient for one's freedom of impoliteness in the sense that sometimes an anonymous participant keeps his/her linguistic behavior polite to achieve certain aims such as asking for information (e.g. the first case studied). Gender online should be approached according to the context and community practice of the participants. It is sometimes found to be relevant in some cases whereas it can be found completely as irrelevant in some other cases of online communities of practice.

Chapter One

1.1.Introduction

As it is widely known, sub-conscious feelings and popular beliefs about language relatedness to gender had existed centuries before the emergence of the language and gender study. One can deduce logically that the existence of gender as a role in society has accompanied the life of human beings since their creation. However, the history of the study of gender in relation to language is so short that it is about half a century. But, this never denies the existence of some useful information about gender from ancient societies whether found in books or transmitted from generation to the other through speech. If we examine different literatures of the world, we may find very informative data about the treatment of societies of linguistic and non-linguistic discrepancies existing according to gender. Since the study has been introduced by the western societies, it is quite preferable to start examining data from their world. This chapter focuses on the development of the different theories in language such as those of discourse, context, and identity and their influence on language and gender study.

1.2.Folk linguistics and gender

Before the existence of any academic work on language and gender, there were a lot of folklinguistic sayings about man and women in society. Some examples are given below.

1.2.1. Examples from the western culture

In examining the western literature and mainly that of the English language, we may consider the one of Coates (1993) as one of the most influential ones in the course of gender studies in the sense of documenting some useful examples related to gender from the past. Coates (1993) supplies plenty of examples about folk-linguistics on the differences between women and men's language mainly those which are related to women's verbosity and language deficiency. This comes to be both as critical and satirical at the same time of women's language giving a deficient social impression on it. This kind of social treatment gives a negative picture on the speech of the woman in society leading her unconsciously to be seen in a lower position if compared with the man and his speech in society. As mentioned earlier, Coates reviews some of the proverbs and sayings dating back to the past and stating the following:

- A woman's tongue wage like a lamb's tail'(England)

- The North Sea will be found wanting in water than a woman at a loss for a word' (Jutland).
- Many woman, many words, many geese, many turds' (England)

These proverbs make an important part of the cultural heritage of the western world and reveal how their society perceives the woman and her linguistic behavior making it completely negative and accusing her of verbosity and garrulousness. Certainly in all cultures, there exist a massive number of proverbs and sayings that tell us about how each society sees the woman and treats her at the same time. In the same way they tell us how all the societies agree on one point which is very critical of the woman. If we review a number of them we will find that most of them use sarcasm and only few of them treat this fact in a serious way. In reading about what popular sayings tell about woman's speech, some would consider them funny and others may think they are very critical to the point it is considered unfair with the linguistic behaviour of the woman. For example:

- 'The war tied everything, except my wife's tongue'.
- "The arm of the woman is her tongue, how could she let it stain?"

So, as we can note here that society in general and mainly men attack woman's linguistic behaviour and accuse her of verbosity and sharpness. We should note that although these sayings are so popular and public, they are not based on real empirical studies and reliable scientific data. They, rather present some cases in society.

Literary fictional texts are also claimed to make clear rebuttals to woman's language. One of the most known ones is those of Shakespeare as noted by Sunderland (2006) are the following:

- 'How hard it is for woman to keep counsel!' (Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, II.iv.9)
- 'Her voice was ever soft, /gentle and low, an excellent thing in woman (Shakespeare, *King Lear*, V.iii.274).
- 'She has brown hair, and speaks small like a woman' (Shakespeare, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, I.i.48).

Sunderland argues that ideas on how women talk are rather seen to be a kind of

prescription on how they should talk. This includes even institutionalized etiquette books in the nineteenth and early twentieth century which cover a lot of advice on how females should talk for the benefits of their male counterparts and that they had to listen rather than speak (Sunderland 2006).

1.2.2. Examples from the eastern culture

In the Arabic culture, there exist certainly a wide range of similar kinds of examples whether in proverbs or literary texts telling a lot on how women use language or they should use language. These sayings and proverbs range between negative and positive visualizations of woman's speech. One of the most known proverbs is the following:

- 'The tongue of the woman is a drawn sword'

This well-known proverb expresses a negative viewpoint of the society about what the woman says. It can be considered as a kind of rejection of what she says even if it is correct. In this respect, people consider her speech and especially her tongue to be sharp and tough. Another proverb may be seen as positive but can have negative side if we examine it carefully. It goes as follows:

- "The bravery of the woman is in her tongue (linguistic behaviour), and the bravery of the man is in his heart."

This proverb means that people can easily recognise a daring courageous woman from her way of speaking while in the case of men courage resides in the strength of their hearts which is clearly related to acts and doings. We can understand from this proverb that a woman can rely on her language in order to be renowned however a man cannot do so because he has to rely on real acts in life by having a brave heart. This can reveal that language use is fitting to women while being inappropriate with manliness. In the same sort of way, we can say that this culture marginalises the woman like many other cultures in making her relying on only speech. However, this cannot be generalised to include all the different eras along the historical background of this culture. There exist certainly a huge number of other sayings about the linguistic behaviour of women which are not negative or denigrating. One of these well-known is the following:

- 'Djaheeza (a name of woman) has ended the discussion'

This proverb is said about the wisest opinion in any discussion that can end a dispute over any kind of problem. Its story happened with a woman named ‘Djaheeza’ who contributed to solve a problem between two tribes struggling about a killed person. She came and solved the problem with a word and from then onwards, this has become a much known proverb that can be used in similar situations. It is important to note that this happened before the coming of Islam.

The Islamic era has also got its appropriate view about the speech of the woman. During this era, the woman was not denigrated and her opinion was taken into consideration absolutely like men. One of the evidences for this is told in this story:

“A woman during the Islamic era of the Caliph Omar Ibn El-Khattab, one of the wisest and shrewdest men in his time, was listening to his sermon where he asked men not to give women a lot of money to marry them. The woman responded him quick-wittedly with a proof from the Holy Quran to show he was wrong in his saying. The Caliph admitted that she was right and he was wrong in saying: “Omar (I) made a mistake and a woman hit the target”.

This is one of the blatant examples that the opinion of the woman at that time was not marginalized because of just being a woman. Also, this cannot be measured at the level of language but at the level of intelligence also. So although the man (Omar Ibn El-Khattab) was known for his sharp cunning and higher level of intelligence, he did not denigrate the woman and admitted his mistake. This can end a lot of saying about men’s marginalization of women and most of what had been said about women in the past. So, generalizations about negative opinions criticizing women’s linguistic behaviour cannot be made to include all cultures or at least all eras within the one culture.

1.3. Academic work on gender before Feminism

There has been a lot of work done on gender before what is known by Feminist waves. In this respect, grammarians play a vital role in showing the importance of gender as a parameter that needs serious consideration in language.

1.3.1.References from the past

At the level of academic work in early times, Coates makes reference to many important sources of institutional data focusing on gender as a vital parameter in language use. She demonstrates how male grammarians and language codifiers of the

past have a kind of ‘Andocentric Rule’. She argues that women were blamed for being responsible of making a lot of changes in language at those times. For instance, at the level of vocabulary involving codification of both dictionaries and grammars dealing with the grammatical structure of English, Richard Cambridge in 1754 is said to criticize women for the linguistic change they were responsible for claiming that dictionaries were made to fix language once and for all. Coates (2003) relates what he says with the fact of neglecting women’s language considering it as completely unimportant at those times. She continues to mention a number of male authors complaining of women’s introductions of new but ephemeral vocabulary to their language but praise male linguistic innovation. Among those who praise men for their linguistic change is the Danish linguist Jespersen Otto. He says that men introduce ‘fresh and new expression’. Not only that, but he could be considered as one of the most known authors who made clear claims and assumptions about gender related linguistic behaviour giving women’s speech and their written work a negative picture. Jespersen (1922) plainly criticizes and denigrates their spoken and written behaviour in saying the following:

‘more often than men break off without finishing their sentence, because they start talking without having thought out what they are going to say, and produce less complex sentences’

Mockery is one of the features characterizing serious appeals of some writers against women’s language in the eighteenth century. Coates (2004) reports Lord Chesterfield who claimed to have written to the world of December 5,th 1754 a clear mix between mockery and discontent at the over use of adverbials by women at that time. Coates (ibid) reports:

‘No content with enriching our language with words absolutely new my fair countrywomen have gone still farther.....A fine woman is vastly obliged or vastly offended, vastly glad or vastly sorry. Large objects are vastly great, small ones are vastly little; and I had lately the pleasure to hear a fine woman pronounce, by a happy metonymy, a very small gold snuff- box that was produced in company vastly pretty because it was vastly little’

These documented examples in the literature work against the status of the woman in society and ascribes her lower position as indicated by many researchers earlier.

1.3.2. References from modern time

In this modern time, gender has become a subject of wide importance because it touches the social life men and women in all fields but inequally between them. Thus, Feminism came to fight against this social inequity and injustice.

1.3.2.1.Feminism

Since the woman has suffered across all the eras of time from injustice and unfairness because of her biological difference from the man and more importantly her physical weakness in comparison with him, it is quite undeniable to refer any gender study of today in the world without drawing on the feminist platform which created the current huge debate over the relatedness of social behaviour and language to gender. Feminism's emergence dates back to the late 1960's and aroused later on by second wave feminism as a kind of asking for equality between women and men in society. The late 1960' and early 1970's was a time characterized by huge feminist protests supported by aid agencies and social organizations such as world Bank and the British Council asking for social equality between women and men . This comes under the Civil Rights Movement in the US urging what is known by women's Liberation Movement to act against the social rules humiliating the women and making her absolutely subordinate to the man. So the lower status ascribed to the past centuries and its bad consequences on her at this time made her call for even the simplest rights like education, fair pays (equal to men), etc. This fact developed into more recognizable stages such as holding worldwide conferences to review the requested women's rights with more seriousness and earnestly. So the United Nations has up to now held so many conferences for the sake of studying women's rights in society.

Since language was/has been regarded as an important tool used against the women in society as feminist waves think, it had been one of the most important targets that should be focused on. As a result, a lot of western (mainly English and American) authors started writing books, articles in magazines and newspapers to ask for change in language. Robin Morgan (1977, p. 106), an American feminist in 1968 in *Going Too Far*, says, *'We do not even have our own names, but bear that of the father until we exchange it for that of the husband'*. Also, Feminism with more daring linguistic behaviours led Germaine Greer, a women's Liberation Movement member to make strong exclamations about how the terms of love used with women are those of food

like 'honey and sweetie'. She also notes that many kinds of love that many men engage with, the women is not the destiny such as those of the Mystics, and the Platonists who see that love between superiors (men) and inferiors (women) is impossible.

Women's movements hit the legitimacy of codified grammars and dictionaries and asked for change in a lot vocabulary, grammatical rules and even expressions they thought they denigrated the women in society. They said that codification of both dictionaries and grammar books are influenced by what is called male 'bias' because the authors were males. Many lexical items in the English language are said to degrade and stereotype the woman such as "son-of-a-bitch", "Miss/Mrs." and the generic terms "he/man" as a form to refer to both males and females. As a result, sexist language came to change those forms 'Ms' for both married and single women. Also, words having male generics changed to be neutral or to include the feminine grammatical marker. For instance: chairperson, barperson, spokesperson replacing chairman, barman and spokesman. In the same sort of way, the use of the third personal singulars/he' instead of the generic 'he' in writing had been introduced by language sexists.

Feminist waves covered multiple kinds of women from different public, private and academic domain. So, women across all these social sciences had started to draw attention to the different academic disciplines which focus on men in all their studies thinking that he is the norm and that he can represent all the human species. These studies used to exclude absolutely women's identities from all kinds of serious study. The problem was even more complex that these studies were mostly done by men and concentrating on the interests of men with a complete ignorance of women as a viable part in the structure of society. So gender study did not emerge from linguistics as a discrete area of study; it rather started with this general contest of women against disciplines across social studies in general and sociology in special. In this respect, women working in these fields of studies started to draw attention to gender as a vital social component in personal, academic and even political life. Imelda Whelehan and Jane Pichter (2004,p. 4) note the following:

"For example, prior to the 1970s, the social sciences in general, and sociology in particular, largely ignored gender. The 'people' it studied were mainly men and the topics it focused on were aspects of the social world especially significant for men, such as paid work and politics. Women were almost invisible in per-1970's' blind gender-blind sociology, only featuring in their traditional roles as wives and mothers within

families.”

In this respect, social and psychological sciences began to pay attention to gender as a problem to be addressed and a thriving area in need of serious examination and study. Therefore in sociology, attention had been given to gender inequality and knowledge about special domains and interests of women. Meanwhile in the field of English literature, women expressed their opposing views against the great works of purely hegemonic male studies which prevented women from excelling in this field of study. Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* (1977) is one of the literary critiques done in this field of study. In this respect and with the increase of the sociological studies introducing the problem of inequality between women and men focusing on gender as a real issue to be examined, women's studies had acquired the status of being included in academic disciplines. Thus it was at that time (late 1960's and early 1970's) that women's studies began to be taught as a discrete field of study at universities and a number of colleges in USA and Great Britain. Tobias 1978,p. 86)says, "*Courses began to be taught, quite spontaneously and without substantial prior organization, at many US colleges and universities beginning in 1969*". In the area of linguistic studies, Robin Lakoff published her controversial article in 1973, *Language and women's*, place making huge rampage leading to loads of different studies in this field of study. Two years later, she introduced the first complete book about language and gender of the same title (*Language and women's places*). Thus the study of language and gender commenced.

1.3.2.2.Ways of approaching gender and language

There have been a lot of ways of approaching language and gender. The 'Deficit', the 'Dominance', the 'Difference' approaches as will be detailed below.

a. Robin Lakoff and Dale Spender, 'Deficit' and 'Dominance'

Although language and gender conceptions had existed well before the publication of the seminal work of Robin Lakoff '*Language and Woman's Place*' in the 1970's, the modern women's movement was an important impetus to language and gender studies and a new phase of looking at the problems of inequality between women and men in a more serious way.

Although the sole reason is to ask for more rights and equality with men, feminism has been associated with a negative reputation in the sense of being anti-men and asking for radical changes in social behaviour. Nevertheless, well reputed organizations and aid- agencies such as the World Bank and the British Council have supported the modern (second) wave feminist protests in organizing worldwide conferences to pass resolutions on women, the family, health, etc. The linguistic side of gender studies was one of the most important targets of the Western women's movements.

As cited earlier, the way of approaching gender in relation to language by earlier waves of feminism was purely with the English language in its abstract system (langue) i.e. language mainly in codified books (grammar, vocabulary, literature, etc) and dictionaries. However, this did not continue to be the same the feminist concerns with language turned to its use in daily speech (parole), particularly the one existing between women and men. Therefore, Robin Lakoff's *Language and Woman's Place* (1975) considers in a broad way what is called gender differences in language use. The book was the first complete one addressing language and gender as a problem in social behaviour against women. It is now widely critiqued for its representation of women's language as a 'deficient language' in relation to men. It exemplifies what is called '*the deficit approach*' in language and gender studies. The book though claimed unscientific, it is said to have created a huge debate and a wide eagerness among language researchers leading them to write many books and articles on language and gender. Later on, the issues addressed were put under empirical studies such as the matter of politeness, where, after empirical study, Janet Holmes (1995) claimed that women were more positively polite than men. The theory of difference is explained to be the result and support of male dominance. One of the strongest claims of Lakoff is that women's language is rather tentative, powerless and trivial (Eckert, 2003: 1). This is due to the fact that it is full of devices such as mitigators (sort of, I think), inessential qualifiers like (really happy, so beautiful). This fact is referred by Lakoff to society that imposes it as a kind of learning to be a woman.

After five years of the publication of *Language and Woman's Place*, another more hard- hitting book was published by Dale Spender '*Men Made Language*' in the UK (1980,p. 152). Spender's work had a non-academic bias and was directed more to a popular audience. She had successfully shown that the generic male 'he' does not and cannot represent the human species. she reports that some researchers found that young

children thought that man meant male people in sentences such as ‘man needs food’ and others found that ‘science students – at least – thought male when discussing the evolution of man, they had little appreciation of the female contribution even when explicitly taught it. The book of Spender was clearly radical in feminist position and explicitly feminist committed. She wrote about sexism in the English language and gender related differences in language use that contribute to women disadvantage and hence silencing them. Spender reports how in mixed-sex talk, women are dominated in conversations, interrupted more by their conversational partners who succeed at having their topics they bring up to be taken up. This book best exemplifies the male dominance approach in language and gender study. It was/ is thought-provoking exactly like *Language and Women’s Place* and highly critiqued later on by language researchers.

b. The difference theory, Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borker

The male dominance approach to language and gender was deriving its concerns from the women’s liberation Movement and interests as well. However, and later on, Deborah Cameron (1995b,p. 39)wrote the following:

‘Dominance . . . represented [a] particular moment [. . .] in feminism: dominance was the moment of feminist outrage, of bearing witness to oppression in all aspects of women’s lives’

Also, Pamela Fishman is one of those who worked with this approach and who famously characterized women’s contribution to mixed-sex talk as ‘shit work’. Mixed-sex talk tends to focus on differences in speech between women and men. However, and although women talk distinctively from men, they tend also to talk differently from one another. That is to say, differences in talking do not exist at the level of the same sex (Jennifer Coates 1989,p. 121). Generalizations about how women talk cannot be discovered in mixed- sex talk only. Coates in her books entitled *Women Talk (1996) and Men Talk (2003)* is said to focus largely on how women use language. In her work, she criticizes Maltz and Borker (1982) for claiming women and men acquire language in single sex groups because they lack empiricism. This is to avoid the creation of new linguistic myths (1989, p.15).

Also, the dominance approach was criticized for representing women as passive and victims. Women’s subordination was considered as ‘pan-contextual’ explanation in

characterizing mixed-sex talk. But it was found that women's silence can sometimes be read as rather subversive and not enforced as a clear meaning of resistance.

The difference approach to language and gender, unlike the dominance one was clearly not concerned with male verbal power. Thus; it dealt with mainly with the traditional approach of variation of sociolinguistics. This appeared in works by Jennifer Coates (1996), Janet Holmes (1995) and Deborah Tannen (1990). These works were clearly influenced by Maltz and Borker's article 'A Cultural Approach to Male-female Miscommunication' (1982). Maltz and Borker claimed that girls and boys grew up largely in different sociolinguistic subcultures that any communication problem can be referred to interethnic communication notion of Gumperz (1978). However this is claimed to require empirical study.

So in contrast to dominance approach, the difference one only describes differences and never criticizes male social behavior. Coates does not denigrate women's talk nor does she represent it as deficient or victimized as done by the dominance approach. She rather represents women as cooperative with empirical studies. Also, there exist a large number of non-academic books supporting the notion of gender differences. The original bestseller was probably Tannen's (1991) *You Just Don't Understand!: women and men in conversation*, but we now also have John Gray's *Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus* (1992), as well as Allan Pease and Barbara Pease's series which includes *Why Men Don't Listen and Women Can't Read Maps* (2001), *Why Men Lie and Women Cry* (2003). This last is described on the publisher's and distributors' web sites as a 'little book of advice for men on how to get on with their partner'. It would of course be interesting to know the proportion of purchasers who are in fact men.

1.4. Developing understandings of gender and language

Later on and after those attempts to describe and even criticize the social imbalances between women and men in gender studies, the Feminist waves emerged.

1.4.1. Feminist waves

Feminism was/ has been behind the language and gender studies. However, through time and at the same point of time, different feminisms with different motives and aims have existed. They differ as claimed by Tong (1992) in nature and aims and

they continue to do so. For example, Dale Spender's approach of dominance was clearly radical in position to society taking into consideration the notion of patriarchy as a target to be discussed. This is unlike the socialist feminists who pose the question of class as a primary concern for their struggle against inequality in gender. The common point that these different feminisms shared is that they all carried the aspect of criticizing the social behaviour. However, they were becoming less and less sufficient with developing notions of gender and language study. Cameron (1995b, p. 39) notes the following

'Both dominance and difference represented particular moments in feminism: dominance was the moment of feminist outrage, of bearing witness to oppression in all aspects of women's lives, while difference was the moment of feminist celebration, reclaiming and revaluing women's distinctive cultural traditions'

Later on, feminist theories of gender and language brought the two approaches of dominance and difference into a single approach. It is called the dominance-difference approach. However, it did not serve to stop what the feminist waves worked for at first. It was a kind of anti-feminist for its essentialist emphasis of the binary nature of gender. This binary nature, in fact, was the primary locus of feminist waves that were striving to end.

The study of language and gender has lately turned to focus on identifying gender as differences in all sorts of contexts. Cheris Kramarae, Barrie Thorne and Nancy Henley (1983) argued that the difference-dominance framework is a conservative and unproductive area of study. So researchers who turned to criticize this framework have claimed it is not illuminating because of multiple reasons. The most important one is that it does not take into consideration the context of situation, the setting of the conversation, who was talking to whom, and for what purpose. Also, it did not consider variation and what Eckert and Mc Connell-Ginet (1999, p.193) called intra group differences existing within the same gender. So, generalizations about the homogeneity of women's language as well as men's one had faced large critique that put an end to the dominance-difference framework. Sunderland (2006, p. 22) comments,

'Newer understandings of gender as identity, and identity as multiple, fluctuating and continually being constructed, have made 'difference' and 'dominance' appear crude and inadequate.'

Even the notion of identity has been challenged (Butler 1990, 1999) by emphasizing the fact of performance, construction and enactment or display in written and spoken texts where the sex of the speaker has little or no interest. We have also to add the notion of discourse and how language *effects* gender too (Butcholtz, 1999, p. 6).

1.4.2. Post structuralism and gender studies

Post structuralism with its sceptic nature and with all the different kinds of knowledge has had its great impact on the language and gender study. Thus, it has challenged the notion of essentialist gender, heterosexuality and male and female dimorphic. This is indeed with the developmental studies of discourse. With this newer perspective, knowledge is always constructed rather than discovered. So, language is said to be the place where our sense of selves, our subjectivity is constructed (Baxter, 1984, p. 21). In this way, seeing language from this kind of angle is indeed as a model of studying language at a discourse kind of level.

Judith Butler is one of the most influential theorists of post structuralist work (1990, 1991, 1999). Butler's work was a clear critique of feminist theories and thinking having the purpose of urging advanced thinking in a broader sense. She opens up a possibility of divorcing gender from identity *'the field of possibility for gender without dictating which kinds of possibilities ought to be realised'* (1999). She gave the alternative gender collocates of *'performance'* and *'performativity'* to replace the notion of gender identity in the heterosexual market. Discourse is said to influence gender roles in society. Adrienne Rich (1980) argues that sexual dimorphism could not disappear only if compulsory heterosexual gender discourses disappear or decline.

1.4.3. Gender, language and power

Perhaps one of the most important conceptions that have accompanied the language and gender study is that of 'power'. On the one hand, it was very concerned with *male dominance* in mixed sex talk. On the other hand, it was a key to critical understandings of discourse. Thus, there developed the notion of women empowerment at both interpersonal and institutional levels. In theorising power related to gender, the most recent studies of Judith Baxter (2002) show that power is continually changing, variable and multiple. Thus, a given participant (male or female) in consideration with his situation, s/he might be powerful in one way and powerless in another (Foucault 1980). So power is not always associated with hegemonic masculinity.

1.4.4. Context

The study of language and gender gives an importance to context in shaping the linguistic behaviour of both women and men. Candace West (1984a) in working on male dominance showed how professional status intersects with gender in doctor-patient talk. The same was found in courtroom contexts by William O'Barr and Bowman Atkins (1980) who showed that 'powerless language' ascribed to women does not apply on all female speakers. In this respect, women of professional status in courtrooms had the same powerful language exactly like their counterpart males. Context of situation was also clearly present in the studies of Deborah Tannen (1991) who claims that girls and boys grow up in single sex groups which gives the result of developing different linguistic practices by males and females. Not only that, but Mary Talbot (1992) claims that the fact of 'overlapping' in speech cannot be interpreted as an interruption (hostile) only with reference to the speakers' understandings.

Another perspective on context derives from the notion of Community of practice which was introduced firstly by Lave and Wenger (1991) in education and adopted later on by Penelope Eckert and Sally Mc Connell Ginet in (1992).

1.4.4.1. Community of practice

In considering the notion of CofP, males and females are viewed to be Community practices. Lave and Wenger (1990) were behind the new concept of community of practice. This entails the fact of the learning apprentices. Thus a community of practice has been defined by Lave and Wenger (1998, p. 45) as follows:

'...collective learning results in practices that reflect both the pursuit of our enterprises and the attendant social relations. These practices are thus the property of a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise.'

However, individuals are said to take some time to learn to be part of the different communities of practice. Thus individuals are not born with these social facts to belong innately to certain community practices. They rather develop themselves through time to be included in groups. One of the examples is the feminine and masculine community practices that children learn to be part of as we will explain. Paechter (2003, p.71) argues the following:

"it might be fruitful to treat masculinities and femininities as communities of

practice in which children and young people gradually learn what it is to be male and female within particular communities...'

1.4.4.2. Femininities and masculinities as communities of practice

One of the most important perspectives in language and gender is to see masculinities and femininities as communities of practice. If we take an example from the social behaviour of individuals, we might find the conception well suiting. For example, a female individual is encouraged by her environment to play with dolls rather than trucks, wear feminine clothes rather masculine ones, not to scream to be seen as a wise person at an early age. All these facts predispose a girl to be aware which group she chooses to be part of. The same thing happens with boys during their early childhood where most of them are encouraged and urged to do things to be considered as future men. These socializations are said to have a great impact on boys and girls either to make them clearly separated groups of different practices in their future. In early childhood girls and boys are considered to be peripheral apprentices in relation to their localized feminine and masculine communities of practice. Wenger (1991, p. 95) says:

'From a broadly peripheral perspective, apprentices gradually assemble a general idea of what constitutes the practice. This uneven sketch of the enterprise (available if there is legitimate access) might include who is involved; what they do; what everyday life is like; how masters talk, walk, work, and generally conduct their lives; how people who are not part of the community of practice interact with it; what other learners are doing; and what learners need to do to become full practitioners.'

So, children learn since their childhood to be part of their localized feminine or masculine community practices. Full participation is meant to include all the different social practices.

a. Practice

Let us first of all define practice. As its name suggests, practice is an essential idea in the community of practice concept. Shared practices in fact, are what gather individuals to form groups considered as communities of practice. However practice is fluid and not fixed (Paechter, 2003, p. 71). Thus the practices of any community of practice are constantly changing, renegotiated and reinvented.

Wenger (1998) relates practice to a number of dimensions. Paechter (2003) relates between these dimensions and the development of masculinities and femininities as communities of practice. The first dimension is that of the *Negotiation of Meaning* one which is defined by Wenger as the process by which one experiences the world and his/her engagement in it as meaningful. Paechter argues that in localized feminine and masculine practice members share the same understanding of being a man or a woman. Someone who does not understand this meaning is considered to be outside the feminine or masculine community of practice. He supplies the example of lesbians being non-full members of feminine communities of practice. So, core meanings must be shared by all the community members whether masculine or feminine ones. The second dimension is the concept that *practice is* the source of coherence of a community practice. Wenger (1991) says that this occurs through mutual engagement in a joint enterprise resulting in a shared repertoire of performances. So boys and girls learn from an early time of their childhood that it is forbidden for a boy to cry in public but it is not the same case for girl to do so. The third dimension is the idea that practice is considered as a *learning process* where Wenger (1998) argues that communities of practice can be seen as a shared histories of learning. Therefore practice is claimed to be dynamic and constantly fine-tuned by the members. Thus masculinities and femininities are argued by Paechter as very dynamic and changing in relation to the wider culture, mass media, and the different communities they encounter. One of the illustrative examples he supplies is that of children moving from the stage of childhood or adolescence to that of adulthood to join either feminine or masculine communities of practice. Here in this example, the learning process is very clear for adolescents trying to gain knowledge to gain full membership of either masculine or feminine communities of practice. So at this particular point of time, adolescents are considered as legitimate peripheral participants in relation to their future communities of practice. The fourth dimension under which Wenger (1998) analyses practice is the fact that practice has to be seen as *boundary* where communities of practice cannot be understood in independence of the other community of practice. So most communities of practice have fixed boundaries and well defined markers of membership.

Paechter, in this point exactly claims that feminine and masculine communities of practice do not operate in the same way as defined by Wenger. However, they show some resemblance to them. He explains that the relationship between femaleness and maleness to feminine or masculine communities of practice is neither direct nor

straightforward. This is due to some cases like legitimate peripheral members of children or adolescents who can be seen as neither full members nor fully rejected of their communities of practice. The last dimension of communities of practice Wenger (1998) describes is *locality*. Seeing practice as local is not restricted other deathatitis constructed in definite l y a spatial way. A community of practice may be geographically distributed but related through connections of ancestry as an example.

b. Identity

Different communities of practice do certainly show different identities. In the case of adolescent girls who choose to be full participants of female communities of practice, they have to understand well their identity to do so.

In the same sort of way in the case of community of practice, Wenger (1998) discusses identity under five dimensions and Paechter (2003) shows how this relates to femininities and masculinities. The first parameter is that identity should be seen as the negotiated experience of the self. Here, Wenger (2003) argue that they define «who we are by the ways we experience ourselves through participation as well as by the ways we and others reify our selves’’ (Wenger, 1998, p. 149)

In his relation to localised masculine and feminine communities of practice, Paechter (1994, p. 23) comments:

“Identity is thus understood through the practices with which we engage, and these clearly include the practices involved in our construction and enactment of particular masculinities and femininities.”

He supplies the example of boys who engage in sporting as a masculine behaviour to discern themselves from the other identities. To this we can add the example of girls enacting feminine behaviours to identify their difference from other communities of practice and mainly those of masculine ones. This does entail the fact of multiple identities since masculine and feminine communities of practice can be thought in relation to class, ethnicity, race, etc.

The second dimension of Wenger (1998) is seeing identity as community membership. Identity has three important dimensions which are: the mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire. The shared repertoire is the most important one in relation to localised feminine and masculine communities of practice.

This is in order to be seen as a member of a feminine community of practice. A girl must show certain aspects of femininity to be fully accepted by feminine community of practice. Paechter (2003) gives the example of female athletes who exaggerate certain stereotypes of femininity like make up, sexual orientation, etc. Paechter (2003) quotes that they do so to be accepted by feminine community practice and mainly compensate for the refusal of others their sporting interests and prowess represent (Dewar, 1990; Sherlock, 1987).

The third dimension of Wenger describing identity is that of the learning trajectory of identity. Just like practice, identity is seen by Wenger (1998, p. 188) “*as a work in progress, constantly renegotiated and fundamentally temporal including the past and the future in the very process of negotiating, the present.*”

He gives the example of children or adolescents in becoming fully adults as either males or female. Here, identities of these boys and girls are certainly in an ongoing (at that particular point of time) change for the pursuit of their future male or female identities in their localised feminine or masculine communities of practice. Paechter (2003, p. 75) argues:

“...community of practice is in itself a learning process; if this is not recognised by some individuals within the community, then they will find it increasingly difficult to remain full members of that community. If they stop working with the community to understand and develop the collective understanding of what it means to be a man or woman in this particular sociotemporal–spatial configuration, then they are likely to move to an outbound trajectory and may need to find a new community of practice with which they have a greater sense of identity coherence.”

Wenger analyses identity as a nexus of multi-membership where it is seen as neither a unity nor fragmented. Thus identity must be constructed to include meanings and forms of participation into one nexus. This is clear enough in masculinities and femininities as communities of practice. Finding a white woman can also be an academic, apparent, etc. where femininity is less central. A female can enact different femininities at the same time. So, identity is fluid and its enactment relies on the membership to the various communities of practice. And also changes according to context, time, etc.

The last dimension is the fact of identity being an *intersection between the local*

and the global. This is also the case of community of practice. So, identity cannot be formed in isolation, it affects the local condition and affected by the global. So even though feminine and masculine communities of practice are localised, they are also affected by the popular culture, the media, etc.

However, the notion of community of practice has also been recently criticised especially because of the fact of considering it to be full of constraints and hermetically sealed as noted by Mills (2003). Therefore, and as claimed by Mills, Wenger's (1998) notion of community of practice adopted by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1998, 1999) is not sufficient to fully describe the complex negotiations of different communities of practice and individuals for its focus on constraints and lack of flexibility within community practices. In this respect, communities of practice are viewed to be in constant process of change.

1.4.5. Discourse

The focus on discourse has become a must in language and gender studies. However, the meaning of discourse is an area of great contest where the basic meaning of it is 'language beyond the sentence level'. In addition to this, researchers agree that it includes the idea of 'stretches' of text whether spoken or written. It is not only supra sentential but functional as well especially when considered in language use Edmondson (1980, p. 272). This carries the notion of communicating language in context which is very crucial to understand mean in general social situation. Discourse can refer also to language in different social situation such as advertising discourse, classroom discourse, medical discourse, etc. In discursive psychology' (Harre and Stearns, 1995) 'discourse' refers to the totality of sings that carry meaning: the mind is seen as the product of the sings encountered, including non-verbal sings.

Fairclough (1992) theorises discourse from a different ideological perspective considering it as a form of social practice. Following Foucauldian ideology of theorizing (1972), it is the sort of language used to construct some aspects of reality from a particular perspective, for example the "liberal discourse of politics". Thus the notion of discourse from this kind of view goes beyond the knowledge about cultural ways of thinking and doing to that of 'practice' (an event). Foucault (1989) emphasizes that his object is not language but the archive which means the accumulated existence of discourse. So, it is very embedded and repeated by social members in their social environment and group. This has highlighted that discourse can be numerous and hence

the plural form ‘discourse’ should exist. For Foucault, discourse necessarily relates to the fact of making someone see the world in a reliable way. Kress (1985, pp. 6-7) notes how discourses supply “*a set of possible statements about a given area, and organize(s) and give(s) structure to the manner in which a particular topic, object, process is to be talked about*”

In his relation to the acts of sex, Foucault explains how the sex act has been made very visible through discourse. It is through the ‘censorship of the word itself’ and the ‘steady proliferation of discourses concerned with it.’ (1977, pp. 17-18) that this term has become very noticeable. The fact of censorship here shows that discourse is often institution –related.

So the social as well as the historical conditions are important in discourse (whether written or spoken) that may result in different discourse emergence such as the ones related to feminist, anti-racist discourses. It is a kind of being overloaded with many pervious discourses to be able produce any kind of discourse. For instance, to be able to preach, someone must have been overloaded with many previous discourses of preaching.

This point illustrates the relatedness of gender to discourse. One of the most important examples of gendered discourse is the fact of the different discourses directed towards girls to ‘get a man and keep him’. There may exist heterogeneity in feminine discourses and sometimes conflicting ones such as what Coates (1997), Hallway (1984), and Kitetu and Sunderland (2000) identify as ‘competing’ discourses of femininity which are the ‘dominant’ maternal discourse saying that ‘children are marvelous’ and the ‘subversive’ maternal discourse which includes negative ideas and feelings about children. Other gendered discourses may be noticed in our daily lives such as those related and directed to Arab men in relation with manliness saying ‘A man cannot be a real one when gaining a women in fight. These kinds of discourses are generally said and repeated that they can be entrenched in their minds. They consequently result in similar discourses and even practices. This goes, of course, with different discourses of similar aims.

Given the assumption based on the different theoretical approaches defining discourse and which do not seem to have come at a common conceptualization and special view about discourse, one can only distinguish between three important concepts which are: discourse, text, and discourse analysis.

1.4.5.1. Discourse and Text

'Text' is a word having notion of 'written language', however, it has been claimed by researchers in discourse that text encompasses both 'written and spoken language'. The notion has also been expanded to include monologues and dialogues between people (Sunderland and Litosseliti, 2005). However, this has not prevented some research scholars from drawing a line between what is meant by discourse and that of text. Gisela Brunner and Gabriele Greafen (1993, pp. 7-8) draw some differences in saying the following:

'By discourse are to be understood units and forms of speech, of interaction, which can be part of everyday linguistic behaviour, but which can equally appear in an institutional sphere, Orality, admittedly, is not a feature which holds true for all forms of discursive behaviour....but is very much the typical case. Regarded systematically, discourse requires the co-presence of speaker and listener ('face-to-face interaction'); this can, however, be reduced to a temporal co-presence (on the telephone).'

Most of research scholars in discourse claim that text does not have to be written. This is in contrast to discourse. Discourse must not be oral (Ehlich, 1983) according to the theory of 'functional pragmatics' he sets up. According to him, the main difference lies in what he called the function of 'handing down' and in the simultaneous existing (or absence) of a situational context. Hence the definition of discourse could become 'text in context' in the view of Van Dijk (1990) who relates it to action. This is on the basis of the speech act theory by Austin (1962). He emphasizes the fact that discourse must be understood as action. This led to regard discourse as a special form of social interaction that cannot be separated from other forms of social practice.

1.4.5.2. Discourse as representational and constitutive of social practice

The fact of considering discourse as one of the social practices extends our view of how we experience the world. For instance, language representation of gender in many visual examples of life such as advertisements can be found existing in written as well as spoken text showing their existence previously. These representations could be seen as forms of 'recontextualisation'. Not only this but as Foucault views discourse, he asserts "discourses are practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (1972, p. 49). In this sense, discourse cannot be regarded as only forms of knowledge about cultural ways of thinking and doing but also more importantly as a

real agent of social construction in the sense of being ‘constitutive’. Since discourse is primarily organizing and gives structure of how things should be talked about, the category ‘women’ does not get out of this conceptualization. Discourses by Hollway (1984), Coates (1997), and Kitseto and Sunderland (2000) are claimed as not only displaying and representing gendered social practices but also maintaining and re-constituting these practices in totally different ways in the sense of being liberating. This can extend to the creation of new and alternative discourses that can represent the newly re-constituted and social gendered practices. However this is done under difficult circumstances which can be due to the women’s limited social position. In the same way, discourse researchers in this field try to make discourse workings more precise to produce social practices in open ways.

Researchers claim that one more important characteristic of discourse is the fact of being cited in other discourses. This is called ‘inter-textuality’ which refers to the idea, as cited in Sunderland and Litosseliti (2006), that texts are in reality full of ‘snatches’ of other texts (Kristeva, 1986). The reader or analyst can easily determine this fact by finding them either cited directly in an explicit sort of way or in an implicit way. In gender studies, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999, p. 136) assert that feminist linguistic political discourse adopts a lot of discourses by Marxist and postmodernist conceptualizations of making them suitable to their logics and needs. This is a vital example of inter discursive (the mixing of different texts and genres in one’s discourse) constitution and inter discursive reconstitution. However discourse of language and gender is not yet crystallised because of ideas of unearthing some particular gender differences in some particular contexts. In the meantime, discourse-as-social practice theories to the language and gender study are growing significantly (Liang and Sutton, 1999).

1.4.6. Identity and gender identity

All people seek to determine what best behaviours they think are suitable for themselves. This fact is inextricably linked to the issue of “who I am” (Noonan, 2005) and the question of “being”. This question, then, is that of identity or the principle of (personal) identity (Howie, 2010, p. 110). In the same sort of way, behaviours, whether linguistic or other, related to gender seem to be of a crucial importance to individuals. Thus, males and females often select specific attitudes they use to express themselves in the right way either as feminine or as masculine. This applies, at least, within pure male

and female identities representing a kind of social norm. So, the selection must not contradict with what society prescribes and expects either and should show some compliance with the norms of the society though it is not the general case to work with all individuals of society. In this way, expressing femininities and masculinities through language use certainly reflects what kind of social environments individuals live in. However, the fact of *reflection* seems to undergo criticism and especially within the discursive theoretical approaches to identity definitions.

Since our object of study should deal with gender (which necessarily means we have to tackle the subject of gender identity), it is preferable to know first what is meant by identity. Thus, a variety of definitions have been provided to elucidate the term conceptualizing the facts of identity (Héctor Grad & Luisa Martin Rojo, 2008, p. 3). So through history, identity has been a subject for discussion and philosophical interpretations by famous thinkers such as Descartes, Locke, smiles and the like. Not only that, but it has also been largely discussed in relation to different disciplines like sociology, social psychology, anthropology, etc. (Ibid). All first definitions of the notion of identity demonstrate that identity is a matter of agency and self-determination; that the individual is a self-interpreting subject (C.Taylor, 1989). This definition dominates past studies but it has lately been criticized for it does not take the influence of society, where individuals live, into consideration. Thus, the social context is claimed important to be included in defining the conceptual fact of identity since the individual's dealings take a large part of content of his social context. Ivanic (1998, p. 12) defines identity to be "the result of affiliation to particular beliefs and possibilities which are available to them in their social context."

Bethan Benwell and Elizabeth Stokoe (2006) draw attention to the necessity of seeing the multiplicity of identities any individual could have. The fact of having many categorization and descriptions on the one individual cannot be ignored in the sense that a person may be, for instance, a young white middle class married woman working as a journalist. So, all these categories are considered as identities that can sometimes emerge or dominate as a result of the social context. In other words, the identity of middle class cannot be crucial except when this woman is faced to a group of upper or lower class ones. Moreover, Benwell and Stokoe extend the notion of multiplicity to that of implication. This means that the identity or categorization of "white" implies 'black', 'young' implies 'old', etc. In this respect, they used the example of the famous British televised programme of 'What Not to Wear' as evidence to prove that the people

who were targeted in the programme may be seen as failing to live up to middle class standards. In this respect, some categories are ignored and downplayed whereas some others are emphasized. That is to say, even within interaction, the fact of mentioning some categories explicitly implies the presence of the others (at least the counterparts) implicitly. In this respect, the fashion experts of this programme generally try to make the clothes of their interviewees more feminine. This implies the implicit fact (identity) of being unfeminine for the interviewees. Not only that, some analyses, especially those of Mc Robbie (2004) of this programme note how this programme publicly humiliates women for failing to comply with the identity norms of middle class in the UK.

This example shows how some identities contrast with public identity and although the two fashion experts are trying to make the real identity, an interviewee has to correspond to the public one. It is said to be apparent that a 'stable' identity always remains behind the clothes they are chosen for them. In this sort of way, identity is something that may be hidden behind what we wear but not always displayed explicitly and publicly. Bethan Benwell and Elizabeth Stokoe (2006, p. 3) comment as follows:

"Identity as an 'essential', cognitive, socialized, phenomenological or psychic phenomenon that governs human action. Typical questions based on this understanding include 'what' identities people possess (for example, are they masculine or feminine?), how they may be distinguished from one another (for example, what are the criteria for categorizing people in terms of class?), and how they correlate with a variety of social science measures (for example, do people of different sexual orientations behave differently?). It is assumed that although people may present themselves differently in different contexts, underneath that presentation lurks a private, pre-discursive and stable identity."

We can see that identity, in this account, is seen in the 'self' image that a person may introduce to people around him. However, post-modern and discursive research theorists in the humanities and social sciences in general and identity in special sees that identity should not be viewed out of the wider social environment someone lives in. It is never complete to understand, in reality, without the different social influential factors on someone's life which lead him/her have certain characteristics to deal with apart from other ones. This falls largely within the insightful recent research that asserts the importance of discourse in many analyses of linguistic data. Bethan Benwell and Elizabeth Stokoe (2006, p. 4) continue claiming the following:

“Crucially, identity has been relocated: from the ‘private’ realms of cognition and experience, to the ‘public’ realms of discourse and other semiotic systems of meaning-making. Many commentators therefore argue that rather than being reflected in discourse, identity is actively, ongoingly, dynamically constituted in discourse.”

Harold W. Noonan speaks in detail about personal identity theory and why it has recently been rejected by researchers in the field of discursive theoretical approaches. He exemplifies this by making a clear link between the self and the body that was thought to be a leading theoretical approach in identity. Noonan (2003, p.2) explains the relationship between body and identity in saying,

“The most natural theory of personal identity, which would be almost anyone’s first thought, is that personal identity is constituted by bodily identity ... according to this view personal identity is essentially no different from the identity of material objects in general. An artifact, like a ship, or a living thing, like an oak tree or a horse, persists through time.”

Therefore, what we have benefitted from the recently introduced approach of ‘social constructionist view’ is that there is no self-related identity. Instead, this approach examines people’s own understandings of identity to accomplish social action through the notion of how to use inner/outer selves rhetorically. However, there is no complete denial of inner self in the sense that this approach does not replace the inner self with the outer one. Instead, the identification of who we are to each other is in itself an important matter in discourse perspectives.

One more crucial feature of identity, as mentioned earlier, is the argument of the fact of identity as a process rather than a state. In this respect, it is thought that identity is something which develops over time and can never be static. In this sort of way (gender) identity is claimed to be multiple, fluid and never complete (Litossli and Sunderland: 2005, p. 7). Femininities and masculinities are to be different across populations and cultural contexts and even within individuals and over time as well. Eckert states that *“male and female, masculinity and femininity, are not equally dimorphic. Nor are they experienced or defined in the same way everywhere.”*(2003, p. 47). Thus femininities and masculinities as identity presentation have been defined by Johnson as “on-going social processes dependent upon systematic restatement”, and it is sometimes referred to as “doing identity work” (1997, p. 22).

It is also regarded to be, as one's sense(s) of oneself/selves as women or man, according to Litosseliti and Sunderland. This is in addition to the existence of contradictory identities.

1.4.6.1. Multiplicity of identities

Eckert (2003) emphasizes on the conception of the multiplicity of the categories of femininities as well as masculinities. She argues that these two categories can never be understood, seen and displayed in the same way everywhere in the world. In this respect, she considers that the social background as the main factor of gender conceptualization, determination, display, and also the way it is seen or viewed. Drawing on examples from the book of Robert Connell (1995) is the different classes and their perception of gender categorization. Thus, masculinity in working class has not the same meaning of masculinity in the upper-middle-class. Masculinity for working class individuals relies fundamentally on physical power, however; it mainly relies on technical (scientific and political) skills for upper-middle-class ones. Nevertheless, the development in technology is decreasing the connection between physical power and masculinity and logically increasing it between masculine power and science as well as politics. In the case of women, femininity in the global market necessitates delicacy and smallness but since the local market gives less importance to physical delicacy and more importance to physical work and self-defense in the workplace and out, less value is given hence to delicacy in connection with femininity. Eckert (2003, p. 48) says that *'Ignoring the multiplicity of masculinities and femininities leads to the erasure of experience for many people.'* This had been illustrated to be existing thanks to some examples supplied by the psychologist Carol Gilligan and her colleagues (e.g. Gilligan, Lyons and Hamner, 1990). In a study of a social segment of white middle class girls, they assert that they (the girls) start losing confidence in themselves at the stage adolescence. This comes to be contrasting to another study of African American girls who do not undergo the same case of crisis. On the contrary, they appear to show more confidence in themselves (AAUW 1992, p.13). This difference in girls' type of behaviour is referred to be the result of the differences existing between European American and African American gender discourses of heterosexuality. Thus, European American discourse had been found to be full of expressions and automatically conceptions of deference, subordination as well as dependence on men. By contrast, African American discourse had been found to show a lot of assertive and effective expressions and conceptions of confidence (Dill, 1979; Ladner, 1971; Staples, 1973).

However, the social American gender construct does not refer the effectiveness of the African American girls to gender but to their race and consider the one shown by the white middle class girls as the norm in female gender script and construction. So the main concept to illustrate is that society considers the African American girls' behaviour as unfeminine and inappropriate and cannot be associated with gender categorization and construct as seen by Americans. What can be said here is that if we consider the white middle class American girls' behaviour to be normative, we automatically find ourselves erasing the other gender experience of African American girls which is seen to be antisocial and hence making them completely invisible.

1.4.6.2. Gender practice

Eckert (2003) refers the gendered behaviour of both male and female individuals to the embedded powerful social acts and practices. She ascribes the gender order which brings out the different social male and female behaviour a powerful existence that cannot be ignored in society. This means that living to be a woman or a man is something that is well drawn and structured in society. However and due to the social changes that happened lately in what concerns being a man or a woman, the social categorization of gender has become of no relation to the biological genitals of both men and women. That is to say the practicing of gender roles that are out of the drawn social structure have become more common to the point that they cannot be ignored in society. In this way, the sex of the individual has become of less importance due to the dynamic changes in society that gave gender an inevitable and different perspective from which it has to be seen. So, changes like having homosexuals in society mustn't be ignored although they get out of the social scripts of the gender order. Eckert says (2003, p.51):

“The development of such non-traditional practices in recent years has contributed to changing the meaning of male and female and thus to changing the gender order, the social structures that in their turn shape gender practices.”

Therefore, *social practice* is one of the most important parameters to measure the gender order in society and the traditional conception which relies on the biological differences can no more be sufficient to determine the gender order. Eckert (2003, p. 51) adds *“We use the term social practice to refer to human activity when emphasizing the conventional aspect of activity and its relation to social structure.”*

In this respect, whatever the sex of the individual is, it can no more be the determinant of what social practice he chooses to do in his/her life although the adoption of non-common practices in relation to gender is somewhat still small in number as opposed to the commonly known ones. But, even though they are not common, Eckert claims they are part of the picture and cannot be ignored.

1.5. Conclusion

This chapter has presented the first as well as the most recent work on language and gender. It sums up the main developmental understandings of language in relation to gender in adopting the latest notions in language such as discourse; context and identity. In this respect, the deficit approach is an approach which sees women language as deficient. The dominance approach sees men as dominating all public spaces, working spaces, work, and so on. In contrast to those approaches, the difference approach does not devalue women's language or men's one. It only describes them. Next, there emerged the Feminist waves which asked for women's right in all fields such as education, courts, public spaces, and so on. These waves contributed a lot to the present day women situation. Not only this, but it contributed to the development of research in interdisciplinary sciences like sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and even anthropology. The next section will introduce the main concepts in politeness theories and how they relate to gender studies in a more specific way.

Chapter Two

2.1.Introduction

This section is going to be devoted to the literature review of politeness offline and in online settings. Thus, the different theoretical overviews are going to be presented. So the first theory is that of Grice (1975) who presented his maxims and seemed to have given rise and eagerness to the study of politeness in general. The second theoretical model to be presented is that by Robin Lakoff (1975) who related the study of politeness to the social parameter of gender and in its turn, she created a huge debate over her supposedly relationship existing between gender and politeness. The third theory to be exposed is the one by Geoffrey Leech (1983) and the *Politeness Principles* which are mainly based upon Maxims of Grice. We are going also to have an overview on the most influential model of politeness which is the one by Brown and Levinson (1978). As it is well known, this model is the most used in politeness analyses; however, this does not prevent us from exposing its weak points and negative aspects in it. A short overview on impoliteness (Culpeper, 2006) study is given since it has lately been argued that impoliteness is neglected by researchers and has to be in focus exactly as in the case of politeness. Also, this section is going to focus on intercultural communication, mainly politeness in online community practices. It introduces works by researchers on politeness negotiation in multiple online community practices. Gender, which is a major parameter in this study, is found very controversial online bringing mixed results among researchers as will be seen in this chapter.

2.2. Politeness theorizing

Politeness has been given a great importance by researchers in the field of sociolinguistics. However, despite the fact that a lot of research has been done on politeness in the last two decades, its definition remains unclear in the sense that its ambiguity and fluidity makes it difficult to come at common agreements on it. This is due to the fact that when applying certain theories on specific cultural backgrounds, different types of results appear.

In this sort of way, the most known example of having a problem with politeness interpretation is the fact of ritualized expressions that persons get used to in the course of their interactions. We can have an example from our Arabic background that the answer to accept an invitation to dinner from someone you know should not be 'no'. In our cultural background, individuals have to learn some courtesy that refusing someone inviting you to dinner or lunch is somewhat impolite to do. In this way, Marquez Reiter

(2000, p. 3) says:

“Politeness is not a characteristic inherent to the action itself but is constituted by an interactional relationship, a relationship based upon a standard shared, developed and reproduced by individuals within a social group”

So some politeness behaviours should not be referred to the fact of being polite but to cultural ritualised facts. Hence, every culture has its own ritualised politeness behaviours. If we take an example from a Chinese situation we would present the example by Gu (1990) who describes accepting a present from the first interactional event as something unacceptable in the social dimensions and norms of the Chinese society.

If we take the fact of politeness in general, we may follow what has been supplied in discursive politeness a difference between two kinds of politeness. They are Politeness1 and politeness2. The first is a kind of politeness is that which must be referred to the participant in the interaction (H) whereas the second kind of politeness is that which has a relation to the analyst. That is to say, it is the interpretation and analyses by the one who theorises politeness. So it has lately been discussed that the definition of politeness has become unclear and so controversial to the point that one cannot make the right choice between the hearer’s interpretation and the analyst’s one. In this respect, Eelen (2001, p. 109) notes, *“In everyday practice (im) politeness occurs not so much when the speaker produces behaviour but rather when the hearer evaluates that behaviour”*. So, the hearer in this field of discursive politeness research has got an important role in the determination of politeness. All this falls thanks to the theorisation of discourse analysis which enlightened the research in politeness. Discourse, as it will be later on explained in more details, does not operate at the sentence level only; it goes beyond this level to include all the situational factors into consideration. This means that theorisation within the field of discourse analysis takes the interaction at longer stretches. So this gave rise to something called *evaluation* of politeness behaviour which means ‘how the hearer interprets the speaker’s behaviour’.

In our analyses of politeness here in this research, we are going to work with this model of discursive politeness research for it is a more flexible model that gives more opportunity to individuals so as to deal with politeness in the right way. However before going into any deep analyses, we have to take into consideration some of the most important literature review and its development within the field of politeness

theorization.

2.2.1. The Cooperative Principle and Conversational Maxims

The general overview of politeness introduced by Grice is that all conversationalists have something called the *propensity* to cooperate with their interlocutors so that they can achieve effective communication. Grice (1975, p.26) states the following:

“Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.”

Grice introduced the Cooperative Principle for the achievement of maximally effective interaction and exchange of information by presenting his four maxims. They are maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner. Grice believes that when people communicate effectively, they will try to be informative, truthful, relevant, and avoid ambiguity. We can rely on this model to explain the theory of Grice in what follows:

Quantity

- be as informative as required. (Don't say too much or too little.)
- Make the strongest statement you can.

Quality

- Do not say false beliefs.
- Do not say something in lack of adequate evidence.

Relation

- Be relevant. (Stay on topic.)

Manner

- Avoid obscurity of expression.
- Avoid ambiguity.
- Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).

-Be orderly

However, this model has been criticised by Robin Lakoff who asks good questions such as the following: ‘why don’t people follow Grice’s (1975) ‘Rules of Conversation’?’, ‘Why not always speak logically, directly and to the point?’ She explained this issue by relating it partly to the need for politeness rules (Lakoff 2004, p. 152). In this respect, we are going to present Lakoff’s theory of politeness.

2.2.2. Robin Lakoff

Lakoff, basing her theory, on Grice’s Maxims suggests that politeness is structured on three rules:

- 1) Formality: keep aloof
- 2) Deference: give options and
- 3) Camaraderie: show sympathy

She ascribes all these rules to the speech of women (believing that women are more polite than men). Holmes (2006, p. 152) in the book of *Language and Woman’s Place* notes in this respect the following:

‘While rule1 and 2 are clearly aspects of negative politeness, recognizing a person’s need for autonomy or “space”, rule 3 refers to positive politeness need- individuals need approval from others, their need to be liked, their need to express shared values and attitudes and so on. In this area, then, Lakoff anticipated the most influential theory of politeness in the last thirty years and her reflections on the implications of these three politeness rules for gendered interaction provoked an astonishingly fruitful spate of research.’

Lakoff argues that politeness basic rules are universal even if they dialectally it is claimed that Grice’s Maxim fall under Lakoff’s first rule of politeness which is formality. It is claimed that both of Grice and Lakoff believe of the universality of their rules of politeness.

However, according to Brown (1976, p. 264), Lakoff’s rules of politeness are seen to be rigid. In the same way, Tannen (1985) criticizes Lakoff’s politeness rules to be unsatisfactory in explaining the complex phenomenon of politeness. Watts (2003), in his turn, states that Lakoff’s theory of politeness does not explain how speakers come to form sentences which can be classified as polite.

2.2.3. Politeness Principles: Geoffrey Leech

The pragmatic theory of Leech is also structured upon Grice's conversational principles. Politeness, in his view, is considered as a regulative factor in interaction and as a key to explain meaning indirectly. The theory of Leech claims strongly for the importance of the communicative goal of the speaker. He emphasizes on "the goal-oriented speech situation in which S uses language in order to produce a particular effect in the mind of the H" (1983, p. 15). He defines politeness as "interpersonal rhetoric" where he sets the three kinds of principles. Grice's Cooperative Principles (CP), his own Politeness Principles (PP) and Irony Principle (IP), Leech claims that PP "designed to minimize (all things being equal) the expression of polite beliefs" (1983). Leech's PP consists of a set of Maxims, they are as follows: 1) tact, 2) Generosity and 3) approbation, 4) modesty, 5) agreement 6) sympathy. Leech asserts that the speaker should always work for the best of the interlocutor (hearer). Leech advocates that Gricean CP and his PP interact with each other. In this respect, he sees the CP are used to explain how utterances are used to express the indirect meanings of the speaker and PP help us understand the indirectness of the speaker. However, the pragmatic theory of Leech had also been exposed to many kinds of criticizing. For example Fraser (1990) sees that Leech's PP is too theoretical because it does not explain which maxims are to be used and how they are formulated, etc. Also, Mey (1993) criticises the theory of Leech for does not take the fact of context of situation into consideration. So Fraser and Mey had proved the failure of Leech's PP because he neglects the cultural and situational context. Not only that but many researchers on an important point on Leech's PP which is the fact of leaving the Maxims open. Brown and Levinson claim that in creating a new maxim every time to explain politeness, there will be an infinite number of Maxims (1987, p. 4). Instead, they suggested forming a model to account for politeness choices made by speakers in interaction personally and cross-culturally either.

2.2.4. Brown and Levinson's Theory of Politeness

The most influential theory of politeness is that proposed by proposed by Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson. It was originally published in 1987. This theory is so controversial that it attracted considerable criticism (Matsumoto, 1988; Ide, 1989). Brown and Levinson were the first to systematize the politeness theory by observing some similarities in the linguistic strategies used by people from different language

backgrounds: English, Tzeltal and Tamil. Their work consist mainly of two separate parts: the first part is their fundamental theory about the nature of politeness and how it functions in the course of interactions. The second part is a list of strategies known as “Politeness Strategies”. The most important concept in the theory of politeness by Brown and Levinson is that of *Face*.

So face is claimed to be the motivation behind politeness behaviour. In reality, their politeness theory is influenced by the work of Goffman who introduced the notion of ‘Face’. So for a better understanding of this notion, we should refer to the work of Erving Goffman (1967).

Goffman defines face in the following way “pieced together from the expressive implications of the full flow of events in an undertaking” (1967, p.31). In this definition, he stresses the fact that face is constituted in social interactions. That is to say, face does not reside in an individual but it is negotiated in the flow of communicative events. Goffman (196, p.5) adds that face is “*the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact*”

In this respect, the line was also defined so as to explain how face works as a “*pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts by which he expresses his view of the situation and through this evaluation of the participants, especially himself*” (Goffman, [1955]1967, p. 5)

So, on the ground of what Goffman offers here, one would claim that face is not seen as a static image imposed on individuals. Rather, it is formed during ‘a particular contact’. From this point of view, face is seen as the result of face-work during interactions. In this respect Goffman, in turn, defines face-work as “*the actions taken by a person to make whatever he is doing consistent with face*” (Goffman [1955]1967, p.12).

Haugh (2013) explains, according to Goffman that face includes what can be said and what can be done either in stating the following

« *In other words, facework involves the verbal and nonverbal acts through which an individual expresses evaluations of himself and others that results in the lines underpinning the face of the speaker and others being “maintained”, “lost”, “saved”, or “given”* »

This means that face and face-work are inextricably linked with each other. Thus on the ground of Goffman's theory of face and face-work, Brown and Levinson built their seminal theoretical work of politeness by expanding the notion of face to the 'positive and negative face (Brown and Levinson, 1987)

Brown and Levinson suggest that all interactants have an interest to maintain two types of face during the course of their interactions. They call them "positive" and "negative" face. Let us start with the definition of the first. Face wants i.e. the positive face. Brown and Levinson claim that positive face is the wish to "be desirable to at least some others" whereas negative face is the wish to have one's "actionsunimpeded by others" (P62). So positive face needs can be said to be the need to be liked and admired whereas negative face needs is considered to be the need for not being imposed upon. This theory of politeness by Brown and Levinson make a strong claim to assert that most relationships between individuals are stable and maintained by universal rules to maintain each other's' face. There are a lot of researchers who support this theory of politeness. Among these researchers Arndt and Janney (1985, p. 293) who claim the following: "*The desire to maintain face and the fear of losing it are interpersonal universals transcending all sociocultural, ethnic, sexual, educational, economic, geographical and historical boundaries.*"

Nevertheless and after many attempts by researchers to apply Brown and Levinson's model of politeness, it has become very evident that this theory of politeness cannot account for the different situations in the world' languages and cultures making it clear that the model given by Brown and Levinson is not universal at all.

Brown and Levinson's approach of politeness, as it is later on commented by Holmes (1995, p. 5) considers

"Any utterance which could be interpreted as making a demand or intruding on another person's autonomy can be regarded as a potential face-threatening act. Even suggestions, advice and requests can be regarded as face-threatening acts, since they potentially impede the other person's freedom of action."

In their turn, Brown and Levinson claim that "Certain kinds of acts intrinsically threaten face" (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.65). So any kind of threatening either the positive or negative face will influence the maintenance of relationships. The notion of face in politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1987) derives another notion in case

people try to maintain relationships. This notion is that about “*face-threatening acts*”. So, individuals, according to Brown and Levinson, try maximally to minimize the threat that can be caused at any given situation or interaction. Furthermore, they propose that the degree of threat is could be evaluated in relation to three sensitive social variables. They are:

- Social Distance between the interlocutors(D)
- Relative power of the interlocutors(P)
- Absolute Ranking of impositions carried in the act in a certain culture(R)

Besides these three variables, one can measure the degree or seriousness of a face-threatening act according to the participants in interaction. Then, participants, in different situations and interactions, choose strategies which can suit the needs of these situations and interactions. Therefore, there exist a kind of direct relationship between the seriousness of a face threatening act and the strategies used by individuals to save their face. Thus, the relation is that the greater the threat of an act, the more polite strategy is required. In this respect, Brown and Levinson propose a diagram for five strategic choices for speakers.

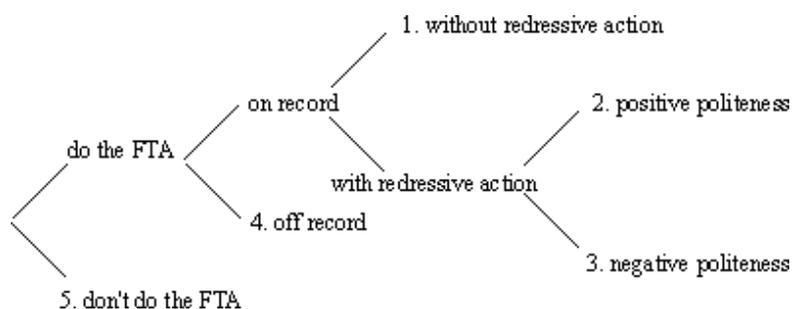


Figure 1 : Possible strategies for doing FTAs

As shown in the table above, the first strategy – bald on record, (do the FTA). Here in this case, urgency is needed and face need is not uppermost in the situation. This example explains the situation

“Don’t sit! There is an insect!”

So the expression “there is an insect” makes it very clear that the expression (order) “don’t sit” is never impolite since the urgency of the situation takes precedence.

The second and third strategies, according to the diagram by Brown and Levinson, are concerned with positive and negative faces. These two strategies involve redressive actions so as one can consider the other’s face and mitigate the possible face-threatening act. According to Brown and Levinson, individuals use these two strategies in order to save their own or others’ face for the purpose of not having relationship cut or break down.

The fourth strategy (off-record) is used when the speaker considers the stake of face loss is too great and decides to address his interlocutors in an ambiguous way in the sense of giving hints. In this case the speaker leaves the situation open and let it to the speaker to decide how to interpret his interlocutor’s expression. Brown and Levinson claim for fifteen off-record strategies. They are as follows: give hints, give association clues, presuppose, understate, overstate, use tautologies, use contradictions, be ironic, use metaphors, use rhetorical questions, be ambiguous, be vague, over-generalize, displace H, be incomplete, use ellipsis. These off-record strategies are considered to be the most polite way of avoiding face-threatening acts, however, their use, in reality, is so problematic because the interlocutor’s interpretation remains difficult to decide upon. The last strategy (don’t do the FTA) is claimed to be used where the FTA is considered to be too great by the speaker and decides to say or do nothing so as to avoid face loss.

A lot of examples have been given to explain and illustrate the use of these strategies, let us consider the following situation to explain what has been mentioned earlier:

- You have just realised that you do not have any money to take a bus or a taxi for an urgent visit to your mother at hospital after receiving a call that she is in a dangerous situation. So you normally need to borrow some money from a friend, you may apply:
 - 1- **‘Bald on record’** if you say “I need some money, it is urgent, could you lend me some please?”

In this case, you do nothing to minimise the degree of the threat of your/ his face.

So the FTA is too big here.

- 2- **“Positive strategy”** if you say:” Hey, mate, how are you? Do you have some money with you?”

In this case the use of ‘mate’ and ‘how are you?’ are used to signify intimacy with the hearer and the tone of the request is more casual and intimate. However and due to cultural differences between cultures, one might consider the first strategy to be more casual because it is direct and has no twisting ways to make you think that you really care for him in the Arabic culture. By contrast, the second could be interpreted as twisting and having played with the hearer’s mind to make him believe you care for him and then can lend you the money. So, cultures are clearly different in perspectives of interpreting politeness and impoliteness behaviour for both of the speaker and the hearer.

- 3- **“Negative politeness”** if you say “I feel really embarrassed to tell you something like this but do you mind borrowing me some money?” “My mum is in an urgent and dangerous situation at hospital and need to go and see her immediately” “ I forgot my purse at home”

In this case, you are explaining the entire situation to show that you really need the money for your urgent situation.

- 4- **“Off-record”** if you say “Oh! My God. I forgot my money at home. I need some to go and visit my mum at hospital, what shall I do now? Where can I find money now?”

In this case, you are requesting the money in an implicit way. It is upon the interlocutor to decide whether he gives you the money you are in need or not. However, a case like this happens many times with a lot of individuals and one can never be sure whether the speaker is requesting money in an indirect way or just complaining his situation. This last interpretation has nothing to do with cultural differences but with human traits of being unaware in cases of danger and start saying a lot of things without paying attention to what to say until you receive the help. In case of this kind you may respond “Oh, thank you! But I did not mean to ask for your help, I was just explaining my situation!”

- 5- **“don’t do the FTA”** if you say nothing but decide to go on foot in a hurry.

Among the five strategies, positive and negative politeness is considered to be more important in discussion because they are closely related to “face”. Here, Brown and Levinson give a list of fifteen possible positive and ten politeness strategies which are utilised by speakers to support or protect the hearer’s face.

Positive Politeness strategies are used to express friendliness in order to minimise the distance between speakers. The strategies are as follows: notice, exaggeration, intensified interest, in-group identity markers, seeking agreement, avoiding disagreement, presupposing common ground, jokes, concern for the hearer’s wants, promises, optimism, including the hearer in the activity, giving reasons, hedging, assuming reciprocity and giving sympathy. Here are some examples to explain more below:

Joke:

“Let me tackle the steak and then I can go on to deal with the ice-cream”

Avoiding disagreement:

(Two people trying to choose a good restaurant and ‘A’ wins out in his suggestion)

A: “You mustn’t be happy with my choice”

B: “Yes, but it does not matter anyway”

Attending to the hearer:

“You look so pale dear! Why don’t you go and see a doctor?”

Hedging an opinion:

“It is a kind of hard for me to do!”

“It is somewhat heavy for me to hold alone!”

Promises:

“Do you agree to go with me next time?” “Yes, I promise!”

Negative Politeness is a kind of politeness that can regard your speech as imposing on or somewhat intrusive to the hearer that can limit his behaviour (the hearer’s one). Thus there are some other strategies which are used to avoid such feeling and preserve the other’s face. Brown and Levinson claim that negative politeness is

most similar to what people mean by being polite. So, strategies of negative politeness can include being indirect, questioning, being pessimistic, minimizing the imposition, showing deference, apologising, impersonalization, stating the face-threatening act as a general rule, nominalization and incurring a debt. Here are some examples for illustration:

Being indirect:

“It is quite hot in here!” (You are normally asking implicitly the interlocutor to turn the air conditioner on)

Showing deference:

“Looking forward to seeing you again!”

Apologising:

“I cannot go with you, I apologise for that”

Minimizing the imposition:

“Do you mind helping me?”

“I wonder whether you could send me the full details”

Impersonalisation:

“It has been done here!” (In case you do not want to mention who did it”)

These are some strategies that by Brown and Levinson in the use of politeness model in the field of politeness research.

2.2.5. Criticism of Brown and Levinson’s Theory

The earlier mentioned strategies are very helpful in analyzing politeness in general and face-work in special. However, some strategies are not without criticism. The most important types of criticism fall within these main following points. Mills (2011: 20) cites the following:

‘Critics such as Eelen (2001) have focused on a number of different problems with Brown and Levinson’s work, most notably their reliance on speech act theory, the model person/individualism, their model of communication, their definition of

politeness, their understanding of the role and function of variables and their assumptions about the universal nature of politeness.'

In general terms, Mills and many researchers do not find the model of politeness introduced by Brown and Levinson as fitting to all situations faced by participants. Mills comments (2003: 57)

"And yet, despite the fact that data can be found to fit the model, to prove that speakers use positive politeness and negative politeness strategies, it is clear that politeness is a much more complex phenomenon."

Watts et. al consider that in spite of the different theories of politeness, as cited in Mills (2003, p. 57), the conceptual view remains elusive. She says:

'Although data can be found which seem to prove that this model of politeness is adequate, when we analyse how politeness actually functions within conversation, Brown and Levinson's model can only deal with certain elements of the data, for example where participants are overtly and clearly polite, and not others.'

Some other researchers synthesise the critical points about this model and summarise them on these three points: a) The universal claim of face; b) The conceptualisation of politeness strategies; and c) Face-threatening acts. We are going to present these problems in some brief explanation drawing on a number of researchers who proved the inconsistency and shortage within this model. We are going to focus on the universal nature claimed for politeness theory by Brown and Levinson and especially that of 'face'.

2.2.5.1. The universal claim of 'face'

Politeness theory by Brown and Levinson assumes that the strategies are universal in the sense that they can be applied on any kind of situation in the world, context or culture. In this respect Werkhofer (1992, 2005) states the following comment on Brown and Levinson's theory

"...all versions of this view either neglect social realities completely or, adopting a remarkably simplistic, traditional approach, reduce them to only a small set of vaguely defined dimensions which are then relegated to a secondary status, thus again emphasizing individualism"

Many other researchers (Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994) have criticised this theory as being related to the social norms of the Anglo-Saxon society and mainly to the tradition of the model person. Matsumoto (1988, 1989) has shown that the concept of face is different in the Japanese society. Matsumoto (1988, p. 405) states what follows:

“What is of paramount concern to a Japanese is not his/her own territory, but the position in relation to others in the group and his/her acceptance of others. Loss of face is associated with the perception by others that one has not comprehended and acknowledged the structure and hierarchy of the group.”

On the other hand, Mao (1994, p. 460) suggests that in the Chinese society, face is quite different from that explained by Brown and Levinson about the English language (society). He says that their concepts of face are oriented towards an ideal social identity giving rise to public image. This definition of face is different from the definition supplied by Brown and Levinson as something which does not impose on individual freedom of action. They see that any impediment to the hearer’s freedom of action is actually considered as a face threatening act. However, in the Chinese social norms, culture and beliefs, it is not considered as a face threatening act if someone insists on another one to have dinner with him at an expensive restaurant. So, some of the face threatening acts in the English society are not seen to be so in the Chinese society. Thus, in their social norms, it is not a good social act to reject someone’s invitation. On the other hand for the speaker, it is considered to be a duty for him to insist on someone to accept his invitation so as to be seen and felt sincere (by his interlocutor) in inviting him.

If we get back to the Japanese research on politeness, Ide (1989) argues that conventions can result in some of the politeness behaviour and utterances. She supports her claim by supplying the example of greetings that all people learn from their society. She (1988, p.242) says:

“if the framework of linguistic politeness is to restrict the scope to a rational or logical use of the strategies, we will have to exclude not only the use of honorifics but also greetings, speech formulas used for rituals and many other formal speech elements which are used according to social conventions.”

In the same sort of way, and focusing on the notion of face, Chang and Holt (1994, p. 126) suggest:

“Western understanding of facework is very much influenced by the idea of impression management, reflecting the dominant individualistic characteristics of Western cultures. This can be contrasted with the Chinese conception of mien-tze, which places more emphasis on the nature of the relationship.”

Not only that but some other researcher such as Bargiela-Chiappini (2003) suggests that context of situation is a good instrument and concept in conceptualizing politeness. That is say; politeness has to be seen from a perspective of being variable from one cultural background to another. In the same sort of way, Spencer-Oatey (2008, p.20) makes it clear that “politeness is managed through multiple aspects of language use”. Also, politeness can work in different fields like discourse, illocution, etc. So, the meaning of (im) politeness can change from one situation to another.

All these critiques by researchers on the theory of Brown and Levinson focus on the point that this theory is concerned with an individualistic culture disregarding other cultural contexts. However, researchers claim that over-emphasising cultural contexts may risk stereotypical conceptions within cultures. Thus, it is preferable to investigate the context in interactions first, instead of basing judgments on the interlocutor’s cultural background. In addition to this, even though researchers criticise the universality of face, they consider face wants as universal. For instance, O’Driscoll (1996) states that face wants are universal although the degree of face needs might vary with backgrounds. So it is agreed upon the universality of face wants and that the negotiation of face remains something universal in the investigation of politeness.

2.2.5.2.The conceptualization of politeness strategies

The conceptualization framework of Brown and Levinson’s strategies has also largely criticized within the work of a number of researchers in politeness analysis. The *first* point is that some research workers in politeness claimed that Brown and Levinson had based their examples on the sentences level speech acts only (Coupland *et al.*, 1988; Holmes, 1999; Blum-Kulka, 1990; Wilson *et al.*, 1991/1992). For example, Coupland *et al* (1988, p.225) state that politeness should be made to “confront the sequential realization of politeness phenomena in discourse.”

Johnson (1992), on the one hand, notes for the lack of context in the theory of Brown and Levinson. Calvo & Geluykens (1995) also indicate that context is not mentioned in Brown & Levinson’s research. Calvo & Geluykens (1995, p.5) state that

“FTAs in conversation should be investigated in relation to the longer sequential organization in terms of turn-taking and not just in terms of sentence-level speech acts”

As a result of these weaknesses in the theory of politeness by Brown and Levinson (1987), they admitted them and called for a discursive approach for politeness theory. They suggest of applying speech act analysis in politeness investigation, which selects “more directly demonstrable categories as done in conversation analysis and then ... [gives] a derivative account of the intuitions underlying speech act theory” (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 10). By this account, a situational-based investigation is needed. However, this never denies the need for speech Acts analysis in politeness investigation. So, Brown and Levinson claim for the need to the Speech Act Analysis and think it is something inseparable from politeness analyses.

The *second* point of weakness in politeness theorization by Brown and Levinson’s strategies is their claim for some acts to be face threatening ones and that can entail conflicts. Kasper (1990, p.195) sees communication as “fundamentally dangerous antagonistic behaviour”. He also claims that the strategies of politeness are used to avoid others in conversation.

Since the degree of face threat is seen to be somewhat greater, it is assumed by Brown and Levinson, that speakers will be more direct in their interactions. Blum Kulka (1989) argues that there is no linear relationship between indirectness and politeness. In the same sort of way, Sifianou (1992) argues that Brown and Levinson’s assumption “reflects a preoccupation with impositions and a negative evaluation of politeness (p.156). Bulm Kulka, in her cross cultural empirical studies finds that the central part of politeness is not in indirectness but it is related to clarity with the interlocutor.

The *third* point is the claim by Brown and Levinson of the mutual exclusivity of positive and negative politeness. In this point, there are some researchers who argue that some utterances can be oriented to both negative and positive face simultaneously. In communicative acts, speakers are found to use complicated positive and negative politeness strategies (Craig et al, 1986). More recently Wilson et al (1991/1992) found that some written monologues contain directives which threaten both positive and negative politeness simultaneously.

2.2.5.3. Face threatening acts

It has been found very clear that the positive and negative politeness strategies

based on face are inadequate in explaining a lot of politeness and impoliteness phenomena. In the theory of politeness under study, Brown and Levinson claim that speakers try to mitigate the potential face threat carried in his/ her utterance so as to maintain the hearer's wants to be approved (positive politeness) or to be free of imposition (negative politeness). They claim that the degree of face threat determines the selections of politeness strategies by speakers. And the degree or seriousness of face threat can be measured by the following points: a) the speaker's and hearer's power relationship (P), b) distance (D), and c) degree of act imposition. They assume for a linear relationship between the three variables and the seriousness of a face threat. However in addressing the wider dimensions of communication, this assertion is argued to be simple (Baxter, 1984; Gu, 1990; Ting- Toomey, 1988).

Holtgraves & Yang (1992) in the investigation of the power and distance dimensions related to politeness among American Korean subjects, have found that the least polite strategies are used with the most distant speakers and this is contrary to the Brown and Levinson's assumption about the most politeness strategies used with strangers and distant speakers.

2.2.5.4. Speech act theory

According to Mills (2011), Brown and Levinson rely on the speech act theory in their analysis of politeness. One of the most important works following this theory is Holmes (1995) who decides what constitutes to be a compliment in some communities she analysed and made quantification of them. However one of the problems is that not all the compliments have the real function of complimenting someone. So some utterances taking the form of a compliment cannot be taken to be so by the hearer. Also, compliments cannot be realized only by linguistic behaviour. So this type of post Brown and Levinson's model of politeness does not acknowledge that some linguistic polite behavior such as requests, compliments and apologies can be realized using different types of linguistic behaviour. For example the utterance 'I am sorry' is not necessarily an utterance functioning as an apology. It can be clear for both speaker and hearer, that expressions like 'I am sorry' does not have the meaning of an apology but 'surface' apology or used as an index of impoliteness. That is to say, the utterance 'I am sorry' is not used always in a *sincere* way. Mills carries on in her explanation that in the type relying on traditional speech act theory the former example with the different realizations of apologies are not counted and hence the analysis of how people

apologise is not complete. On the contrary when we adopt the second type of analysis where the function of politeness markers differs from its conventional surface usage this would in fact be counted as an apology (giving a false view of the way interactants use politeness resources to be insincere, ironic or impolite) Mills (2011). Mills carries on by claiming that one of the greatest problems within politeness theory by Brown and Levinson and also Janet Holmes is that they see politeness as necessarily as a positive thing and always something nice without being aware of the fact that speakers can use it in a manipulative way. In this sense and since very earlier periods of British history politeness had been considered as a kind of lying and hence should be seen as ‘a velvet glove within which to hide one or another kind of iron fist’ (Sell, 1992, cited in Watts, 1992a, p. 45). Therefore, politeness has long been used by speakers as a tool to realize some goals either long term or short term goals without giving any consideration to sincerity. In the politeness model by Brown and Levinson, we have to assume that all politeness is sincere. Another problem with the model of politeness of Brown and Levinson is the fact that they consider politeness as a matter of essentially avoiding Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) but do not consider that the definition of an FTA is a complex concept. For example the mitigation of the request ‘could you pass the salt?’ by using ‘could’ is not applicable in many societies. Furthermore, there exists no threat of face in this kind of situation since the speakers are strangers to each other it cannot lead them to further conversation. Moreover, politeness is not only a matter of avoiding FTAs but it can further encompass many other behaviours such as hiding someone’s real intentions and avoiding responsibility. Mills gives the example of apologies which, in Brown and Levinson’s terms, are viewed as a way of a debt to be paid by the one being impolite in his previous actions. This view of debt has not always the same features in consideration with politeness because of the fact of the variation existing within the interactants in the sense of having apologies from inferiors to superiors, or vice versa where the situation is quite scarce and complicated. The example of the apology of the White House to Mrs. King for his claim that King was a communist was declared to be an explanation rather than an apology as said by Mrs. King. All this has a relation with complex goals the different speakers and hearers want to fulfill (Lakoff, 2000, p.26).

Also, one of the main features in the analysis of politeness by Brown and Levinson is the reification. Politeness has been reified in same way done by the previous researchers in politeness such as Leech (1983).

2.2.5.5. The Model Person/ Individualism

Brown and Levinson focus on the 'Model Person' because they argue that speakers are rational in their interaction using language to achieve their short and long-term goals. Thus, speakers use the best calculations in very strategic linguistic ways in the use of politeness so as to appear placating their interlocutors. However this atomistic notion of 'individualism' is central to the Western societies where they use manipulative ways only to achieve their goals. However, within Arabic-speaking cultures and Asian societies the situation is quite different. A model of politeness based on the individual is not valid (Ide 2005; Hamza 2007; Kadar and Mills, 2011a). Ide (2005) characterizes this model of individualistic thinking stereotypically associated with the Western societies as 'the eagle soaring in the sky' in opposition to what Suzuki (1978, cited in Ide, 2005, p. 48) calls 'thinking in the forest' which is indicative to the mode of thinking dominating the Eastern societies. Mills (2011) explains this by claiming that in Eastern societies the individual is more concerned with the other trees (persons) surrounding him within the entire forest rather than assuming he can soar on the forest and map out their needs. This different Eastern model of individual indicates the inadequacy of the one introduced by the Brown and Levinson in the Western society.

2.2.5.6. Model of Communication

In the model of politeness introduced by Brown and Levinson, it is assumed that communication is totally perfect between interlocutors in the sense of the non-existence of any misunderstanding. This can be proved by the formulaic example of 'I am sorry' uttered by a speaker which is understood by the hearer that the speaker has apologized. Mills (2011, p.23) comments:

'Many theorists (Mills 2003a; Watts 2003) have drawn attention to the fact that communication and interpretation of utterances is much messier than this model can allow for, especially when considering politeness. Here, interpersonal relations and status are potentially up for grabs as they are continually being negotiated; difficult and sensitive negotiations are also being handled. It is therefore not surprising that this model of straightforward communication is untenable.'

2.2.5.7. Definition of politeness

Brown and Levinson define politeness in relation mainly to ‘the mitigation of face threats. Ide (1989) draws attention that when someone uses a particular honorific, he is mainly determining his position in relation to others within the social system and thus he is acknowledging the importance of the social group and contributing to the maintenance of the social system. Conversely if the speaker uses swear words he is challenging the social order in the community of practice he belongs to or the social system in general. A further problem within this model of politeness is that there is no clear definition of ‘impoliteness’ and it is considered just as an absence of politeness (Eelen, 2001, p. 98). Culpeper (2005, 2007), Bousfield (2008) Culpeper, Bousfield and Wichmann (2003) and Bousfield and Locher (2007) have defined politeness in a way which separates it from politeness by not simply being the opposite of impoliteness.

2.2.5.8. Variables

In the theory under criticism, Brown and Levinson argue for a three measures participants use in order to inflect and predict politeness behaviour on the part of both themselves and their interlocutors. Thus they see the speaker’s and hearer’s power relationship (P), distance (D), and degree of act imposition (R) as determiners and of politeness behaviour and help someone predict the polite or impolite acts of his/her interlocutor. In this respect, participants make these some calculations in relation to these three dimensions in order to be (im) polite, and can have some consciousness of the kind of polite behaviour their interlocutors can use with them. However Manke (1997) and Diamond (1996) have found- when using the parameter of power in institutions where ranking is an important factor in determining politeness behaviour by participants as claimed by Brown and Levinson- that those in position of power do not use the conventional forms of politeness associated with power but choose some deferential forms showing solidarity with their subordinates.

2.2.6. Discursive/Post-modern theories to (im) politeness research

Given the diverse discursive theoretical viewpoints of post-modern research to politeness, it is difficult for researchers themselves to come up with generalizing conclusions or a unified and more importantly clear framework that can account for politeness study. Nevertheless, it can be said that these theorists have got common points about conceptualizing and viewing politeness. They also seem to share the

viewpoint that the age of grand-theorizing in politeness is over. Thus, it has been concluded that politeness study should not deal with predictive, easy, and all-encompassing models which lead to stereotyping. In this respect, politeness theorists do not attempt to construct a general model of politeness like the one of Brown and Levinson since they recognize that so doing would lead to generalizations which are prone to stereotyping and which are based on ideologies of the dominant group (Mills 2003a, 2003b). Instead, theorists of discursive politeness aim to develop a more contingent type of theorization that can account for contextualized expressions of politeness and impoliteness. Also, discursive theorists try to focus more on participants' positions and what they display in their speech in the group rather than interactants' intentions and feelings.

Discursive theorising to politeness and impoliteness shares some common points in approaching (im) politeness. However, the points they share are too diverse that it is very difficult to group them under an overarching scheme. However, it is possible that we discuss the common points they share in studying politeness. Firstly, most discursive theorists share the view that politeness does not reside in utterances and are interested in the relation between politeness and impoliteness. Secondly, most discursive theorists try to describe the relation between individuals and society in the analysis of politeness by arguing that identity is not pre-formed and that politeness is constructed jointly within groups and individuals do not always choose instances of politeness behavior they use.

Thirdly, discursive theorists tend to use the same form of analysis although basing on different theoretical models. That is to say, they tend to question the role of the analyst and focus more on analyzing context. They tend to examine politeness within longer stretches of interaction rather than simply isolated forms in language. They also consider politeness as a judgment rather than seeing it as an element traced within the utterance itself. They tend to avoid generalizations and see politeness as a resource which can be accessed by participants rather than something inherent in utterances. These elements are discussed in detail by Mills (2011) in what follows.

2.2.6.1. Viewing politeness

Unlike Brown and Levinson, the definition of politeness is an intensely problematic term. For example, Terkourafi argues that discursive theorists have moved from seeing politeness as 'deviation from rational efficiency to a more comprehensive of politeness in context to a more comprehensive notion of politeness-in-context' (2001,

p. 6). She argues that politeness is not just strategic conflict avoidance' but also, 'social indexing' (2001) where participants (especially in Japan or China) focus more on discernment which is the participants' understanding of their positions vis-à-vis others in the group rather than the strategic use of language to achieve one's ends.

Some other theorists think that politeness as a term is problematic and use alternative terms instead. For example, Locher uses the term 'relational work' which is the 'work' that individuals invest in their relations with others (Locher, 2006a). Thus, politeness, for her, is a form of judgment within the wider term relational work. However, in the analysis of relational work where some forms can neither be seen as polite or impolite, the question of politeness and impoliteness is still undefined and nebulous. She also draws the attention to differentiate between the definition of politeness for the speaker and the hearer. She claims that politeness is a marked form of appropriate behavior and that the hearer will understand an expression as polite when it is marked and appropriate (Watts, 2003). Locher and Watts have also added elements which are judged to be impolite, over polite and politic. This, as a result has led to a great deal of discursive theorizing.

Locher (2006a, p. 264) draws attention to the fact of change within politeness and impoliteness. This fact was not considered in the work of Brown and Levinson (1987).

Terkourafi (2005a, p. 248) defines politeness in totally a different way in considering it as a question of frequency. She, in contrast to Brown and Levinson, says that 'politeness is a matter not of rational calculations, but of habits' (2005a, p. 250). So, focus should be on the norms of CofP rather than the individual's strategies.

Pizziconni (2007) has also shown that politeness is associated with different values in some cultures. In British English, politeness is related to considerateness while in Japanese, it is more likely to be associated within the social position of participants within groups. Thus, politeness is closely linked to social values within different cultures and this leads to different definitions and functions of politeness across cultures. Let us discuss these definitions of politeness views in detail.

a- Politeness is not utterances

In this sort of way, researchers argue that politeness does not reside in utterances. Locher and Watts argue (2007, p. 78) that 'no linguistic behavior is inherently polite or impolite. Watts (2003) draws on Relevance Theory to try to develop an analysis which

considers context. Locher argues that what is considered polite, impolite, or politic relies on participants who are part of the social group they belong to. Bousfield (2008) goes beyond focusing on the individual utterances to emphasize the activity types or discourse roles available to interlocutors by suggesting that the roles we are allocated and the discursive repertoires available to those roles determine largely the types and levels of politeness and impoliteness used.

Face, which is central in Brown and Levinson's model of politeness, is viewed differently by discursive theorists. Most of them criticize the static view Brown and Levinson tend to characterize with. Bousfield (2008, p. 42) says that face is "internally expected and externally realized in interaction, requiring in actuality some fine tuning or outright re-modification/ manipulation". It is rather a constantly negotiated process by interactants. Terkourafi (2007) argues that there is no faceless communication and interactants do 'information work' and 'facework' at the same time and all the time. Geyer (2008) claims that face is not fixed and it is achieved within interaction.

The face constituting theory of Arundale (2010) also suggests that face is an interactional achievement rather than an abstracted entity.

b- Relation between politeness and impoliteness

Impoliteness was firstly claimed to be the opposite of politeness by Brown and Levinson but discursive theorists such as Bousfield (2008, p.43) suggests that "impoliteness is very much the parasite of politeness". Bousfield (2008) and Culpepper (2007) have shown that impoliteness should be analysed both separately and in relation to politeness. Bousfield (2008, p.72) says that instead of seeing impoliteness as mitigating Face Threatening Acts, it is rather seen as the communication of intentionally gratuitous and conflictive verbal face threatening acts which are delivered on purpose.

c- Process

Discursive theorists tend to emphasize the fact of process rather than product in politeness analysis. This means that they give more attention to the choices that interlocutors could have made and the possibilities of misunderstanding, rather than assuming that politeness is a given and a product. In addition to this, discursive theorists analyse politeness in relation to the rest of the interaction. Bousfield (2008) is interested in the way that utterances lead in to both politeness and impoliteness. Also, he is interested in the effect of politeness on interlocutors. In some instances, as he argues,

the effect could be politeness whereas in others could be impoliteness.

2.2.6.2. The individual and society

The relationship between the individual and society is studied in politeness, especially from a discursive point of view. I present some of them below.

a. *No pre-formed identities*

Discursive theorists stress the fact that identities are constructed in the process of interaction and that politeness is a tool for individuals to construct their identities. Thus, the individual is not seen as a fixed entity in the way it was presented in Brown and Levinson's work on politeness. Rather, the individual is seen as the nexus of social forces and politeness as a response to the need to display a concern for the group (Kadar and Mills, 2011a).

b. *Co-construction*

Discursive theorists argue that politeness and impoliteness are achieved at the same time. This is evident in research by Bousfield (2007) where individuals should understand the hypothesized intention to make their judgments. Haugh (2007) argues that "(im) politeness is conceptualized in a collaborative, non-summative manner through interaction by participants. In this way, we can move our understanding of politeness¹ beyond the problematic encoding-decoding model of communication implicitly relied upon" in politeness theorising. Locher and Watts (2007, p. 72) claim that even the norms that govern politeness use and interpretation are constantly renegotiated by participants.

c. *Choices*

Discursive theorists do not simply assume that politeness is a matter of choices. They tend to focus on CofP or social factors which influence the production and interpretation of politeness. For example Yoshida and Sakurai (2006) show how interactants choose between plain style (honorific free) with family members and a more formal style where their social role as wife or husband is foregrounded. Within the same interaction, participants can switch between the two styles to show their awareness of their social roles to their interlocutors.

Discursive theorists are more concerned with a social model of politeness both at the level of community of practice and the wider social level. Leech (2007, p.170)

argues that “all polite communication implies that the speaker is taking account of both individual and group values”. So, these theorists try to integrate the wider the social norms and individual agency in politeness analysis. One of these wider social norms affecting politeness use is power and status.

2.2.6.3. Form of analysis

Discursive theorists approach politeness differently from those who follow Brown and Levinson model. Haugh (2007) argues that the discursive approach leads to the collapse of the analyst participation in the interpretation of politeness. This leads, for him, to focus on a qualitative rather than a quantitative kind of analysis of politeness. This also, as Haugh claims, leads to a burden of the validity of the analyst interpretation. However, if the analyst is aware of the way politeness is negotiated, then he/she could make interpretations in the same way as interactants.

a. Role of the analyst

In relation to certainty about politeness and impoliteness, the analyst’s role is downgraded by researchers such as Locher. In her analysis of advice-giving online column about politeness strategies used by participants, she (2006a, p. 262) states the following:

“It is not enough to identify mitigation strategies to claim that we have witnessed politeness as such. Nor does it seem justified to argue that the imperatives used for giving advice are 'impolite' or automatically 'less polite' than the mitigated variants in this context.”

From Locher’s point of view, it is not possible for the analyst to categorize certain linguistic forms as polite, non-polite, politic, or any other. She also argues that nothing in the utterance signals polite, non-polite, politic or over polite and it is the context itself that creates the rules of interpretation and appropriateness. Also, she goes on to argue that the analyst should be aware of the norms of appropriateness within certain community practices to be able to claim certain utterances are polite, or other. However, this does not guarantee that they are viewed in the same way by participants.

b. Context

Discursive theorists have a common point which is the focus on the context. So instead of disembodied, abstracted and invented examples, it is clear that only parts of

conversation in context can be employed, and contextual elements are used to clarify the meaning of those features which seem to be contribute to judgments of politeness or impoliteness.

Nevertheless, this has an impact on the type of theoretical model, which can be developed. Locher (2006) claims that theorists should be concerned with what is appropriate with each interaction and this leads to the localization of appropriateness. This type of localized analysis does not lead to grand theory. However, Terkourafi (2005a) suggests the possibility of analysis of micro as well as macro levels. Christies claims that "a context is a psychological construct, consisting of any set of mutually manifest assumptions that interlocutors in the process of producing and interpreting utterances infer to be relevant to the meaning of that utterance" (Christie, 2007, p.285).

c. Discourse

Discursive theorists examine politeness and impoliteness within longer stretches of discourse. Bousfield (2008) argues that it is not enough for us to analyse the explicit elements of talk which we could recognize as polite or impolite but we need to analyse the lead-in, onset and effect of politeness, as well as the response of the interlocutors.

d. Judgment

Judgment is an important element in the analysis of politeness and impoliteness within discursive theorizing. Also, impoliteness is often seen as an act which does not have the intention of offence but rather to vent anger and express distress and complaint. So, intention is an important element in addition to interpretation in the analysis of politeness and impoliteness.

Judgment of polite and impolite acts can be recognized within stereotypes as shown by Okamoto (2004, p.43) when he states that "the belief that women should use more honorifics or polite language than men is widely promoted as a behavioral norm in Japanese society". Thus, women not behaving as so, are judged to be acting impolitely.

e. Generalizations

Many of the discursive theorists still think it is possible to make generalisations about politeness across groups. Kadar and Mills (2011a) stress that although it is difficult to think of norms governing an entire language group, generalisations are still possible to be made.

For instance, Bousfield (2008) wishes making generalisations about negative and positive face in the UK and US but with some kind of hedging.

f. Resources

Both the model of Brown and Levinson and discursive research to politeness tend to see (im) politeness as a resource. But their definition is quite different. What, the discursive theorists add to the notion of resource is that it is not a stable set of linguistic items which unequivocally indicate politeness or impoliteness. Furthermore, Geyer sees politeness as a resource of identity. She argues that past theorists claim that one's identity leads to particular politeness acts; in contrast to this, she sees identity as "interactants' discursive ascription to a membership category" (2008, p. 49).

2.2.6.4. Spencer-Oatey and Rapport management

Spencer-Oatey's theory of rapport management (2008) also focuses on theorizing politeness as a form of interpersonal evaluation. In this respect, Spencer-Oatey (2008) supplies the broader notion of rapport management and notes that interpersonal rapport depends on three important elements, which can be summarized in *face*, *sociality rights* and *interactional goals*. All of these elements can contribute to either a success or a failure in interaction. Thus politeness has been defined differently by a number of researchers. It is characterized as an interpersonal attitude (Culpeper, 2011; Haugh, 2007a; Ruhi, 2008). Other researchers see it as an evaluation (Eelen, 2001; Haugh, 2007b; Locher and Watts, 2005; Mills, 2003; Spencer-Oatey, 2005; Watts, 2003).

2.3. Waves of politeness

Karen Grainger divided the study of politeness into three essential parts which she named 'waves of politeness'. By so doing, she differentiated between the ways of analyzing politeness and impoliteness by theorists of this field of study. We are going to see in detail how she presents these waves and on what bases.

2.3.1. First wave: Gricean Approaches

The first wave of politeness stems out from the philosophy of J. L. Austin (1962) and Paul H. Grice (1975). This approach is adopted by Lakoff (1973, 1989), Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) and Leech (1983). They all go beyond the four maxims of Grice's Cooperative Principle in the sense that there is more meaning in conversation than the maxims introduced. However, the most influencing model of politeness study is

the one introduced by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987). This might be due to its detailed explanation of why particular speakers choose particular lexical items on certain occasions. In this respect, Coupland, Grainger and Coupland (1988, p.253) claim: "Brown and Levinson's 1978 extended chapter transformed politeness from an apparently peripheral sociolinguistic concern into a distinctive theory of social interaction".

Since Brown and Levinson's model is the most influential; thus, the most used by researchers, it has gained the most criticism. The problem with this model is that it uses example that are not part of context. As supplied by researchers in discourse, much of the meaning of talk lies in its sequential and situational context. This is one of the most important points in post-modern approaches to politeness theory.

Other criticisms that apply the Gricean pragma-linguistic approaches are that they tend to focus more on the speaker's intension (e.g. Eelen, 2001; Mills, 2003; Arundale, 2008). Also, they tend to give a lot of importance to the analyst's interpretation of politeness. This is also a problem within post-modern researchers who tend to give importance to the participant's interpretation of politeness and impoliteness (Eelen, 2001; Mills, 2003; Watts, 2003, 2005; Locher, 2006).

2.3.2. Second wave: Discursive politeness

When trying to apply the Gricean approach (specifically the Brown and Levinson's model) on different situations and mainly cultures, researchers found that it fails in a lot of cases. As a result, the 'discursive' approach to politeness was developed. This approach sees meaning is more fluid than represented in Brown and Levinson's model. It is also negotiable between participants and cannot reside in the speakers' minds in the form of intention (Haugh, 2007). The discursive approach was initially developed by Watts (2003, 2005), Locher (2004, 2006) and Locher and Watts (2005). The main question is what it means to participants to be polite. This focus on participants' interpretations and evaluations of politeness leads some researchers like Watts, Ide and Ehlich (1992) and subsequently Watts (2003) and Locher (2004) to distinguish between first order and second order politeness. Locher and Watts (2005, p. 16) argue the following:

"We consider it important to take native speaker assessments of politeness seriously and to make them the basis of a discursive, data-driven, bottom-up approach

to politeness. The discursive dispute over such terms in instances of social practice should represent the locus of attention for politeness research.”

Thus, Locher and Watts argue that there is no place for second order politeness in the study of politeness. In other words, any technical and specialized notion of politeness that privileges the analyst's view should not be considered in politeness research. Instead, focus is put on the hearer's interpretation of politeness in naturally-occurring interactions.

The major advantage of the discursive approach is its focus on situated naturally occurring discourse data. This turn in politeness study has gained much currency in politeness research. Some of these important studies are Culpeper, Bousfield, and Wichmann (2003); Culpeper (2005), gender and politeness (e.g. Mills, 2003), politeness at work (e.g. Holmes and Schnurr, 2005; Mullany, 2006) and institutional politeness (e.g. Harris, 2001).

Nevertheless, not all of these researchers believe in the non-existence of a general and cross-culturally valid theory of politeness (Haugh, 2007, p. 297).

One other criticisms of the discursive approach as articulated by Terkourafi (2005) is that it goes away from trying to account for linguistic choices and reducing politeness theory to an account of what terms people use for their behaviour in various situations.

2.3.3. Third wave: sociological/ interactional approaches

While the post-modern approaches to politeness research can be considered as a response to the Gricean and Brown and Levinson's models of politeness, the interactional approaches cannot be said to contrast with either the postmodern research or the Gricean approaches because it overlaps with both of them. One common point between the Gricean and the interactional approaches to politeness is that both of them rely on the fundamentally Austinian notion of speech act theory. In this respect, what is under focus is the link between the linguistic forms and their functioning in meaning. O'Driscoll(2007, p.486) finds much of value in Brown and Levinson's theory. He points out that it provides a "culture-neutral, empirical tool for examining interaction 'on the ground' with pan-cultural applicability." Grainger (2011) places O'Driscoll, Arundale, Haugh, and Terkourafi in the 'interactional' category for they want to bring back to politeness theory the Goffman theory. This theory considers both philosophical/

linguistic accounts of how people interact and "the moral norms of considerateness which bind individuals qua interactants." (Goffman [1983]1997, p. 171). This includes the "mechanics of encounters" (Goffman 1997, p.172), like topic control conventions and the turn-taking that are described in conversation analysis (Sacks et al. 1978; Schegloff et al. 2002). The Face Constituting Theory introduced by Arundale, Haugh's critique of the discursive approach, and Terkourafi's frame based view have got a favour with the sociological approach to the analysis of interactional data. Also, Bargiela-Chiappini (2009) claims that politeness study could benefit from an ethno methodological perspective. This enables the analyst to make interpretations of politeness without having recourse to the ones of the participants. Thus the analyst justifies his/her interpretations by focusing on what participants make relevant in interaction. In this respect, the post-modern focus on meaning is kept without reducing the interpretations of politeness to a discussion of "folk" terms.

The interactional approach seems to take the best of the post-modern approach but retains the analyst technical 'second order' conception as a way of accounting for language in interaction.

2.4. First order and second order politeness

As it is noted earlier, the distinction between first order politeness and second order politeness has been made by Watts (1992). He defined first order politeness (politeness 1) as "the various ways in which polite behaviour is perceived and talked about by members of sociocultural groups" (1992, p.3), and second-order politeness (politeness2) as "a term within a theory of social behaviour and language usage" (1992, p.3). Thus, the former (politeness1) refers to common-sense beliefs on politeness and the latter (politeness2) refers to the scientific examination of politeness made by the analyst. Eelen (2001) further developed in more detail the distinction between politeness1 and politeness2. He distinguished between two types of first order notions of politeness: politeness in action (expressive and classificatory politeness1) and politeness as a concept (meta pragmatic politeness1). The former is related to "the way politeness actually manifests itself in communicative behaviour" (Eelen 2001, p.32) (cf. "perceived"), and the latter to "commonsense ideologies of politeness...the way politeness is used as a concept, to opinions about what politeness is all about" (2001:32) (cf. "talked about"). Eelen (2001) retained the notion of politeness2 as a "scientific conceptualization of the social phenomenon of politeness" (Eelen 2001, p.

43). However, he argued that the proviso that the key value of a theory of politeness was its ability to “explain the phenomena observed as politeness¹” (2001, p. 44).

In the same sort of way, the first second order distinction can touch the analysis of the notion of face. Thus, first-order face (face1) is equated with folk notions and expressions, while second-order face (face2) is defined as a theoretical construct (Terkourafi, 2007, 2009; O’Driscoll 2011; cf. O’Driscoll, 1996). Following this approach, the terms *miànzi* and *liǎn* (face1) would be situated instantiations of a single, universalizing, abstract concept” (i.e., face2) (Terkourafi, 2009, p.284). Nevertheless, this view neglects the fact that participants do not only talk about face, (by employing folk terms such as *miànzi* and *liǎn* in Chinese), but they may also experience cases of face(work) where emic terms would not normally apply since they are out of the folk discourse on face of that culture. Chang and Haugh (2011, forthcoming), in studying ‘strategic embarrassments’ in Taiwanese, argue that these strategic embarrassments are not readily discussed in the folk notions of *miànzi* and *liǎn*. Thus, Haugh notes that it is necessary to consider the fact that first order politeness (metapragmatics) cannot be encompassed by folk talk about politeness. In this respect, one has to take into consideration the perceptions of participants that arise during interactions and which are not commented upon explicitly.

2.5. Politeness online

Online politeness needs to be based on politeness offline. However, we should first give a glimpse on culture and intercultural communication.

2.5.1. Intercultural Communication

Intercultural communication has been very often thanks to online communication which facilitates communication between them. I start with presenting what is meant by culture.

2.5.1.1. Meaning of Culture

The studies of culture date back to Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) who approached 200 ways to define the culture concept. Atkinson (1996, p.625) defines cultures by saying, “... most typical form as geographically (and quite often nationally) distinct entities, as relatively unchanging and homogeneous and as all-encompassing systems of rules or norms that substantially determine personal behaviour”. This concept mainly attributes the national dimension of seeing cultures which is, in essence, a simple perspective. However many researchers have given a variety of views of seeing

culture and different dimensions to classifying cultures. Hofstede (2001), in his attempt of approaching cultural traits, defines culture as "*the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others*". It is always considered to be collective. It can be applied on tribes, ethnic groups, nations, and organizations. Also the term culture can be applied on genders, generations, social classes, etc in more advanced studies. Researchers do not have an agreement on how we can divide cultures and everyone poses a different set of dimensions that can help differentiate cultures. In 1952, U.S. anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn (1962) argued that there exist universal categories of culture from which he chooses the pattern of living or economic situation for societies as the main differentiating characteristic of cultures. As said earlier, models of dimensions of culture differ from one anthropologist to the other, however; the most influential one is the Hofstede's model of culture.

Hofstede's model of culture is the most renowned one for it is done on a large world scale. In 1970, he got access to a large survey database about people's values in more than 50 countries around the world. He got from his study five cultural dimensions with an added sixth dimension later on (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). These dimensions are as follows:

- a. High/ low power distance dimension which is the extent to which less powerful individuals in institutions accept and expect the distribution of power unequally.
- b. Uncertainty avoidance: this is defined as the extent to which individuals in societies are programmed to feel either comfortable or uncomfortable in unstructured situations such as surprising and unknown ones.
- c. Individualism/ collectivism: this relates to the degree to which individuals of a society are integrated into groups.
- d. Masculinity/ femininity: this is at a societal level referring to the distribution of values between the two genders.
- e. Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation: long-term refers to values perseverance, thrift, ordering relationships by status, and having a sense of shame as opposed to reciprocating social obligations, respect for tradition, protecting one's 'face', and personal steadiness and stability.
- f. Indulgence versus Restraint: this relates to the gratification versus control of basic

human desires related to enjoying life.

Although the Hofstede's model of culture seems more universalizing and more overwhelming, it has been criticized for its over generalizing conclusions related to society based on employees alone. Some of the criticisms of this model fall on the high/low power distance dimension and individual/ collectivism one. In western societies, the category that prevails is that of individualism and not collectivism that categorises societies like China. The second dimension based on high and low power distance can be exemplified in societies such as the western ones which are based on a low power distance dimension opposing societies based on a high power distance level such as the eastern ones. However, the claim for a homogeneous high power distance in societies like China is not accepted for there exist special cases that cannot be characterized as so (Greenfield, 1994). Greenfield argues that each society "strikes a particular balance between individual and group, between independence and interdependence" (Greenfield, 1994, p.4).

Edward T. Hall (1983) differentiates between cultures in terms of their communication. His theory of high/low context culture one refers to cultural essentialism. He argues that western cultures rely on verbal communication and most of their communicative acts are explicit in nature. This is opposed to the eastern cultures that are categorized by non-verbal communication. Thus low-context cultures such as the European ones have got a tendency towards the use of verbal expression about what they think and mean "the mass of information [being] vested in the explicit code" (Hall, 1976, p.70). In contrast high-context cultures, "most of the information is either in the physical context or initialized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message" (Hall, 1976, p.76). In the same way, Anderson (2003) also separates between high and low context cultures with a clear difference of communication behaviour. He suggests that HC encourages implicit and non-verbal communicative behaviour and LC encourages the opposite kind of behaviour. He claims that the HC cultures do not rely on such load of verbosity because the information is integrated from the context, the situation, and the non- verbal cues which give the message meaning unavailable in the explicit verbal utterance (Anderson, 2003). By contrast, LC culture messages must have detailed unmistakable verbal form with much specificity.

However, some researchers such as Holliday (1999), Scollon & Scollon (1995)

have criticised these stereotypical assumptions about the two kinds of cultures by claiming that they are very generalising in nature. The assumptions that certain features are carried in people from certain countries could “blind us to other, equally important aspects of a person’s behaviour” (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, p.156). This fact is mainly due to intercultural communication online where this view does not help well because of the missing of the physical context of the interactants as well as their non-unapparent national identities.

Thus Holliday (1999) proposes a different but more flexible view of cultures. He suggests the concept of small versus large culture. The large culture for him, leads to over generalisation and otherisation of foreigners such as educators, students and societies. Small culture, on the other hand, refers to groupings or activities wherever there is cohesive behaviour (Holliday, 1999). So Holliday’s paradigm of small versus large culture better fits situations in online settings. This view of culture does point out that cultures cannot be equated with nations. In this respect, Kramsch claims, “every culture is heterogeneous, i.e. it is composed of a variety of subcultures, and every situation elicits a variety of responses, even within the same national culture” (Kramsch, 1998p.50). Crane also suggests that cultures have become less cohesive in their nature and that societies are ‘notable for their lack of cultural coherence’ or ‘loose boundedness’ (Crane, 1994, p.3). Although researchers have recently argued that national cultures cannot be made as a general reality of nations explaining everything about individuals’ behaviour, they do not totally deny their existence on a national level. The concept of national culture can be very apparent in some contexts such as education where values of societies can be differentiated from each other and present specific traits of their own. This fact has to go hand in hand with the concept of small culture in order to understand the variability existing within large cultures. Jayasuriya (1990) says that “culture is not a fixed entity but a mixture of past present and indeed future concoctions” (1990, p.14). This indicates the fact that culture is not static but changes over time. He also regards that societies should be seen as the blueprint but not the ultimate explanation of ultimate behaviour. Guest suggests that we should “focus on the properties of individuals or character types rather than cultures at large. The linguistic dynamics should be adjusted according to the nature of the interaction (individual/small groups) and not in order to conform to an abstract, generalised, formula (‘culture’)”. Goodenough (1994, pp.266-7) and Guest (2002) believe that culture is formed reformed in the process of interaction. Thus culture is not static and it is negotiated interactively.

In this respect, Knoblauch (2000) says “since the culture of the world of everyday life is constructed by means of communicative acts, it is essentially a *communicative culture*” (p.25). On the basis of this claim, Holliday introduces the notion of *discourse* into the concept of culture. He claims “discourse has to be considered as the concrete expression of the language-culture relationship because it is discourse that ‘creates, recreates, focuses, modifies and transmits both culture and language and their interaction’” (1994, p.414). The introduction of *interactive communication* and *discourse* into the notion of culture and mainly intercultural communication has been proved to be both accurate and productive in order to better understand what goes on between individuals and small culture they are faced with.

These researchers support the discursive and interactive investigation to culture which can better fit with online communication where the individual is faced with different small cultures. Since this discursive model to culture is claimed to be better in explaining what happens at the level of online community practices, it will be the basis of this study. This is in relation with what happens within politeness negotiation online and mainly at a discourse level of kind in electronic mail communication. This will be better explained and discussed in the third chapter.

2.5.1.2. Intercultural computer mediated communication

Technology and scientific advance in what concerns communication gave birth to online and computer mediated communication allowing individuals from different parts of world cultures to communicate with each other and hence new ways of communication have to be created and studied either. It started mainly with e-mail access, as a confined means of communication to the US defense department personnel and scientists only in 1970’s (Hafner and Lyon, 1996). It expanded in 1980’s geographically to include universities especially professors and students in computing-related departments and other asynchronous CMC modes (Herring, 2013). In the late 1980’s it covered different parts of academic staff in other disciplines and reached popular access in 1990’s (Ibid). The rise of Internet Service Provider (ISP) gave the opportunity to people to connect and communicate from their homes to include synchronous chat (Ibid). Computer mediated communication has got various socio-technical and interactive modes such as email, discussion lists, web forums, chat, MUDs (Multi-User Dimensions) and MOOs (MUDs, Object Oriented), IM (Instant Messaging), text messaging (SMS), weblogs (blogs), and microblogs. These modes are

mainly textual and rely on the use of typing words to be read on digital screens. All these various modes of CMC enabled individuals to communicate and interact through asynchronous and synchronous messages and hence intercultural and cross-cultural kind of communication results.

Research on CMC has shown some benefits of this mode of communication. This can be attested in individuals who hesitate to express their opinions in face-to-face settings and who find it easy to do online (Harasim, 1993; Citera, 1998). In the field of gender, it is argued that women also benefit from CMC settings in what is expressed in the following:

'Text-based CMC, lacking physical and auditory cues, possesses a degree of anonymity that makes the gender of online communicators irrelevant or invisible. This allows women and men to participate (and be recognized for their contributions) equally, in contrast with patterns of male dominance traditionally observed in face-to-face communication (e.g. Graddol and Swann, 1989).

Intercultural computer mediated communication is claimed to have been mistaken for mass media (Gumpert, 1993, p. 268). In the same sort of way, Cathcart & Gumpert (1993) claim that there should be a new typology that includes media technology. The need for studying this new communicative mode, Hart (1998) introduces the notion of Intercultural computer mediated communication to describe cultural communication taking place at the level of online communicative settings.

Online communication has become the focus of many research studies to describe the social, cultural, economic, and political forms in computer mediated discourse (see Jones, 1995; Herring, 1996; Hine, 2000). In this respect, researchers claim that cultures should be studied in their own natural state, rather than under control, by experimental scenarios. So within this view of naturalistic and discourse based perspective, e-mail communication of this study will be studied.

a. Computer mediated communication

Herring (2004) describes CMC as a mode of communication in which interlocutors use a computer keyboard to type verbal language that appears as a readable text on the computer screen. CMC was first used as a tool of transmitting simple data and information but quickly turned to be a social interface (Walther, 1996, as cited in Herring, 2004). Interlocutors in CMC use and appreciate the interactive mode, which

allows language to be manipulated, reproduced, altered and updated (Herring, 2008). Also, identities in relation to gender, race, class, ethnicity and religious affiliation can be concealed or reinvented (Heisler & Crabill, 2006). It is also important to note that CMC is a type of communication that lacks a perception of physicality. Thus language comes to compensate for this physical absence with its multimodal and semiotic systems (Dresner & Herring, 2010). People's interactions and conversations stem from their cultural rules (Montero-Fleta, Montesinos- Lopez, Perez-Sabater, & Turney, 2008); however, they are considered to be part of the same community when sharing the same linguistic and communicative competence (Felix, 2003). This helps us believe in a certain simulation of the different online community members in spite of the various offline backgrounds to which they belong.

b. Community of practice and online communication

The notion of community of practice (CofP) was developed first by Wenger (1998) in his studies of the language practices of certain groups of people sharing the same tasks and as a result they develop the same language styles and practices. More recently, this notion has been adopted by feminist linguists, namely Eckert and McConnell Ginet (1992) to look at the specific local perspectives of viewing gender within different groups of people instead of considering it instantiated within the individual. A *community of practice*, according to Eckert and McConnell Ginet (1992), is an aggregate of people who come around mutual engagement in an endeavor. In its relation to gender, Carrie Paechter (2002) argues that it might be fruitful to seem as culinities and femininities as communities of practice organizing practices in response to local conditions and wider influences and considerations.

Similarly, online groups of participants are seen as communities of practice. Nishimura (2008) argues that community-hood online can be created when members' mutual expectations are satisfied through the sharing of information and experiences with other members of an online group. Herring (2004, pp.14-15) claims for three traits an online community can have and which are 'identity', 'sociability', and 'support' in addition to the introduction of the kinds of behaviors for a virtual community. In relation to the first trait or criterion, which is 'identity,' Herring argues that it can clearly be seen in the jargon, reference to group, and in-group/out-group language that may not be understood by non-members of the online group. The second criterion, which is 'sociability,' can take the form of frequent and reciprocal postings in exchange

of information and knowledge. The last one is 'support' that can have the form of advice-giving and advice-receiving, exchange of text messages, in addition to responding to questions and requests. Felix (2003) argues that interlocutors online can be viewed to be part of the same community in practice when they share the linguistic as well as communicative competence. However and as Mills (2011) notes, the notion of CofP has been used by analysts in a very localized form leaving aside the external wider social forces that could impact communities of practice. In the same sort of way, the study of politeness is concerned with this narrow focus. Thus, Mills (2011) argues that any linguistic behavior in groups is determined by our interaction with what we see as the group rules of appropriateness and those rules must be seen as determined by social forces outside of the CofP. In this respect, Mills advocates that analysis of politeness should not examine politeness at a local level only but it should take into account relevant wider social forces that may impact politeness behavior of participants. Mills argues that observers must also consider the fact that participants belong to multiple community practices. She gives the example of brusqueness in British English that has a resource of the use of unmitigated statements in general but which can go unnoticed in some CofP's, in which joking and swearing prevail and hence not evaluated negatively. In communities where participants use a lot of modification, an unmodified statement would be evaluated negatively. Also, those who continuously use this kind of unmodified language would not be seen as brusque but are accepted that it is their speech style or that it is their own character. So, styles are not assumed to be invented in community practices. They need to be seen as an ever-changing resource upon which participants draw, evaluate and establish as resources assumed to be available in their use. In this respect, online communities of practice should be analyzed in relation to the wider social forces constantly influencing them.

c. Intercultural computer mediated discourse

Susan C. Herring is one of the pioneers in working on computer mediated communicative means. Herring (2001) defines computer mediated discourse as follows:

'The communication produced when human beings interact with one another by transmitting messages via networked computers. The study of computer-mediated discourse (henceforth CMD) is a specialization within the broader interdisciplinary study of computer-mediated communication (CMC), distinguished by its focus on language and language use in computer networked environments, and by its use of

methods of discourse analysis to address that focus.'

Computer mediated discourse is mostly text-based which takes a variety of forms such as e-mail, discussion groups, real-time chat, virtual reality role-playing games, etc. all these forms of CMD rely primarily on text linguistic form and free from physicality making it unique in nature and allowing for studying verbal interaction and the relationship between discourse and social practice.

Computer mediated discourse is discussed and approached thoroughly in a variety of ways and sorts so as to understand its nature. Although it appeared in the 1970's, it was not given a serious attention and note only in 1991 with the publication of Kathleen Ferrara, Hans Brunner, and Greg Whitemore's "Interactive Written Discourse as an emergent genre" (Herring, p. 2001). Thus a number of theories and approaches have been made as a result. Herring (Ibid) notes in this respect,

'Popular claims -- some endorsed by published research - held that computer-mediated communication was "anonymous", "impersonal", "egalitarian", "fragmented" and "spoken-like", attributing these properties to the nature of the medium itself, and failing to distinguish among different types and uses of CMD. Ferrara et al. (1991), although contributing useful observations on one form of real-time experimental CMD, also overgeneralized, characterizing what they termed "interactive written discourse" as a single genre. In fact, subsequent research has revealed computer mediated language and interaction to be sensitive to a variety of technical and situational factors, making it far more complex and variable than envisioned by early descriptions.'

In his attempt to skim the different computer mediated approaches, Joseph B. Walther draws attention to the different theoretical approaches and their criticism along with the development made in the online computer mediated settings. One of the most important approaches is the *social presence* theory introduced by a number of scholars. In Short, Williams, and Christie's (1976) theory claimed that various communication media differed in their capacity to transmit cues of nonverbal communication in addition to verbal content. In this respect, they argue that the fewer the number of cue systems, the less warmth and involvement users experienced with one another. When scholars such as Hiltz, Johnson, and Agle (1978) first applied this model, the results seemed to fit the theory introduced. However and later on, some theoretical and methodological critiques have challenged the social presence explanation of computer mediated dynamics (e.g., Lea & Spears, 1992; Walther, 1992). This has been propped

up with views such as the old generation of CMC (text-based e-mails, chats, and discussions) as opposed to the new one featuring photos, graphics, avatars, videos, etc. Another theory which dominated computer mediated discourse is the *lack of social context cues* hypothesis (Siegel, Dubrovsky, Kiesler, & Mcguire, 1986; Sproull & Kiesler, 1986). The framework originally specified that CMC used the cues to individuality and normative behaviour that face-to-face interaction can transact in a non-verbal way. Consequently, and according to this model, CMC users became deindividuated and normless in the sense that CMC settings prevented users from knowing others' characteristics such as charisma, affection, etc. The lack of nonverbal cues led them to become resistant to influence, self-focused, and affectively negative. Like what happened with the social presence theory, the lack of social cues hypothesis faced a number of critiques. Thus researchers have brought different complex more context-based frameworks to understand more the dynamics of CMC personal, interpersonal and hyper- personal relationships and their effects on the user of CMC. As a consequence, positive affective outcomes appeared in addition to the negative ones firstly introduced. These latter theoretical frameworks predict different social and interpersonal effects of the different CMC media in relation to other contextual factors (Walther, 2010).

Also one of the most influential CMC discourse theories is *media richness* theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986) which originally modelled the relative efficiency of communication media for reducing equivocality in organizational decision making and interpersonal situations either formally or informally. This term signifies multimodal or greater-bandwidth media which includes verbal and nonverbal cues. This theory is based on four sub dimensions which are as follows: (1) the number of cue systems supported by a medium, (2) the immediacy of feedback provided by a medium (from unidirectional to asynchronously bidirectional to simultaneous bidirectional interaction), (3) the potential for natural language (compared with the more formal genre of memoranda, business letters, or data printouts), and (4) message personalization (i.e., the degree to which a message can be made to address a specific individual). So according to this view, face-to-face communication is the richest model for it contains multiple-cue systems, simultaneous, sender-and-receiver exchanges (providing great immediacy of feedback), natural language, and personalization of message. However, and in the same way with other theories, this model has been criticised for its over generalisations and lack of contextual situations that make variable results in the investigation. For instance, Hancock, Thom-Santelli, and Ritchie (2004) tried to apply

this theory on individuals' preferences for deceiving another person. They found that individuals choose telephone first followed by face to face and instant messaging media and the last medium was text-based messages of e-mails. Hancock explained this by arguing that people do not want to have a written and recordable proof for their lies such as what happens with CMC in order not to be used against them later. So these findings do question the hypothesis of media richness brought before. These hypotheses can be seen as the most important ones that have been criticized largely by researchers in CMC settings and CMD.

d. Politeness, gender and CMC

Computer mediated communication in relation to gender and politeness has been a subject of much importance and complexity as well. Below, I present some of the studies on this field.

d. 1. Politeness online

Given the bulk of evidence and research made on politeness in face-to-face communication between individuals, scholars have continued to investigate this linguistic phenomenon in online settings. Thus and as mentioned earlier, research on politeness online has developed to the point that there exist old computer mediated evidence and novel, often challenging, theoretical frameworks that seem to make changes at the level of the theory of online settings. In this respect, David A. Morand and Rosalie J. Ocker (2002) ask the simple question "Is politeness present in CMC?" and answer through their investigation of this issue that (im) politeness in CMC exists in the same way it does in FtF communication but with some differences because the settings of CMC have completely different rules from offline and face-to-face interactional ones. Perhaps one of the most important claims on politeness online is the one given by Herring (1994) that it is easy to be impolite in online settings because of the geographical distances and the absence of social accountability. Hiemstra's (1982) examination of transcripts from CMC sessions (synchronous and asynchronous) found that face threatening acts online are unavoidable no less than in FtF communication in the sense that a great majority of the messages analysed contained instances of face threat and face threat mitigated. Thus and in the same sort of way with FtF communication, interactive events such as requesting, disagreements, criticisms, etc are loaded with potential face threat. A. Morand and Rosalie J. Ocker (2002) argue that all the different instances of politeness that someone can be faced with in his offline setting can be

found online except one instance of face threatening acts, very common in FtF, which is absent from CMC background. This face threatening act is *conversational interruptions* which is a high indicator of dominance related to politeness research. However, technology is said to have its own characteristics in what concerns politeness because of *personal intrusions* (Lee, 1994). On the other side of the coin, Sproull & Kiesler (1986) suggest that CMC mode of communication lacks the social context cues offered by FtF communication such as the physical environment and non-verbal cues. However and as argued by researchers such as Rice & Love (1987); Walther & Burgoon (1992) individuals in online communication opt for different kinds of tools to compensate for the absence of the social context cues. They, for instance, choose to use punctuation marks and words as relational cues to support their environment and amplify meaning. Metz (1994) and Gumperz (1990) claim that such ‘electronic paralanguage’ like *emotive icons* are very important in maintaining and creating a socio emotional environment proper to the real life of CMC setting. Walter (1992), similarly, argues that participants of CMC modes develop conventions and understandings like emotive icons which enable them to establish socio emotional communication. This is in opposition to the early claim of media richness theory which sets that CMC settings are rigid ones and more task-oriented. All the data presented above indicate the presence of the notion of face and facework in online communication settings. The notion of face as firstly introduced by Goffman refers to “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact”. Furthermore, Goffman suggests that one has some emotional attachment to the face s/he maintains (1967, p.9). To the point, we have been discussing issues and frameworks of politeness negotiation online in relation to the theory of *positive politeness*.

Negative politeness on CMC also has its presence in online communication. David A.

Morand and Rosalie J. Ocker (2002, p.45) suggest that “*The communication and demonstration of social distance, circumspection, formality and impersonality (which is accomplished via negative politeness) is also a form of emotion-work.*”

In the same sort of way, positive politeness tools are used for social harmony and closeness, “*negative mechanisms are essential for preventing individuals from “coming too close,” for buffering egos from the inevitable frictions and intrusions of social life.*”

(Ibid). This is due to some variables such as formality, coldness, impersonality

and official sounding mapping onto higher social distance some online participants make use of. So, closeness in CMC might be indexed through the use of emoticons in opposition to egalitarian relations which are characterised by an exchange of equivalent levels of linguistic regard.

Due to the dynamicity characterizing CMC settings making it continually changing, David Morand and Rosalie J.Ocker(2002) draw attention to the evolution of its politeness norms. They analysed clarity and consideration on CMC settings and proved that CMC makes it difficult to its participants to combine between these two basic rules of communicative competence which are clarity and being polite at the same time. These two basic rules of interaction often clash except in some instances where some directives, for instance at the level of organizations which intensify productivity and performance goals, cannot be understood to be impolite by both addresser and addressee. So if we come to apply this in online settings, a great tendency towards misunderstandings and misinterpretations would occur because of the absence of the nonverbal cues such as the high pitch of voice accompanying negative politeness and hence indicating higher consideration with the addressee. As a result of this, participants develop some new ways to make up for the absence these non-verbal cues by adding indices of positive politeness such as the use of emoticons in their direct messages.

d. 2. Gender online

A lot of scholars have studied the relationship between gender and cultural origin in online discussions. Herring (2000) argues that minority gender in online discussion tends to conform to the style of the majority. Ryoo (2003) analyzed how gender identities were constructed, contested, and reproduced within CMC in Korea using data collected from two e-bulletin boards. He concluded that gender impact has got an impact in online discussions and that men talk more and differently than women do online. Graddy (2004) reported that male conversational style is adversarial, self-promoting, contentious, and assertive. According to this study, males did not respect the discussion posting rules in comparison with females, and worried more about threats to individual expressions. Also, males tended to post longer and more frequent messages in comparison with females. Females on computer-mediated conversations tended to be qualifying, apologetic, supportive, and polite. (p. 3). Acknowledging the differences in the style of discourse between men and women in computer-mediated communications, linguists and other social scientists made empirical studies testing the hypothesis.

Herring (2000) analyzed the language in relation to gender in Chat, multi-user dimensions (MUDs), Multi-user object oriented (MOOs), listservers, and newsgroups. She found that gender socialization from face-to-face interactions is carried over into both synchronous and asynchronous environments. Similarly, Selfe and Meyer (1991) made similar studies and found that, even under complete anonymity, men who occupy high status off-line dominated the interactions of an academic listserv. Panyametheekul and Herring (2003) investigated the interaction between gender and cultural origin in a Thai chat room. They concluded that Thai females participated more, which was opposing the general expectations about the roles of women in Thai society. Rossetti (1998) studied the differences in online discussions between men and women to the socialization process that begins in early childhood and found that in the formative stages of social development, children tend to associate with their own gender. One of the most famous claims (but problematised later on) in research on computer mediated communication demonstrates, is that gender is invisible in this setting because of the fact of anonymity that renders participants of lower social status and even less powerful individuals or groups equalised with other participants of more powerful positions and higher social status. The argument by Graddol and Swann (1989, p.576) is as follows:

“Text-based CMC, lacking physical and auditory cues, possesses a degree of anonymity that makes the gender of online communicators irrelevant or invisible. This allows women and men to participate (and be recognized for their contributions) equally, in contrast with patterns of male dominance traditionally observed in face-to-face communication.”

In their analysis of computer mediated communication, Herring and Stoerger (2013) skim about research on gender and online settings from early theoretical frameworks to the novel and recently published hypotheses in relation to different accounts and dimensions.

They argues that although CMC had been introduced in the 1970’s, it was restricted to male use leading to gender inequity in terms of access and use of CMC setting until much of 1990’s in the US. Almost 95% of women stayed away from CMC access (mainly because of being unwilling and less interested in it) until 2000 where they flocked online with a rate of 50% of web users in the US. Brenner (2012) claims that women now outnumber men in some social media domains such as Pinterest site, Facebook, Twitter, etc. In opposition to this males dominate music-sharing sites such as

last.fm, Wikipedia, etc.

So far, we had mentioned gender equality online drawing on research by Graddol and Swann (1989); however; research by other linguists later on found that even under anonymous circumstances, male participants dominated female participation to CMC and sometimes aggressively (Dibbell, 1993; Herring, 1992, 1993, 1999; Herring, Johnson, and DiBenedetto, 1995; Kramarae and Taylor, 1993; Sutton, 1994). This is explained by Herring and Stoerger that gender can be visible online because of the features characterizing one's discourse style mainly examined in FtF interactions like verbosity, use of assertiveness, etc. A lot of research is done on CMC reporting gender differences in terms of language use such as insults, challenging, crudity adopted by males (Herring 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996a, 1996b, 1999; Kramarae and Taylor, 1993; Savicki, Lingenfelter, and Kelley, 1996; Sutton, 1994) in contrast to females who apologise, support, appreciate, etc (Hall 1996; Herring 1993, 1994, 1996a, 1996b; Savicki, Lingenfelter, and Kelley, 1996). However and recently some researchers challenge these theoretical issues of differences by arguing that there were no clear cut gender differences at the level of CMC (Herring,2005).One striking finding on gender and CMC is the fact of gender switching which is proved to be easy in the selection of one's photographs (e.g. avatars opposite to one's gender) but difficult in modifying one's gendered behaviour. In addition to the CMC general phenomenon of anonymity, there is the new technologically-driven trend toward increased nonymity online. This trend bans anonymous criticism (Sandoval 2012). Herring (2013) cites, '*The intent of these rules is to protect individuals from false claims and cyber bullying by making Internet communicators more accountable.*' However these rules did not prevent male from harassment even when they use their real names online and women tend to receive less responses and retweets in nonymous CMC (Herring, 1993; Mashable, 2012). Nevertheless, anonymity online is not confined to male participants but it has been found that even females opt for being anonymous. A recent study (Hinduja and Patchin 2010) analyzing the behaviour of young CMC participants (10 to 18 years old) suggests that females are more likely to be cyber bullying victims and offenders where they are more likely to spread rumors about other in online settings. Males, in this research, are more likely to post mean/hurtful pictures and videos.

d. 3. Gender and politeness online

Perhaps, one of the most important facts about gender online, especially textual CMC, is the nature of its contexts, in lack of physicality, hindering its users from perceiving the gender of their counterparts. In this respect, theorizing gender in these contexts might be more difficult to deal with. However and especially initially, this anonymity gave optimism about gender equality online (e.g., Danet, 1998) which was soon recognized untrue in the sense of the persistence of gender distinctions as exactly as in offline settings. Research on gender and politeness in computer-mediated communication has been the focus of a number of scholars. Herring (1994) showed the differences existing between male and female academics in discourse. She makes reference to the general claim of impoliteness online stating that anonymity reduces social accountability and hence the use of politeness in general decreases too. This can be considered as one of the universal rules of politeness online (but with some restrictions). Herring (1994) describes online community participants as having the potential of being less polite in their communicative interactions due to the geographical distances and hence the reducing of social accountability between them. In what concerns gender and forum communication, such as listservs and newsgroups (both of which involve asynchronous communication) and Chat, MUDs, and MOOs, Herring (2003) reports asymmetries between the two genders, making the claim that differences still pervade. For example, males are more impolite, aggressive and adversarial in their speech acts than females who are polite, aligned and supportive in their discourse style in most of the cases (Herring, 2003). However, in recent studies, it has been found that traditional gender distinctions were not so great. In what concerns gender masquerade as a result of anonymity in synchronous CMC, observations by LambdaMOO founder Pavel Curtis (1992) concluded that gender switching is infrequent simply because it is difficult to be someone one is not regardless of the names they choose for themselves. Herring (1998) concluded that gender switching takes place, but it does not go undetected in practice.

Recent studies of CMC have assumed that gender equality has been reached in terms of participation in blogs as well as social network sites (Herring et al. 2004; Huff Post Women 2012). However, at the level of linguistic behavior the results ranged between significant to non-significant gender differences. For instance, studies by Huffaker and Calvert (2005), Herring and Paolillo (2006), Guiller and Durndell (2007) found few gender differences in discourse style, blogs and discussion groups. Gender

differences appeared in studies (Koch et al., 2005; Baron and Ling, 2007; Tossell et al., 2012; Waseleski, 2006). This is at the level of discourse styles in the sense of male domination and assertiveness over females.

Research on politeness related to gender showed a lot of differences between men and women in the use of language. A brief explanation of these differences would tell that women are more positively polite than men (Holmes, 1995). Some studies reported greater female use of tag questions (e.g., McMillan, Clifton, McGrath, & Gale, 1977; Mulac & Lundell, 1986), although others have found the opposite (e.g., Dubois & Crouch, 1975). Holmes (1998) claims that women use and receive more compliments. In mixed gender conversations, males have been found to interrupt more than females (e.g., Holmes, 1991; Smith-Lovin & Robinson, 1992; Tannen, 1994). In comparison with online community practices these findings have been suggested to show mixed results between real male female different behaviours and equal ones.

Politeness in relation to gender in computer mediated communication has been addressed by Herring (1993, 1994) who continues to claim that gender differences in the use of politeness online exist hand in hand with politeness in face-to-face communication (FtF) communication. However these differences according to the investigation made online were not exclusive in the sense that women and men behaved similarly in some instances in online communities of practice. Research investigation by Herring (1993a) showed that women and men exhibit different patterns of net participation in terms of amount, frequency, and manner of posting. Also, Herring (1994) analysed women's and men's behaviour in academic and non-academic fora, to see the differences between male and female politeness behaviour. The hypothesis guiding her investigation was that women and men have different behaviours on the net and assign different values for these behaviours. This means that women and men have different ideas for what constitute appropriate and inappropriate behaviour online. For this, and drawing on work by Gilligan (1982) claiming that women are more positively polite than men who are more negatively polite, Herring discussed the net etiquette for positive and negative politeness behaviour by males and females of the earlier mentioned academic and non-academic fora. The results, according to her, showed that this positive and negative politeness behaviour assigned to men on the net is a simplistic view and found that the more revealing contrast is between a politeness based communication ethic and an ethic of anarchic self-determination and vigorous debate. In brief, she found that flaming is practiced almost exclusively by men on the net. That is

to say men are more dominating and patronising women and use more boasting, profanity, long messages, sarcasm, etc. Men are said to flame because of the disinhibition caused by the de contextualized nature of the computer medium itself. Also, and at that time when male dominated the Internet, flaming continues to exist for some more time. In the same sort of way and challenging the simple assumption of gender equality in online settings (Graddol and Swann 1989), Herring (1996) addresses the subject and claims that inequality in cyberspace exists and cannot be seen disconcerting and ignored. She furthers that these differences are not randomly distributed between individuals but males are in groups tending towards more adversarial behaviour in contrast to female groups tending towards more supportive behaviour. Herring (1996b) argues that males and females constitute different discourse communities in cyberspace. Similarly, she (2003) found that Females in computer-mediated communication (CMC) apologize more than males, whereas males use more aggressive language and insulting speech acts, along with more profanity. Yates et al. (2005) argue that in mobile phone communication, females violate fewer politeness norms than males do. More precisely, Yates (2006) reported higher levels of satirical expressions and swearing words in male text messages than in those written by females.

e. Gender, politeness and forum communication

e. 1. Forums and politeness

Forums are a type of virtual, internet communication, in which registered participants can post and contribute to discussions posted by an administrator or other participants. There exist different types of forums and different forms (Ehrhardt, 2009a, p.118). Ehrhardt makes a general characterization of forums and discussions on them. In this respect, forums are based on written communication where authors respect the language norms very much. The discussions are not synchronic in addition to many long spatial chronologies. In forums, there is no difficulty to find contributions to discussions posted a long time ago. The contributors and partners in forum discussion boards might be in different parts of the world where communication between them is almost verbal.

Anonymity is a major characteristic of forum discussions. Registered participants use nicknames that might have no relation to their real identity. So face work becomes more difficult with anonymous individuals in the sense that one of the major elements of politeness, self-presentation, is suspended. Face threats are suggested to be more acceptable because of the fact of anonymity (Liedtke, 2011, p. 60). Also, since

participants lack some information such as geographical localization, age, gender etc., identity is not important in forums. So these characteristics, if found, cannot be considered as true at a 100 percent of degree. Where identity has no importance, face seems to be relevant in forum communication. Forums generally have rules of politeness use and sanctions of cancelling contributions are made on users who are impolite in their communication with other participants. Relationships are not as important as argumentation and clarity in the text posted. This is true at the level of this case study where participants of good expertise present technical information written with the help of added photos of how web pages should be or how users can follow steps to get to the goal wanted. So the content of the message is much more important than relationships between participants as suggested by Ehrhard. In addition to this, Ehrhardt proposes that separateness is more important than connectedness as indicated in face work theory in the sense that authors say their opinions freely with no intention of solidarity creating. The posts with their discussions are public where technical information is directed to the partners (if the author is not a partner), the participants who can comment, and the passive readers of the public audience. Good information with great expertise has a reward of being constant in the forum. Since forum discussion is public, face negotiation also goes at a public level of kind where any face loss is suggested to be public and difficult to repair and reconstruct as indicated by Ehrhardt. Texts in forums are persuasive and present an idea or a viewpoint to be reasoned on but as will be seen later in this case, one can say that the posters present information to the readers and do not wait for discussion or controversy. Ehrhardt suggests that forum discussion cannot go on if everyone has the same opinion. In this respect, face-threatening activities such as disagreement, criticism, correction, etc are stimulated by difference in viewpoints (Ehrhardt, 2010, p.177).

Although participants to forum discussions are unknown for each other for most of the times, face-work and politeness seem to exert power on their discussions. Thus, according to Ehrhardt, one might find politeness negotiation and fear of face loss as a norm in forum discussions.

e. 2. Thanking and praising as linguistic polite behavior

In Leech's theory of politeness (1983), thanking (I would prefer to use the term "sincere thanking") comes under the heading of what he calls 'convivial' category of J.L. Austen's speech-act theory, i.e. a speech-act that is intrinsically polite or courteous.

So, maximizing politeness (1983, p.84) is achieved by boosting by the use of intensifying adverbs, or prosodic devices.

A. Whitworth notes that polite words “Please” and “Thank you” imply choice.

Also, “Thank you” implies the fact that the other need not have done what they did, i.e. that they had choice. He continues to say that ‘*One need not thank another for a forced action,*

e.g. one would not forcibly eject someone from a building then say ‘Thank you for leaving’ (except sarcastically)(Whitworth, p.354). In this respect, when we thank people acting under orders, like soldiers or firemen, it is the voluntary aspect of their service that is recognized.

In what concerns politeness theorizing by Brown and Levinson (1987), thanking falls in the positive politeness super-strategies towards lesser degrees of FTAs and directions towards more intimacy between speakers. In this respect, the act of thanking can be seen as a politeness phenomenon, usually a positively affective speech act. One of the main requirements of politeness achievements fall into acts of thanking. However, in some studies, it is clearly discerned between acts of thanking or gratitude-expressions in accordance with the context in the sense that strong or weak gratitude expressions go hand in hand with minor or major favour. Also, it is differentiated between material and immaterial favours (Aijmer, 1996, p.68). In the same sort of way, and as many speech acts, thanking does not come out of pragmatics. Aijmer (1996, p.75) claims for the use of pragmatic frames for pragmatic phenomena where the frames are different variables for the context of an utterance. These frames must be known by the speaker in order to achieve a successful communicative situation. Aijmer (1996), in her studies on the English language, suggests some situational parameters for thanking. One of the major ones is that she distinguishes between intensified and simple thanking of ‘thank you’ and ‘thanks’. However, in our culture, simple thanking in Arabic is ‘شكرا’ and ‘شكرالك’. This would be like the ones in the English language ‘thanks’ and ‘thank you’. Intensified thanking might be expressed in a more exaggerated way by adding praise or stress on the word (شكرا) itself. That is to say, ‘thank you’ in Arabic is not really seen intensified. As will be shown below in this study, intensified thanking is reinforced by the doubling of letters to express exaggerated stress in some comments. Other comments exhibit the use of praise to reinforce their thanking. Some other ones use both of them.

e. 3. Disagreements and critiques

Researchers in politeness theory agree that disagreeing poses some problems in politeness theorization, and research presents differing viewpoints in what concerns its

nature and effects on participants in conversation. Maria Sifianou says that, “disagreement can be defined as the expression of a view that differs from that expressed by another speaker. Yet, in the relevant literature, disagreement is mostly seen as confrontational and should thus be mitigated or avoided.” In politeness theories (Brown and Levinson, 1978/1987; Leech, 1983), disagreement is considered to be part of impoliteness linguistic behavior that should be avoided to save the interlocutors’ ‘face.’ In the work by Waldron and Applegate (1994), disagreement is seen as a form of conflict that influences communication between interlocutors. Nevertheless, Schiffrin (1984) argues that disagreement among friends can signal sociability rather than a breach of civility. Recent research has shown that disagreement should not be perceived always as a negative discourse feature resulting in conflict and impoliteness, but can, instead, signal intimacy and sociability (see, e.g., Tannen, 1984; Kakavá, 1993a, 2002; Corsaro and Maynard, 1996; Locher, 2004). Also it is not always a factor that destroys relationships; rather, in some instances, it strengthens them (Georgakopoulou, 2001). Sifianou (2012) suggests that “disagreements are complex multidirectional and multifunctional” and that “interlocutors have personal traits and relational histories that predispose them to particular strategies and specific evaluations.”

This renders historical conversations of paramount import and effect on current conversations that should not be ignored in analyzing this discourse. In many studies on online forum settings, disagreement is seen to be a norm for a good discussion and that a discussion cannot go on when every participant has the same opinion (Ehrhardt, 2010, p.177 cf). In the Arabic culture, women are generally discouraged from expressing disagreement in public, especially toward males in positions of relative power. If a woman wants to express a disagreement in this culture, she would generally rather choose forms carefully, i.e. with higher level of mitigation. However, this cannot be generalized on all women in my culture as there exist cases where women pronounce disagreements freely and in public contexts.

2.6. Profitability and politeness online

The question of profitability in online communication does not have a lot of supportive official scientific research. We can say it is a marginalized subject although it is important to discuss it as all the other subjects. I have a proof from the technical forum under study and which is registered by the manager of the forum and which proves that these forum owners seek to get their forum popular and hence get some

revenue in return. The example is that the assistant waits for readers, commentators, and followers so as to gain revenue which he describes as just some cents from AdSense. However and when I visited the well-known forum, Aufeminin, I found that this forum gives its annual revenue which is estimated up to millions of Euros. This sum of money is very big because the forum has millions of visitors and if someone wants to get this kind of popularity, it is not an easy task at all.

2.6.1. Sorts of politeness online

In speaking about the use of politeness and profitability online, we have to be aware of something important. It is the fact of the existence of politeness between people online and politeness between people and the software. The first case is the most known and which exists at the level of the linguistic behavior in communicating between people. The second case of politeness online is the one existing between the programmers of software and people and which mainly revolves around the pop ups, spams, etc. which are all considered as different sorts of impolite software vis-a-vis the online users and clients. I am not going to speak about the traditional politeness between people online because I did this earlier but I will give a glimpse on polite computing.

2.6.2. Polite and impolite computing

Computers have evolved to a certain degree that they can now ask questions, request some information, suggest actions and can even give advice. This is of course thanks to the developed software that has the ability to make choices, and thereby make computers more or less as active machines making them as interaction participants. This has led to the development of what we call now human-computer interaction (HIC). Since the new social roles of computers of now are making them as collaborators and active participators, their software has a new requirement-to be polite.

The reverse of the concept of polite software is *selfish software*. Carrying the same meaning of selfishness in human interaction, selfish software acts as it were the only application on your computer. It runs at every opportunity, loading at start-up, as well as running continuously in the background. Not only that, but it interrupts you at any time to demand what it wants, or announce what it is doing. Brian Whitworth (2005) claims that polite computing to be more beneficial than selfish software and supports his claim with real examples like eBay, Amazon, and Google. Whitworth, (2008, p.4) reports the following:

“A study of reactions to a computerized Chinese word-guessing game found that when the software apologized after a wrong answer by saying “We are sorry that the clues were not helpful to you.” the game was rated more enjoyable than when the computer simply said Degree of choice offered to the other party Polite Legitimate Anti-Social Figure 1. The social choice dimension 5 “This is not correct” (Tzeng, 2004). Brusque and often incomprehensible error messages like the “HTTP 404 – File not Found” response to an unavailable web page, can imply a user fault, while a message like: “Sorry I could not find file xxxxx.”

It is clearly cited here that polite software has got more beneficial results on the businesses of companies online. So politeness is always a good choice whether at the level of software or between people.

2.7. Conclusion

In summing up, politeness theorizing has evolved from studying politeness in isolated examples to its examination in contextual and interactional samples of longer discourse fragments and stretches. This has resulted in a lot of new related and complicated politeness concepts such as first order and second order politeness. Researchers had to divide politeness into two categories politeness1 which is the one related to participants of interaction in their community practice and Politeness2 which is the related to the analyst. This means an analyst cannot decide what is polite or impolite but rather the one in the interaction is the one who is able to do. However, if the analyst can also rely on politeness metapragmatics that can help him/her decide what is polite or impolite. Metapragmatics of politeness is what participants of a certain community practice say about appropriate and inappropriate polite behavior. However, if these issues of politeness are studied in relation to gender online, it becomes slightly different to examine and more difficult to approach.

Chapter Three

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the methodological approaches of studying politeness negotiation in relation to gender in the two discussion boards are presented. Thus, at first, the research aims and the research questions are introduced as well as the research paradigm. Then, the research design of the study is presented in addition to the participants. Next, the methods of research and data collection and analysis are presented. In brief this is a case study of two discussion boards where the approach used is quantitative. However, the researcher had to use qualitative analysis in order to support the findings. Interviewing is used in this study with a game designer and sitedeveloper who used to be paid online from a Canadian counterpart. In sampling, the researcher relied on the documented comments in the two forums of the male, female and neutrally nicknamed participants. In the same way, politeness approaching also was taken into consideration.

3.2. Methodology and approach

Methodology and approaches used in this study are mixing. I used the quantitative qualitative approaches to support my findings.

3.2.1. Discussion of methodology

The main aim of this study is to see how participants as well as managers of discussion boards negotiate politeness in relation to gender. Starting from the concept of the lower use of politeness online, it is the aim of this study to see why politeness dominates in some discussion boards and not other ones. This work aims to see the reasons that urge the users of discussion boards to use either politeness or impoliteness with relying on interviewing and met a pragmatics inside and outside the two discussion boards studied. The aim of this study is to examine politeness and gender in order to see why some online participants continue to behave politely even when they are distant and unknown. This comes from the general view claiming for impoliteness prevalence and dominance in online community practices due to the unknown backgrounds of participants (Herring, 1994; Kleinde & Bös, 2015). What is specifically emphasized on within this study is the detection of politeness and impoliteness linguistic use in the comments in response to the different posts in the two forums. The presence of gender in this kind of online communities of practice and how it can affect politeness is also one of the main aims of this analysis. We have to note that the first forum under analysis

is a forum which is information-based community in which informatics aid and help prevail and that, normally, elicits polite comments from other participants such as thanking and praising. The second discussion board is a news forum that, according to previous literature, is dominated by impoliteness use on the part of the participants.

In addition to the research aims introduced above, the research questions are as follows:

- 1- How do discussion board participants (administrator or participant) negotiate politeness in relation to gender?
- 2- Is anonymity always a cause that makes participants in discussion boards less polite? How is this related to gender?
- 3- Does profitability play a role in using politeness in forums? How does this correlate with gender?
- 4- Why do participants in some news forums use a lot of impolite and offensive behavior?

In order to answer these questions, I analysed a number of 122 comments of a technical forum that is concerned with delivering information in informatics and blog setting as well as 318 comments of a news forum. The analysis of the data in this study is mainly based on a quantitative method as well a qualitative one. As researchers note, both qualitative and quantitative research methods have both strong and weak points. These two, paramount paradigms of research are distinct in relation to their philosophical stances. Bryman (2004, p.19) notes that these differences existing between qualitative and quantitative research methods are derived from “the connection between theory and research, epistemological considerations and ontological considerations”. In this respect, quantitative research “embodies a view of social reality as an external, objective one” (ibid, p.20). Its scope is to generate patterns and relationships between variables out of hard findings of numerical data (Grix, 2001).

So, in contrast to quantitative research, the qualitative one underlies assumptions of what reality is and how the knowledge of reality can be acquired. Thus in qualitative research, social reality is approached as a “constantly shifting emergent property of individuals’ creation” (Bryman, 2004, p.20). Cohen et al. (2004) argue that reality can be better understood from “the standpoint of the individuals who are part of the ongoing

action being investigated.” So, the radical difference between qualitative and quantitative research is that the former is concerned more with the process of meaning making than with outcomes.

The distinction between the two research methods includes the fact that qualitative approaches develop theories inductively while quantitative ones generate findings deductively through scientific investigations, generally taken in the form of numbers and statistics. On the one side of the coin, quantitative research and although it can bring out theories that can be used to generalize a phenomenon, it is criticized for its lack of explaining individual cases and behaviours. On the other side, qualitative research methods though cannot be used to generalize a phenomenon, can furnish an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon from an insider’s viewpoint. In this respect, both of the research approaches have got their own strong and weak points. They relate to different aspects of reality and not its totality.

However, Allwood (2011) argues that this radical distinction between qualitative and quantitative research methods is “abstract, very general and its value is usually taken for granted.” He adds “the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research is unclear, poor and therefore of limited value and that its popularity risks leading to unfortunate consequences.” Allwood argues that the distinction by researchers in their approaches used in research is not made clear. The first reason he suggested deals with the distinction as relating to *a part* of the research process. Generally, any type of qualitative research done can exist at the level of a quantitative one. For example, if a research study is done on an individual who lived during a war (in a qualitative way), there exist different other individuals who lived in that war and hence, the research method can be quantified. Allwood argues that “*the identity of any phenomenon (including e.g., attributes and components) is qualitative, but it always has a quantitative aspect (how much of it is there).*” (2011, p. 1422).

One other reasons he suggested is related to the fact that the distinction as relating to complete research methods. All the different types of data can be approached at least in a qualitative way. Sandelowski says:

“The notion that it is reasonable to classify research methods as either qualitative or quantitative is problematic for different reasons. One reason is that it seems self-evident that all research at least is qualitative (see also e.g., Sandelowski et al. 2009).

Allwood adds that it is difficult *“to show that a certain research method necessarily has to be linked to a certain research philosophy (for example “quantitative”).”*(2011, p. 1423). The third reason he suggested is the fact that the distinction as relating to research philosophy as mentioned above about the features characterizing the two different approaches. An example might well illustrate this, as mentioned above, the opposing features of objectivity and subjectivity. Allwood refers to Vidich and Lyman (1998), who proved that, all research can be seen to contain both objective and subjective elements.

Allwood thinks that sticking to one research method may prove to be limiting for the development of new research methods. Allwood (2011) says,

“For example, researchers who believe that it is only allowable to develop new methods within the assumed reference frames of each of the qualitative and quantitative approaches will miss opportunities for fruitful combinations of features belonging to both of the approaches.”

Thus mixed research approaches in studies might be better to find one part of the knowledge or ‘truth’. This is in opposition of the notion of ‘absolute truth’ upheld by rationalism. ‘Truth’ exists as subjective and valid only in the particular context under inquiry.

Concerning data collection, I used the quantitative research method to make generalizable conclusions. I also relied on the qualitative research methodology in some parts of this research study such as the part of first order politeness elicitation via the use of interviewing. In this respect, the following section of research design is going to explain more this choice of mixed research methods.

3.2.2. The research design

This research helps detect the reasons behind the impolite and polite use of linguistic behavior in virtual world and how it relates to gender, especially at the level of discussion boards. Since anonymity is one important determinant of this context online, it is highly expected that the participants use impolite and offensive linguistic behavior. In addition to anonymity, distances are also expected to hinder social accountability and hence allow users to be less polite and feel free to offend other participants easily. The theory inspiring this research study is the one of politeness elicitation of first order politeness from the meta discourse used in the forums under

study and out of them as well. In this respect, I firstly introduce the way in which the research design is focused upon computer mediated communication and discuss its advantages and drawbacks. After that, I describe the research design and summarize the study to indicate how the research procedures get modifications when necessary. Then, the setting of the study and its participants are described.

3.2.3. Research design based on CMC

Currently, with the development and advance in technology in computer mediated communication, it has become easy for people to communicate from different parts of the world in a very short time and instantly. One of the most important features of the context of these forums under study is that of anonymity. A cartoon in the New Yorker displayed a dog sitting in front of a computer screen and proclaiming “On the Internet, nobody knows you’re a dog” (Steiner, 1993). Although this cartoon is meant to be a joke, it is an indication of the obscurity of the virtual environment that the users find themselves in. This is a feature which keeps the Internet users’ identity and background anonymous, unknown and non- apparent. So, contrary to some institutionalized emails, for instance, discussion boards are surrounded by obscure identity users. Email users in institutions might not be allowed to use offensive and impolite linguistic behavior because they are already known by their community. However, in forum communication contexts, participants can use whatever kind of linguistic offensive behavior thanks to the anonymity factor and the absence of social accountability. Herring (2004, p.2) says:

“Text-based computer-mediated communication (CMC) predisposes people to be less polite than they otherwise would be face-to-face. Reasons proposed to explain this purported effect include that text-only communication filters out voice and gestural cues, ostensibly reducing social awareness, and that the internet facilitates communication among strangers at a geographical remove, thereby reducing social accountability. These accounts invoke a de facto technological determinism, the assumption being that the configuration of computer network technology determines how people express themselves online.”

Keeping close to the research aims for understanding how politeness is negotiated via discussion boards by males and females, this research, in investigating the comments of the discussion boards participants, seeks to understand how different contexts online have an impact on the users that force them choose polite linguistic

behaviours while other contexts do not.

The number of people using the Internet is growing more and more through time. In 2014, the Internet World Stats reports that the users have reached the three billion ones (for more details, visit Internet World Stats). Although this virtual world is abstract, it affects hugely people's lives and allows them communicate, do business, and chat easily and instantly. For the reason of doing business, the creation and management as well as the success of one's virtual forum is a hard challenge that only few people can reach. This, as will be explained later, has to be accompanied with the suitable linguistic tools that help in doing so. In this respect, the study is substantially structured in a way which presents electronic qualitative and quantitative data such as the quantification of the comments of the participants and analyzing qualitatively some posts either.

As discussed in chapter one (the introduction), because this research aims to see the reasons behind the fluctuating rates of politeness and impoliteness use by the participants, I collected the data from a technical and a news forum for the purpose of quantifying the comments. Since, other data needs more in-depth analysis; I used the qualitative approach to complement the concluded points. So, in the technical forum, I quantified the comments which are meant to be polite behaviours such as thanking, praising, etc. to see their dominance in the forum. In the same sort of way, I counted the number of the male, female, and neutral nicknamed participants to see their presence and contribution to newer postings. For the sake of eliciting first order politeness, I relied on interviewing and meta discourse in and out of the forum (i.e. what is said about politeness even pragmatically). In the second news forum, I also counted the comments of the male, female and neutral nicknamed participants to see the dominance of the impolite offensive linguistic behavior of the news forum. Also, and in the same sort of way, it was necessary to analyse some data qualitatively such as first order politeness elicitation to supply some answers for the questions asked above. The research methods of data collection of this study will be discussed later in section3. The following section illustrates the research procedure.

3.2.4. Research procedure

I chose the case study research method because I have clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and I seek to provide an in-depth understanding of the technical forum and the news forum. In addition to this, I will compare the two forums at the level of

some points at the end. In choosing this multi-site case, an array of possibilities for purposeful sampling is available in Creswell (2007). This multi-case study shows different perspectives on the problem. It means, I am going to focus on the parameter of politeness and that of gender, and the context of computer mediated communication.

Generally, case study research must draw on extensive data collection of multiple sources of information observations, interviews, and documents. Yin (2003) recommends six types of information to collect: documents, archival record, interviews, direct observations, participant-observations, and physical artifacts. This multi-case study is going to use the following types of information sources in accordance with its nature: direct observations, online documented sources of the two forums, and interviews. Since this study is online and it does not have a physical and face to face communication and presence, physical artifact is logically missing and will not be drawn on as a source of information. The data we are going to rely on is written according to the nature of the context of the forum communication and as a result another type of information source is added and which is 'archival records'.

The type of data analysis of this multi case study is a *holistic* one of the entire study (Yin, 2003) and will not focus on only one point. In this respect, and through this data collection, a detailed description of the multi-site case is going to be provided (Stake, 1995). After the description, I will focus on some key issues or (analysis of themes) such as the presence and contribution of the male female participants (concerning the technical forum) and identity (gender) relationship to impoliteness in the news forum. This is done for the purpose of understanding the complexity of the cases under study and not to generalize beyond of them. I will, also, use an analytic strategy and which is identifying the issues in each case and then look for the common themes that transcend the cases (Yin, 2003). In this respect, the cases under study are going to be studied in relation to gender and politeness use where some common themes between them would be the degree of politeness, offensiveness, profitability (as will be analysed in the fourth chapter), etc. In other words, in this multiple case study, I will describe each forum within the case and then follow this with a thematic analysis across the cases and this is called the cross-case analysis as well as *assertions* or an interpretation of the meaning of the case (Creswell, 2007).

In the final interpretive phase, I report the meaning of the cases which come from learning about the issues of those cases. Lincoln and Guba (1985) say that this phase

constitutes ‘the lessons learned’ from the cases.

Researchers such as Glesne & Peshkin (1992, p.30) supply some advice when doing research. For instance, they say, “The researcher should pilot their observations and interviews in situations and with people as close to the realities of the actual study as possible.” Thus, and following this view, the data collection procedure, whether, qualitative or quantitative in this study has been taken from the news forum between the date of April 17th, 2011 and that of August 1st, 2015 while the technical forum data is taken between October 24th and 27th, 2013. All the data is documented on the Internet through the following links for future referencing. In what follows, I summarise the pilot study.

As far as this pilot study is designed to test the feasibility of the research design and the hypotheses of why news forums allow impoliteness while the technical ones restrict its use, the procedure of the former is identical to the main research. The quantitative data includes counting male, female, and neutral nicknamed participants’ comments on the basis of measuring (im) politeness use. The qualitative data includes the analysis of first order politeness elicitation from the metapragmatics used by the participants in and out of the forums. I tried also made some interviews with an expert of online community practices related to the technical forum. Following the data collection, the main analytical frameworks – discursive and the interactional approaches are used to analyse the data in the pilot study. The analysis proceeded from quantifying the number of polite and impolite comments in relation to gendered nicknames of the participants. The procedure of analyzing first order politeness was further elicited through interviewing and investigating what is going on inside and outside the forum. As Haugh (2007, p.310) suggests to emphasize on the ways in which participants interpret, understand, analyze, negotiate and evaluate one another’s verbal conduct as might be shown in the details of what they say when they respond. This approach tends to focus on how (im) politeness is constructed during interlocutors’ interactions (documented in the discussion boards analysed).

The interpretation and evaluation of (im) politeness will be more relevant if the perspective of first order politeness (politeness1, i.e., interpreted by the interactants/interlocutors) is adopted and have the interpretation and evaluation checked by the analyst.

3.2.5. Recruitment

So as to collect naturally occurring data, I relied on the documented discussion boards on the browsing system of the Internet. I started with collecting the polite comments of the male nicknamed participants, those of the female ones as well as the neutral ones. The comments were collected to measure the degree of politeness within each of the male, female, and neutral nicknamed participants. I am going to start with the technical forum. Those comments which were recruited to the analysis of the data were posted in response to other newly introduced posts by experts in informatics and blog setting. Those posts by experts in informatics have received commenting from the other forum browsers which are put under analysis. In this respect, those recruited comments to be put under analysis have been found to range from male to female participants. Since the nature forum discussion boards is a text-based one, some other participants have chosen to hide their real gender. Therefore, these comments have been given a separate category of neither female, nor male but a neutral one. For this reason, I called these participants as neutral nicknamed participants. Concerning the news forum, the participants who were put under analysis are also divided into three categories: the male, female as well as neutral nicknamed participants. This time in the news forum, the comments of those participants were targeted to the official news delivered by al-Arabiya.net. Although, the participants have contributed through those three categories of male, female, and neutral ones, I suppose it is difficult to assume the gender of the participants since the context of discussion board does not allow others to see who is behind the screen. However, it is not important to categorize those participants since the purpose of the study is not a difference study based one. As mentioned above in the second chapter, the study of gender differences is not fruitful since generalizations of facts related to males and females have declined because of the existence of exceptions and variation within the same gender. In this respect, gender in this study is rather considered from a more discursive, logical and flexible way that can deal with different situations online.

I should note also that the forum participants did not know one another because of the earlier mentioned reason of the nature of the context of the discussion boards which hinders the participants as well as all the browsers from seeing one another and hence be always skeptic about their identity. In this respect, anonymity is one of the most important features in this study. Anonymity is given such an importance because it can give the freedom of expression of participants online and hence let them be impolite and

less caring about their linguistic behaviour. Being anonymous online can lead participants to act the way they like and without any fear of being socially sanctioned because of the absence of social accountability that exists in offline settings and face to face communication.

In the first technical forum, the comments were collected between the date of April 17th, 2011 and that of August 1st, 2015. The number of the participants, whether male nicknamed, female nicknamed or neutral nicknamed is 77 ones. Those participants have made 122 participations. Concerning the news forum, a number of 318 comments on the part of male, female, and neutral nicknamed participants have been analyzed. The dates of the comments range between 24th and 27th October 2013.

3.2.6. Data collection

This section presents the methods for research into virtual communication. The fact that I chose only one technical forum (case study), and only one news forum knowing they exist in a great number on the Net, is part and parcel of the qualitative research method, as introduced by Creswell (2007). Patton (2001, p. 3) notes that qualitative researchers should take the naturalistic approach to understand the “real world setting [where] the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest”, but leaves the “phenomenon of interest unfold naturally.” This can show the fact that qualitative analysis generally reflects the researcher’s view and understanding of a phenomenon from her/his own work of investigating the qualitative data.

In what concerns the quantitative approach adopted in this study, it helps give stronger evidence to the data analysis as well as the conclusions. Quantitative research method adopted here has the role of giving proofs of what is claimed in this study.

3.2.7. Observations

The observation is the widely used method specifically in studies that relate to behavioural sciences. Under the observation method, C.R. Kothari (2004, p.96) suggests that ‘the information is sought by way of investigator’s own direct observation without asking from the respondent.’ This method has got one main advantage and it is that subjective bias is eliminated, if the observation is done accurately. A second advantage of this method is that the information obtained relates to what is currently happening; it is not complicated by either past behavior or future attitudes or intentions. A third positive point of this method is that it is independent of respondents’ willingness to

respond and hence it is less demanding of active cooperation on the part of respondents as what happens in the case in the interview or the questionnaire method. This method is particularly suitable in studies dealing with subjects (i.e., respondents) who are incapable of giving verbal reports of their feelings.

Nevertheless, this method also has some drawbacks and limitations. First of all, it is an expensive method. Secondly, the information given in this method is very limited. Sometimes unexpected factors might interfere with the observational task. At times also, the fact that some people are seldom consenting to direct observation creates obstacle for this method to collect data effectively.

When using this method, the researcher should bear in mind things like: What should be observed? How can one record the observation? How can we assure the accuracy of observation? C.R. Kothari (2004) points out that ‘In case the observation is characterised by a careful definition of the units to be observed, the style of recording the observed information, standardised conditions of observation and the selection of pertinent data of observation, then the observation is called as *structured observation*.’ But the reverse of this (i.e. when observation is to take place without these characteristics to be thought of in advance, the same is termed as *unstructured observation*. In this respect, structured observation is considered convenient in descriptive studies, while in an exploratory study the observational procedure is most likely to be relatively unstructured(Kothari: 2004). In this research study, I observed some parts of the documented data of the two forums in an unstructured kind of way.

In this method, it is often likely to talk about participant and non-participant types of observation in the context of studies, mainly in social sciences. This distinction is dependable upon the observer’s sharing or not sharing the life of the group under his/her observation. If the researcher observes by including himself, more or less, in the group he/she is observing for the purpose of experiencing what the members of the group experience, then the observation here is called the *participant observation*. However, when the researcher observes as a detached envoy without making any attempt to be a member of the group and experience what they feel, then the observation of this type is often termed as *non-participant observation*. (When the observer is observing in such a manner that his presence may be unknown to the people he is observing, such an observation is described as *disguised observation*).

There are several advantages of the participant type of observation: the first one is

that the researcher has the ability to record the natural behaviour of the group. The second is that he/ she can even gather information which could not easily be collected if he/she observes in a disinterested fashion. The third one is that the researcher can make a verification of the truth of statements made by informants in the context of a schedule or a questionnaire. However, there are also certain drawbacks of this type of observation. First, the observer is exposed to the loss of the objectivity to the extent he participates emotionally. That leads to the fact that the problem of observation-control is not solved; and it may narrow-down the researcher's range of experience. In this research study, I stayed out of the group observing their behavior and hence it is likely to be referred to a second type of observation and which is the non-participant observation.

Sometimes we talk of *controlled* and *uncontrolled observation*. If the observation takes place in the natural setting or context of situation, it may be termed as uncontrolled observation. When observation takes place according to some organized steps such as definite pre-arranged plans which include experimental procedure, then it is called controlled observation. In non-controlled observation, no kind of trial is made to use precision instruments. The main aim of this type of observation is to obtain a casual picture of life and persons. This can give naturalness and completeness of behaviour that can permit enough time for observing it. Nevertheless, in controlled observation, mechanical (or precision) instruments are used as aids to accuracy and standardisation. This kind of controlled observation has a slope to supply formalised data upon which researchers can build generalisations with some degree of assurance. The main polytheism of non- controlled observation is the fact of subjective interpretation. In addition, there is the danger of having the feeling that we have more knowledge about the observed phenomena than we actually do. In usual, controlled observation takes place in a variety of experiments that are proceeded in a laboratory or under while uncontrolled observation is haunted to in case of exploratory researches. In this research study the data is taken from a natural setting and not pre-arranged one. This means, I did not organize or plan for the study but observed data in their natural form. As termed above it is an uncontrolled kind of observation.

3.2.8. Documented data or content analysis

Content-analysis is defined as an approach consisting “of analysing the contents of documentary materials such as books, magazines, newspapers and the contents of all

other verbal materials which can be either spoken or printed.” (Kothari, 2004, p.110). Before 1940’s, content analysis contains mostly quantitative analysis of documentary materials of data that is related to certain features that can be identified and counted. However and since 1950’s, Content analysis is generally qualitative analysis with regard to the general meaning or tenor of the existing documents. “The difference is somewhat like that between a casual interview and depth interviewing.” (Carter V. Good and Douglas E. Scates). Many researchers like Bernard Berelson are often associated with the latter type of content analysis. “Content-analysis is measurement through proportion.... Content analysis measures pervasiveness and that is sometimes an index of the intensity of the force.”(Ibid, p.670).

Whenever a researcher is interested in studying the nature of verbal materials, content analysis is a vital and central choice of activity to choose like what I did in this study. In any kind of field of research, a review contains content analysis of research articles that were published before. The analysis might go at either a simple level or a subtle one. A simple level of analysis is done if we pursue the study to be based on certain characteristics of the document or verbal materials that could be identified and counted (such as on the basis of major scientific concepts in a book). A subtle level is done when a researcher makes a study of behavior and attitudes, say of the press towards education by feature writers (C.R. Kothari, p. 2004). This research study involves a considerable part of document content analysis of the articles published on politeness and online community practices and which are used in explaining and data analysis. Many CMC researchers Claim that one of the most insightful methods of investigation is content analysis of conference transcripts (Donnelly & Gardner, 2009).

3.2.9. Interviewing

Interviewing is a vital research method, which is often used in qualitative research, in order to explore the meaning of the examined topic in more detail. Kavale (1996) describes the main purpose of the qualitative research interviewing as ‘to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say’. There are three main types of interviews: structured, unstructured, and semi-structured. Structured interviews are interviews which are used in surveys consisting of questions which are pre-set by the researchers and the respondents are not given a chance to mention other points, except for the answers requested. Unstructured interviews, by contrast, proceed with little or no constraint from the interview questions. The interviews generally begin with broad and

general questions and give the chance to the interviewee to guide the conversation. At last, the semi-structured interviews which “consist of several key questions that help to define the areas to be explored, but also allow the interviewer or interviewee to diverge in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail” (Gill et al., 2008, p.291). According to Mann & Stewart (2000, p.75), the choice of the interview method usually “depends upon the research question itself, or upon the qualitative approach which informs the overall research design.”

The E-interview, a short expression referring for electronic interview, is a research method that comes to replace conventional face-to-face interviewing by the use of the Internet. Bampton & Cowton (2002) suggest that, in comparison with the face-to-face interview, the e-interview necessitates two fundamental changes to interviewing: “In relation to time, the interactions between interviewer and interviewee are likely to be asynchronous, with pauses of varying lengths between bursts of communication or ‘episodes’; while in terms of space, the relationship takes place ‘at a distance’ through the medium of electronic, screen-based text” (Bampton & Cowton, 2002).

These differences have got their own advantages and drawbacks either. The advantages of using email to conduct semi-structured interviews are three-fold. First of all, email interviewing is favorable to both interviewers and interviewees. For example, Foster (1994) notes that e-interviews command the barrier of different geographical locations and time and do not need to travel around to do interviews. Moreover, since the interviewers and interviewees do not have to meet for interviews, the interviewees can reply and respond to the interview questions the time they want. Also, the interviewers can carry out interviews with a number of interviewees simultaneously.

Secondly, on one side of the coin, e-interviews conducted in semi-structured format give the ability to the researchers to “track the issues which are of most interest to themselves” and “seek further clarification and elaboration of answers” (Mann & Stewart, 2000, p.75). On the other side of the coin, because of having less time stress to answer the interview questions, interviewees can organize their thoughts taking all their time and thus can give more elaborated or in-depth feedback and answers. Thirdly, the researcher can rely on the interview data collected from emails because the words used in the data analysis are the words written by the interviewees. In this respect, researchers do not need to transcribe the interviewees’ responses since they are already written in their emails and hence need less worry for the accuracy and regulation of the

interview transcriptions. None the less, the conduction of interviews online still has its drawbacks because of the nature of the context of computer-mediated communication. Firstly, as discussed above, the usefulness of the time allowance for the interviewees could become a nightmare for the interviewers. In contrast to face-to-face interviews, e-interviews allow the interviewees to choose the time and place where they answer, or choose not to answer at all. Mann & Stewart indicate that “it could be wrong to assume that all participants will be prepared to talk in depth ...” (Mann & Stewart, 2000, p.151). This can even include the participants who do respond to the e-interviews who might “go to the questions they have the most to say about and skip the others” (Mann & Stewart, 2000, p.149). Second, due to the absence of face-to-face and physical contact, the information which is transferred in non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, tone of voice, gestures cannot be captured online. Bryman (2001) point out that, “Qualitative researchers are frequently interested not just in what people say but also in the way that they say it.” Thus even though emoticons like this one (☺) have been created in computer-mediated communication to compensate for the missing non-verbal or extra linguistic cues, it has been admitted that “online discourse might lack some of the analytic breadth that is possible when FTF conversation are observed” (Mann & Stewart, 2000, p.87). In this research study, I used the semi-structure interviews via instant messaging.

Along with the conduction of this research study, I have taken into consideration these advantages and disadvantages. Also, I have been faced with the fact of the non-willingness of the participants to respond to my emails although I insisted on them to do so.

Since different issues emerged between along with the study, different interview questions were prepared for every target in the forum communication. I interviewed an expert who makes money from the internet as will be demonstrated in the last chapter.

3.2.9.1.Data analysis

In this section, I describe how the different qualitative and quantitative data collected in the research project were used to support the data analysis. At first I have to introduce the analytical framework of this study and then the procedure of the data analysis.

3.2.9.2. Analytical framework

Inspired by the case study approach, this study puts into consideration the relevant factors such as the subject discussed, the response to the post, etc. in the interpretation of the data under study.

Creswell (2007, p.73) argues that “case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context).” Creswell, claims that “case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases), over time, through detailed in-depth data collection involving *multiple sources of information*(e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents, and reports), and reports a case *description*, and case-based themes. For example, several programs (a *multi-site* study) or a single program (a *within-site* study) may be selected for study.” He also continues to argue that a qualitative case study can be accompanied with quantitative research methods to better understand the case under study. For instance, Yin (2003) combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to case study development and discusses explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive case studies.

3.2.9.3. Computer mediated discourse analysis

Herring (2004) considers computer mediated discourse analysis as an ‘*approach*’ rather than a ‘*theory*’ or a single ‘*method*’. The CMDA approach allows diverse theories about discourse and computer-mediated communication to be entertained and tested. In addition to this, though its overall methodological orientation can be featured, it is not a single method but rather a set of methods from which a researcher can select what best suits for his/her data and research questions. Herring (2004, p.4) says; ‘*the CMDA approach allows diverse theories about discourse and computer-mediated communication to be entertained and tested.*’ She goes on to add that the basic methodological orientation of CMDA is “language-focused content analysis.” (ibid). This, as she noted, may be purely “qualitative—observations of discourse phenomena in a sample of text may be made, illustrated, and discussed—or quantitative—phenomena maybe coded and counted, and summaries of their relative frequencies produced.” (2004, pp.4-5). Also, we should draw attention to the fact that quantitative computer mediated discourse analysis should comprise a qualitative component, e.g., counting a certain phenomenon instances especially when the phenomena of interest are semantic rather than syntactic in the sense of being (structural) in nature (Bauer, 2000). There

are researchers who confined their analysis with reference to the qualitative approach, others to the quantitative one and other ones who combined between the qualitative and quantitative ones.

As with other forms of content analysis to be successful, the researcher should select a research question that can basically be answerable. He/ she must select methods that address the research question and apply them to sufficient corpus of data. After that, if coding and counting approach are chosen, then the researcher should operationalize the phenomena to be coded, create coding categories, and set their reliability (e.g. getting multiple raters to agree on how they should be applied to a sample of data). If statistical methods of analysis are chosen, then the researcher should identify, and apply appropriate statistical tests. Finally the interpretation of the results should be done responsibly and in a direct relation to the research question.

3.2.9.4. Analyzing "Virtual Community"

The term 'virtual community' has become very fashionable on the Internet. However, some researchers ask the question of features that characterize a certain group online to be considered as *community*. One of these questions is: can we consider any group online as a community? The answer of Herring (2004) is negative in the sense of not consider any group online to be a virtual community. For this purpose, she proposes that the researcher should determine the properties of virtual communities and assess the extent to which they are realized by a certain group online.

Herring, for this purpose, suggests two examples. The first is the well-known site of 'linguist list' and the second is an online American forum called 'Inquiry Learning Forum (ILF) Which has the aim of fostering online community within secondary math and science in-service and pre-service teachers interested in the inquiry learning approach. She considers these two environments plausible for being virtual communities for a number of reasons. The first is that they both bring real world professional people together. The second reason is that their online participation is centered on a shared professional focus as in Wenger's (1998) community practices. Third, the linguist list has long lived which can give it the level of online community while one can say that the Inquiry Learning Forum has a *prima facie* claim to community status because its aim is to support a community.

To carry out an investigation by means of CMDA, the researcher should go

through five conceptual skills. First, it necessary to have a research question which can be empirically answerable from the available data; non-trivial; motivated by a hypothesis; and open- ended. Second, the data selection should be ‘appropriate’. This means that if a study is carried out for a purpose of comparison, then one should have more than one sample.

Second, the data should be taken in a natural environment and should not be elicited experimentally. The case under study has been taken from a sample of data that is produced naturally and not elicited experimentally. Herring notes that it is often impossible to examine all the phenomena of relevance to a particular research question. For this reason, the researcher must usually select a sample from the total data he has. In CMDA, this cannot be done randomly, since random sampling does not consider context which is vital in the interpretation of discourse analysis results. In this respect, Herring (2004, p.11) suggests that “data samples tend to be motivated (e.g., selected according to theme, time, phenomenon, individual or group).” In the same sort of way the data taken from the two forums have been selected according to the theme of politeness negotiation. Third, the researcher should operationalize his/her key concepts in terms of discourse features. This entails concepts related to the community such as core participants, in-group language, support, conflict, roles, etc. I operationalized key concepts of in-group language use and namely that of thanking, praising, offensiveness, etc. under the heading of (im) politeness use in the forums under study. After that(the fourth step), the researcher should select and apply methods of analysis such as counting frequencies of (e.g. messages, posts, etc.). I counted here frequencies of thanking, praising, and offensiveness in the discussion boards I studied. The last step is the interpretation of the results which relies on summarizing the results of data analysis, answer the research question as well as explain unexpected results, and consider broader implications.

This is a skim of the research methodology used here in this study. This is basically done at a structural level of kind and is general for all kinds of research. Specifically, the research methodology in politeness studying, also poses a big problem for researchers. The following section is going to reveal the research methodology I followed in my interpretation of the results of politeness use and on which bases I considered some acts as polite, non-polite, etc. this considers a big part the problem of first order politeness elicitation which is a subject of much controversy.

3.3. First-order politeness elicitation

In light of the insightful and useful approach of the discursive analysis of politeness as well as the interactional one, second order politeness should be based on first order politeness. However and according to this research conduct, first order politeness explanation of the community members is not always easy to catch for the analyst of politeness especially in online community practices. This interviewing method of research is drawn on work by Mills and Van Der Bom (2015, pp.190-191) who introduce one of the most fruitful ways of eliciting first order politeness and which is based on interviewing the participants of a certain interaction to elicit their judgements on polite and impolite behaviour. Mills and Van Der Bom (2015, pp.190-191) claim:

'We then analyze their judgements and come to some conclusions about the way politeness functions in this interaction. Notably, our texts for analysis include the initial recorded interaction, as well as recordings of the evaluations and judgements from participants about the initial interaction themselves. Finally, we address how the interplay of the initial conversation, in combination with the participants' evaluations of politeness in the interaction, and the analyst's view, might lead to a second-order understanding of politeness and impoliteness. We focus particularly on ideologies of politeness and impoliteness.'

This comes to be as a way of clarifying the discursive approach of politeness analysis that has long been seen as nebulous to politeness researchers in lack of clear methodology that could be relied on when analysing (im) politeness and stressing out that a wide range of different analyses are possible.

Although different in nature and procedure, the methodology supplied by Mitchell and Haugh (2015) in analysing (im) politeness relies partly on eliciting participants' opinions about politeness behaviour after the data collection in the sense of interviewing the participants of a certain interaction. Mitchell and Haugh (2015) claim:

'We have also elected to draw from consultations with the participants themselves...These took the form of follow-up interviews conducted by either the first author or a research assistant. During these semi-structured interviews, the participants were asked their impressions of what happened, what they thought of the other person, and what they thought the other person thought of them.'

However, it is explicitly claimed that interviewing the participants is not a final way of deciding on (im) politeness behaviour because the interview is totally another text and another conversation with the analyst as indicated by Mills (2003, p.45). In this sort of way, they claim the following:

'For these reasons participants' reports cannot be treated as offering definitive 'proof' of their interpretations or evaluations at the time of the interaction, and the interviewer should be treated as another participant in the interaction, and not simply as a neutral elicitor of comments'

Mitchell and Haugh (2015), based on Pomerantz (2005) argue that consultations with participants may help the analyst confirm his/her inferences through the examination of the interactional data and allow for the withholding of certain actions or reactions by participants to be *investigated* (Pomerantz 2005, p.102; cf. Waring et al., 2012, p. 279). So this kind of methodology suggests that along with interviews with participants about their evaluations and judgements on (im) politeness behaviour, the researcher could investigate through certain actions and reactions of participants that help make metapragmatic insights to enrich interactional analyses. Thus, in spite of the presence of opinions of participants, investigation in the metapragmatic understanding of politeness negotiation between participants is still needed to figure out how politeness actions and reactions function between participants.

These ways of politeness analysis which consist of follow up interviews are used when the participants are willing to contribute and give positive feedback on their part. However, sometimes the participants do not have positive feedback. So the question is how we could be aware of first order understanding of politeness to come up with final conclusions of politeness negotiation between the participants of this forum. Drawing on these insightful views, I have to note here that even though the latter methodology consists of interviews, *investigation* through metapragmatic visions is needed to conceive how (im) politeness works and in what ways it is negotiated between contributors of certain interactions. Also, even though this methodology of research does not explicitly mention that a whole *investigation* is done in politeness analysis in relation to interviews, it is clearly included in the way of examining how interaction is generally dealt with between speakers of a certain (im) politeness situation. Therefore, one might suggest that investigation for politeness¹ elicitation via the metapragmatics available in this case under study might lead to insightful conclusions of how politeness

is negotiated between the participants of the forums. Furthermore, investigation for first-order politeness understanding of a certain community members underpins the research work of Kleinke and Bös where first-order politeness was elicited from the comments of the participants of the two forum communications they studied. Thus, this is an investigation to inspect how politeness behaviour is negotiated via the met a pragmatics that is embedded in the comments of the participants. In this respect, although it is not explicitly mentioned that investigation via the met a pragmatics of the comments is a used as a way of first-order politeness elicitation, it is what actually done to come up at final conceptions and evaluations of (im) politeness behaviour. Kleinke and Bös (2015, p.52) comment:

'The second level of the analysis takes on a first-order perspective, investigating the met pragmatic comments in the corpus. We focus on the questions of how met a pragmatic comments are used for the discursive struggle over intergroup rudeness, and how they display expectations regarding unmarked or politic behaviour in online discussion for a dealing with highly controversial topics.'

In this sort of way and drawing on those ways of discursive politeness research proceeding, the method of research of this case is based on interviewing and investigating the metapragmatics of the comments of the participants of this forum and even in other forums. In this respect, the comments propagating or arousing rude verbal exchange or quarrels in this forum are seen as instances of (im) politeness negotiation in contrast to those cases of the comments not bringing out verbal disputes that are regarded as polite for they consist of only thanking and praise language forms. (Im) politeness is negotiated very carefully in this kind of technical forum and instances of impoliteness are negotiated with more care. In addition to the other cited causes of politeness prevalence, the matter of profitability cannot be ignored for most of forum members as well as the managers are interested in successful blog designing and other related matters which are exchanged through this community of practice. To this, one can add that most of them publicise for their own blogs in this forum where some of them set explicitly the amount of payment for different technical informatics designs and services. One other thing that cannot be ignored is the advertisements of some big corporations such as Google on their blogs and even the forum itself for which payment is received in return of this dispensation.

Not only that but investigating out of the forum can help us apprehend how

politeness is negotiated in these special community practices. Thus, browsing into some of the most famous forums and going back to analyse early literature about discussion boards might be supportive to answer the question. In dealing with the question of profitability in forums, one can visit some of the most famous forums such as “Aufeminin”, to see that it gives explicitly its annual revenue each year which is equal to millions of Euros. So the question of profitability cannot be marginalized in relation to politeness prevalence in some forum community practices (it is important to note that the relation between impoliteness and profitability is not a direct relation which means that it is not true for all forum communication). This is due to the fact that this might contrast with political forums where impoliteness prevails although it is prohibited and not seen as a norm (Kleinke and Bos, 2015). When I relied on early literature of forum communication in relation to politeness, the study of Herring (2002, p.373) seems to help solve one side of the problem. In her study about a feminist forum troll invasion, she refers to some early studies of forum disruption through impoliteness disrespectful, provoking male language behaviour that led to the shutdown of a forum. She reports, ‘Collins-Jarvis (1997) documents the crisis that befell Comserve’s Gender hotline when several males began bombarding the forum with antifeminist messages, causing female subscribers to flee the group, and the forum eventually to be shut down.’ Thus, one of the most dangerous consequences that can happen with some forum communication is the loss of credibility and the reason for which a forum is created that can lead to its complete destruction and shutdown. And this can happen with the influence of impoliteness in some forums like the one cited by Herring (2002).

To sum up, I relied in my study on interviewing and the meta discourse in and out of the forums under study. As introduced earlier in Kleinke and Bos (2016) about first order politeness elicitation, I followed this method of research because it help easily extract the general way of seeing (m) politeness negotiation in this online community practices.

Also, I have to note something very interesting about politeness and its definition in forum communication. It is the fact that most participators do not interact intimately to the point they can use impoliteness between them in a normal way as what happens in intimate discourse. As it is known, impoliteness such as insulting is highly allowed in intimate discourse. This can lead one to inquire about why we cannot view impoliteness in these two forums as allowable as in intimate style. The simple answer to this is that forum communication cannot be seen from an intimate side of view because the

participators are not close to one another. This can give us the possibility of considering politeness and impoliteness from a distancing kind of level. That is to say, if someone uses thanking, it is more likely to be considered as thanking (except if the conversation suggests another thing).

3.4.Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodological framework of this research study. The data collection and data analysis have been discussed in relation to the research aims and questions. To sum up, this research is a qualitative study of two cases (discussion boards) supported with quantitative data analysis. I relied on the interactional approach supported by Arundale (1999, 2006) and discursive approach to politeness (Eelen, 1999) so as to investigate politeness use in the comments of the two discussion boards. The data selection has been done in relying on multiple sources of information so as to answer the research questions. The main one is content analysis which involves observing and analyzing the comments of the participants of the two discussion boards, the technical and the news forum. I followed the methodology introduced by Herring (2004) about computer mediated discourse analysis and which is based on five conceptual skills that are roughly sequential starting by choosing an answerable research question, then selecting natural appropriate data followed by operationalization of key concepts, and then selecting a method of analysis and, and finally interpret the results.

Chapter Four

4.1.Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the theoretical framework underlying this study and the methodology used to investigate politeness negotiation and the factor of gender in forums. This chapter will present the data analysis of this research. The researcher divided this chapter into two parts. In the first part, she analysed the technical forum where in second part, she investigated the news forum. Next, the researcher described the background of each case studied separately in each part. After that the results were presented, and then were interpreted. Finally the researcher draws a general conclusion of the two parts. We have to note that in the first forum, the comments that were analysed were directed to many posts in the forum. However, in the second forum (which is a news forum), the comments that were analysed were directed to only one news post. It propagated hundreds of comments. These comments were in the form of reciprocal attacks between the males and females in the forum.

4.2.Part one: The Arab blogger forum

The focus of this first case study is on a forum called ‘The Arab Blogger; Arabic Cash Academy’ which is a forum, in the Arabic language, dedicated to bloggers providing them information on how to set up his or her own blog in a manner that might be called “professional.” This type of forum gives one access to the recently developed applications that may improve the quality of one’s blog. It is a forum dedicated to teaching professionalism within blog setting and designing.

This study focuses on analyzing the use and negotiation of politeness employed in this forum. It examines the reasons for which the participants choose (im)polite behavior. Thus, the goals of the participants (Spencer-Oatey, 2008) in criticizing, disagreeing and thanking in the use of politeness should be analyzed carefully. In this respect, the negotiation of politeness within this forum has its own unique conventions (detailed later within this study). I have to note that second-order politeness stands on first-order politeness elicitation, as introduced in the discursive approach to politeness research. Hence, first- order politeness elicitation, in this case, relies on the met a pragmatics of politeness use in and out of this discussion board. This investigation confirms the claim of earlier studies about some forums being dominated by politeness. This is in spite of the fact of anonymity.

4.2.1. Results

According to research done on thanking by Aijmer (1996), and according to the norms of social behavior in this Arabic context, we are not going to consider ‘thank you’ as an intensified polite speech act. It is rather seen as ‘simple thanking’. Intensified thanking in this forum should be exaggerated. This exaggeration relies on either stress or praise. In this respect, this study views the use the phrase of ‘thank you’ as an act of simple thanking. Intensified thanking, here in this case of Arabic language, are acts of thanking which are exaggerated either by doubling letters or praise forms such as ‘you are a master’, ‘lion’, ‘hero’, etc. Praise is viewed as an intensified polite act. Disagreements are divided into polite and impolite. They are analyzed contextually in a qualitative way in the sense that the disagreement is seen polite if it consists of some politeness cues such ‘excuse me’, ‘dear’, etc. and more importantly generating no aggressive responses. Impolite disagreements are also analyzed contextually and are viewed as impolite if they use impolite forms such as ‘ignorant’, ‘non-professional’, etc. and also if they generate aggressive verbal quarrelling responses or not.

Apart from the existence of different kinds of posts such as advertising ones, posts of jokes related to blogging, and posts asking for help in blogging, I chose to analyze one type of post: the kind on which the forum seems to come into existence and which is information giving where knowledge and expertise is exchanged between the participants who seem to be experts in informatics. I analyzed 12 posts of information-giving on blogging that had generated about 121 responses and comments varying from thanking and praise sorts to information-adding in comments and criticizing one’s kind of information posted on this forum under analysis.

4.2.1.1.Kinds of politeness

The general number of the comments is 121 ones posted by a number of 75 participants of the same basic interest: information exchange. This means that seventy five participants have made 121 comments. The comments range from polite to impolite. Apart from an unrelated form of comment such as asking for links online and publicity in the participants’ responses, I divided the comments found into thanking comments, praise comments, polite disagreement and criticizing comments, and impolite disagreement and criticizing comments. Before giving the results in percentages, I will give example of those kinds of polite and impolite behavior in the forum. Table 1 below will show some examples of those comments and their translation

into English:

	Example from the forum:	Translation into English:
Thanking	مشكوووووووورر /ma	Thank youuuuuuuuu
Praise	جامد جدا	Very strong
polite disagreement	الفكرة المضافة رائعة جداً وقد استخدمتها في الماضي	The idea of adding is great but I used this before
Impolite disagreement	لا تحاول تلميع الشركة لأنها أصبحت معروفة لدى الجميع بالنصب والاحتيال.	Do not try to polish the company because it has become known for its fraud and theft.

Table 1: Examples of politeness in the forum

And now, after giving some examples of the thanking, praising, polite and impolite disagreements I will give the results.

The results found show a kind of prevalence of politeness in the form of thanking intensified by praise forms and/ or by letters added to thanking, such as in the example 'thank youuuuuuu'. So, thanking as a polite form of language is found to cover a large proportion of the kind of the linguistic behavior used in this forum of knowledge-exchange that it approximates two thirds of all the responses posted. In this respect, the rate of thanking posts is 69.42 % and the rate of polite disagreements is 05.78 %. Thus, if we add polite disagreements to polite thanking, we find that more than two thirds of the posts in this forum corpus are polite. Praise delivered to the participants with very good information posted is found to cover a rate of 14.87 % of all the response posts. Thus, one can claim that more than ninety percent of the language used in this forum of knowledge exchange is clearly polite. A percentage of 02.47 % is found to hold impolite linguistic behavior in the form of disagreements and critiques and not insults or swear

language behavior. The remaining 07.43% is a mixture of some unrelated questions of links providing and publicity having nothing to do with the posts of information giving supplied by the participants. (See table2)

kind of (im) politeness	Percentage
Thanking	69.42 %
Praise	14.87 %
polite disagreements	05.78 %
impolite disagreements	02.47 %
Non related posts	07.43 %

Table 2: Kind of politeness

As it is noticed in the results above, polite linguistic behavior is dominating in its forms of thanking, praise, and polite disagreements. If one asks the question of why such kind of abundance of thanking, we can say that the forum is ruled by experts posting new information and visited very often by bloggers who want to improve their blogs via the use of this information. So, when these visitors find data that suits them, they logically use thanking to reward the experts. These are some examples of the thanking, praising, polite disagreements and impolite disagreeing comments found in the forum. Let us start with a thanking comment which is directly followed by its translation in table 3:

The comment in the forum	<p>Aim live عضو جديد: جزاك الله خيرا ونتمنى المزيد... تقبل مروري</p>
The translation of the comment in English	<p>Aim live New member 'I hope God will pay you better and we wish that you will bring us more information.'</p>

Table 3: Example of thanking

The second kind of politeness which is praising is present in a variety of forms. I

We can see that this is extracted from a conversation between two members of the forum. I took just a small extract to show the impolite disagreement as an example but I will discuss this conversation later in the discussion.

Taking into consideration the difference between polite and very polite language (Haugh 2012), one can notice that there exist simple thanking linguistic forms as well as intensified thanking forms posted. The very polite forms are intensified by either letter doubling or praise forms. The number of posts with praise polite language forms approximates a third of all the posts of thanking in the sense of constituting a rate of 30.95%. In the same sort of way, the percentage of intensified thanks with letter doubling is 29.76%. Simple thanking forms constitute a rate of 39.28%. In this respect, intensified thanking exceeds the half and approximates two thirds of the all response posts of thanking polite linguistic behavior. See table 7

kind of thanking	Percentage
Intensified thanking by praise	30,95 %
Intensified thanking by letters	29,76 %
Simple thanking	39,25 %

Table 7: kinds of thanking

As seen in the table above, the participants who commented using thanking expressions have boosted their thanking forms using either praise or doubling letters with a frequency of approximately 60 percent of rate. So intensified thanking exists with high percentages than that of simple thanking. We can say that the participants used intensified thanking because they generally visit this forum to find information about blogging and reward the posters by intensifying their thanks through praise and letter doubling. Here I will supply some examples of the simple thanking and the intensified thanking in this table below:

	Simple thanking	Intensified thanking with letter doubling	Intensified thanking with praise
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The comment in the forum	C4 aissams عضو جديد شكرا لك	Sos-sat عضو جديد مشكوروووووور	Mariam.osama عضو نشيط و رائع شكرا
The translation of the comment	C4 aissams New member Thank you	Sos-sat Thank youuuuuuuu	Mariam.osama Thanks, more than great

Table 8: Examples of simple and intensified thanking

We notice that thanking in the forum is used with a higher frequency than any other kind of politeness. However, in the next section, we shall see the negotiation of thanking according to the gender of the user.

4.2.1.2. Gender and thanking

In taking into consideration the gender parameter in the forum, one can never be certain of the one typing behind the screen when he/she cannot see and identify him/her. However when I relied on the nicknames of the participants denoting the gender of the one participating, I found some gender differences. All the female responses belong to polite thanking intensified by either praise or letter doubling. That is to say the females who responded politely intensified their thanking at a one hundred percent rate. See table '9'

female thanking	Percentage
intensified thanking	100 %
simple thanking	00.00%

Table 9: female nicknamed participants' thanking

As it is clearly seen the female nicknamed participants intensified and boosted their thanking forms with 100% of rate. On the opposite side of the coin, the male responses ranged between intensified and simple thanking. In this respect, the male intensified thanking constitutes a rate of 72.5 % of all the male thanking responses. The

remaining male thanking responses were simple at a rate of 27.5 %. See table 10

Male nicknamed participants' thanking	Percentage
intensified thanking	72.50%
simple thanking	27.50%

Table 10: male nicknamed participants' thanking

As the table and graphic representation show, the male nicknamed participants intensified their thanking forms with a high frequency in comparison with simple thanking. One can say that although the percentages of both of the male and female nicknamed commentators are high, there exist slight differences in the sense of female nicknamed participants being more polite than the male ones.

4.2.1.3. Female presence and contribution

a. Presence

The participation of males and females in this forum makes a great gender difference in what concerns posting information-related posts and responses/comments too. In this respect, the total number of the participants taken in this study is 77 ones between participants of male nicknames, those of female nicknames and those of neutral ones. In what concerns the responding posts, only a rate of 07.79 % constituted the female nickname participants. That is to say, only six female participants seem to be present in this forum. The remaining percentage is between participants of neutral nicknames with 44.15% and participants of male ones with a rate of 48.05%. In numbers, thirty four (34) neutral nicknames as opposed to thirty seven (37) males made comments to newly information posts. See table11

Male female presence	Numbers	Percentage
Participants with male nicknames	37	48.05 %
Participants with female nicknames	06	07.79 %
Participants with Neutral nicknames	34	44.15 %

Table 11: Male female presence according to nicknames

As it is displayed in the table as well as the graphic representation, the female nicknamed participants exist with very few percentages in comparison with the male as well as the neutral nicknamed participants. One might explain this with reference to the fact that males dominate the public arena as indicated previously by some researchers (Mills, 2002; Oliveira, 2003).

b. Contribution to knowledge and information

In what concerns information and knowledge giving posts, no participant with a female nickname posted a new knowledge or information post. This is in opposition to a male nicknamed participation of knowledge giving with 83.33%. That is, sixty four (64) males posted new information in this forum. The remaining thirteen (13), i.e. a rate of 16.66 % participants with neutral nicknames also contributed to knowledge in posting new information in the forum. See table 12

Gender of the participant	Numbers	Percentage
Participants with male nicknames	64	83.33%
Participants with female nicknames	00	00.00%
Participants with neutral nicknames	13	16.66%

Table 12: Information and knowledge giving posts according to gender

In this respect, and as it is clearly seen in the table and the figure above, the females participating in this forum under study did not supply any kind of post of knowledge- giving. This might be explained with reference to Herring (1996) claiming that males are experts and more professional in informatics and related scientific fields. Here I will present some examples of the male nicknamed participants who have posted new information for bloggers translated into English. The member is has a nicknamed of ‘**Abdelhak elouajdi**’ who seems to have introduced new information for the members of the forum. I wrote only the nickname of this member, the title of his post and the post itself. It goes as follows (See appendix 1):

1. Abdelhak elouajdi

A news magazine template for blogger

Peace be upon you(hello), I will present a template I made by myself, this time I made my best efforts to give you a better content, and in order to enrich the Arabic content in this field.

This template, in reverse of the other Arabic templates, is featured by powerful improvement of appearing in Google search because it contains codes which ask Google search for their archives of articles. This is because when the searcher searches for something, he writes the title and not the subject. Also, I added it to the universal site alexia to become her friend too and in order to improve its appearance on this site, one should download alexia toolbar.

Template features at a design level Look at the plan

Examination Download

The second neutral nicknamed participant who posted a new kind of information is under the name of ‘**Ams**’ and who has presented something related to reviewing. That is to say, how someone can add reviewing in his/ her blog. This time also, I wrote only the nickname of this member, the title of his post and the post itself. It goes as follows (see appendix 2):

2. Ams

In the name of Allah the merciful Peace and blessing from God on you Adding reviewing next to every subject

So as your visitor can review your subject

It appears next to every blogging; note that the first stars are related to the visitor And the second stars are related to the whole general reviewing

The way of composition

Go to the following site: outbrain

Choose the settings you want them to be in your blog Click on ‘install’ and this will take you to this page

After determining your blog and the title of adding (it will not appear), click on “adding user interface”.

Word Press

In the same way of Word Press, but try to choose Word Press instead of blogger Try to download the file and put it on your blog in Word Press and activate it.

Do not forget us from your sincere prayers www.Ams90.net

These participants under the male and neutral nicknames as seen above have posted good information for the bloggers frequently visiting this forum. I extracted only the written information without the images used in the forum. (See appendices for further explanation). Also, these posts are expected to be read, liked and commented on by the visitors. Not only this, but some of those who pin their posts, like the one under the nickname ‘Ams’ put the link of their blogs so as to be visited by other members or visitors of the forum. This has a relation to profitability as will be explained in the next section.

4.2.1.4. Profitability in the forum

I have earlier cited in the chapter of methodology that this study is based on both methods of qualitative and quantitative ones. This qualitative analysis of the following example will show that profitability is something expected from those managers of the forum. In working with what I have called earlier as meta discourse analysis to show the importance of the relationship between politeness and profitability, I analysed the example I found in the forum in which the manager asks his assistant to explain some important information about a given subject. The assistant agrees and expects a lot of readers, likes, comments and evaluations. However, when he comes back the day after to see the feedback of the visitors he finds that some people have seen his post but wasn’t evaluated except by two people and got only 3 likes, and not commented on at all because those visitors think he gave them no secrets. He at the end feels degraded and angry and finds no importance to stay in the forum. His post after drawing this troll contains also an important message in which he says it is better to work with French people, British, Americans, Canadians, etc. because they give feedback and promote to do better. I took all the conversation from the blog and it goes as follows:

The general manager whose nickname is **rmdnnjh** has drawn a troll and has

written the following (see appendix 3):

Rmdnnjh

A troll to Arabycash

Good morning, how are you everybody?

This is my first troll drawing in my life in which I express some of the jokes happening to me in the academy.

This is what I feel when I write a subject and do not find a feedback helping me or promoting me towards making better and better.

The manager starts to visualize the following situation

Hussein Ali (the director): Sir Joseph, try to explain this subject to Arabycash urgently please.

Joseph: ok

Joseph starts writing and starts to think that it would be his best subject and when he finishes he gets afraid of not having feedback from the visitors. He publishes his subject on Araby cash academy, and when he comes back later he finds 132 readers of the subject, 2 evaluations, and only 3 likes at most and the no comments. He visualizes the opinion of the readers in the state of being sarcastic that the subject is not beneficial and that they did not give them any new, good and beneficial information. He, at last, visualizes himself in a state of anger and that he has nothing to do in the academy. He accompanies his troll with a message which goes as follows:

‘My dears, I am not here to be hypocritical and not writing adverstising articles for a product or a book!!! I have no book to sell or a product to publicise for... in my point of view, the one who wants to gain money nowadays, he has to work with the foreigners like the French, the Americans and British, Europeans, and Canadians.

Please, if the subjects which we write in the site are not beneficial or do not please you, try to tell us what you need us to explain for you.... put your questions and try to interact with us so as we feel that our time and work do not go in vain....

Try to imagine that every day you give to someone a present or something nice and he does not thank you; he takes the present and does not give you any attention!!! Will you come again and give him presents another time? Or.....does this behavior

promote you to give him more???

Imagine that someone comes to you whenever he needs you and asks for help and when you help him, he does not thank you or give you any importance or attention; how will you feel towards him? And what is your stance towards helping people?

One of the visitors under the nickname of **عجوز** has replied in the following way

عجوز.2

Unfortunately interaction in forums is no more like in the past. Social media sites have become a source for everything.

Moreover, the visitor in the forum takes what he wants and leaves Good luck for Arabycash academy.

The general manager has responded as follows

Thank you brother but I am not talking about the forum only, but the main site also. You can imagine the effort made by the team to write articles, lessons and instructions for free. Yes, it is free without rewards, may be some cents from AdSense because the main site is in Arabic as you know.

The absence of feedback puts us in doubt whether our subjects are not exclusive, or not beneficial. This makes us lazy because we find no encouragements or feedback like thanking. At least, they thank us; it is free without paying any money and even if the article is not beneficial one should give us its drawbacks And this will promote us towards giving the best if God wills.

Thank you my friend for your feedback

Here in this comment, the assistant is trying to make the visitors sensitive and convince them to leave their feedbacks when they read his post. This as he said would encourage him to bring the best to the bloggers in need of information about blogging and getting money from the internet. As he notes, the team works with a lot of efforts and waits for the feedbacks of the visitors which could help them get some revenue even if it is not a lot.

4.2.2. Discussion

4.2.2.1. Elicitation of first-order politeness

First order-politeness elicitation relies, in this study, on investigating (im)

politeness negotiation in and out of this forum. Therefore, investigation inside the forum consists of observing the met a pragmatic comments between the participants. So, the comments propagating or arousing rude verbal exchange or quarrels in this forum are seen as instances of impoliteness in contrast to those cases of the comments not bringing out verbal disputes that are regarded as polite for they consist of only thanking and praise language forms. This is detailed in the next section. So to support well our inferences about (im) politeness negotiation in this community member via interviewing the participants, the forum owner and the manager were contacted but no positive feedback was displayed on their part. Not only that, but one of the most active members of this forum was also contacted about the reason behind such over use of politeness in this particular forum but she said that she does not have the right to answer this question because she was just a member. This fact led me to investigate outside the forum. This comprised of browsing into some other forums and going back to analyze early literature about discussion boards that can support answer the question. In relying on early literature of forum communication in relation to politeness, the study of Herring (2002, 373) seems to help solve one side of the problem. In her study about a feminist forum troll invasion, she refers to some early studies of forum disruption through impolite disrespectful, provoking male language behavior that led to the shutdown of a forum. She reports ‘Collins-Jarvis (1997) documents the crisis that befell Comserve’s Gender hotline when several males began bombarding the forum with antifeminist messages, causing female subscribers to flee the group, and the forum eventually to be shut down.’ Thus, one of the most dangerous consequences that can happen with some forum communication is the loss of credibility and the reason for which a forum is created that can lead to its complete destruction and shutdown. And this can happen with the influence of impoliteness in some forums. In parallel with this, if one visits some of the blogs which are publicized for by its members in this forum communication, s/he could find it is explicitly mentioned that blog design, or site creation is based on exchange of payment. So the question of profitability cannot be marginalized in relation to politeness prevalence in some forum community practices (it is important to note that the relation between impoliteness and profitability is not a direct relation which means that it is not true for all forum communications). This is because this fact might contrast with political news forums where impoliteness prevails although it is prohibited and not seen as a norm (Kleinke and Bos, 2015). In this case under study, profitability is central and fear of loss of credibility that may lead to complete shut down because of impoliteness and hence loss of profitability cannot be

ignored, at least in this case under study as will be detailed later in this discussion.

4.2.2.2. Second-order politeness

a. Thanking and praising as polite behavior

As noted earlier, the language used in this forum is Arabic. The first observation one might make is the prevalence of politeness linguistic behavior ranging between thanking, praising, agreeing and disagreeing politely as indicated by previous literature. In this respect politeness linguistic behavior in this online community of practice under analysis exceeds ninety percent of all the linguistic behavior found. By contrast, impolite linguistic behaviour does not exceed three percent. Not only that, but if someone makes a difference between impolite and highly impolite aggressive language like insults and swear linguistic units, one can notice the non-existence of such impolite linguistic phenomena. As said before, politeness behavior in the form of thanking, intensified thanking by letters or praise, and praise dominated over impoliteness behavior. Some examples of these polite linguistic behaviors are as follows in the table below:

Kind of thanking or praise	Example in Arabic (from the blog)	Translation into English
Simple thanking	شكرا	Thank s
Intensified thanking by letter	مشكووووووور	thank youuuuuuuuu
Intensified thanking with Praise	مشكور يا أسد	Thanks, lion!
Praise	يا بطل	you are a hero

Table 13: Examples of praise and thanking from the blog

This kind of polite language behavior dominated the forum in the sense that it constituted more than ninety percent of the responses. Thanking is seen as a suitable polite language form in return of any kind of favor someone does for anyone.

b. (Im) polite disagreements

The study of this forum sample registered an impolite language use response of a male nicknamed participant siding with an online corporation making theft from participants working for it. So, the information given in this post is that one can make an online complaint against any online burglar corporation s/he worked for without

generating his/her legal legitimate money gains in the sense of not being paid by the corporation. The impolite language used between the two male participants was not in the form of insulting for an online corporation. So it was a kind of online conversation not exceeding three responsive posts. Translated from Arabic to English, the conversation goes as follows:

The member under the nickname o **تركي العياش** has posted information about depositing a complaint against a company which steals money. Also for all the posts, I took only the nickname of the member, the title of the post and the post itself. He writes (see appendix 4):

تركي العياش

By the name of God Hello,

This is a link of a foreign forum <http://www.forexpeaceary.com>

The forum is very strong and most of the companies take it into serious consideration

You can write your subject in the forum and you can raise a file to the court by giving your file.

The case is debated by the members and the managers of the forum and the company is contacted to discuss the case. They vote on it and then they refer it to the court to have the judgment on the company.

Youth! Do not say just a forum and it can do nothing to the company; try and then judge!

Of course a lot of companies have a bad reputation and known in most forums by their theft and fraud such as hfx andufx..... Such companies are known by the managers of

The foreign forum and this helps a lot when someone has a problem with one of these companies.

Since the subject was good, it was proven on the forum by the general manager and praised by other members. This member added a comment claiming that an online corporation named 'hfx' has been arrested and closed by the court. However, one of the members under the nickname of '**Mourad**' claimed that he worked well with this

company and it was not corrupt. This member responded impolitely in the following way:

Mourad

Hhhhhh, I swear I do not know what to tell you; I opened an account in this company

but nothing like this happened with me. I made benefits but in getting the money, it takes time because of procedures.

You seem to be a loser or you do not know how to work with them. All those who fail say it a fraudulent company.

(Scripts which are not understood)

After this response the one who posted the information تركي العياش has responded as follows:

تركي العياش

Do not try to polish the company because it has become very known by its fraud and theft and it is clear from your tone and style that you belong to this company.

The member **Mourad** has responded **as follows**:

Hhhhhhhh I am not with them but you seem new in the market. Business has the principle of loss and gain.

I worked with a lot of companies and tried them; the one which steals the most is market al Saud. You can try and you will learn. I used to start with a small credit with a number of companies.

And today I am working with plus500 and I thank my God. One day I gain and another I do not. But it is according to the strategy and you should preferably be an expert; you will win with no manager or nothing. Play by yourself and you will be satisfied.

The manager of the forum (B) did not respond impolitely to this although he is expert in working online. This might be referred to the fact that he did not to want to disturb other browsers or participants and hence lose popularity on his forum.

In what concerns the polite disagreement language use in this forum sample, one disagreement has been found under the form of a critique made by the general supervisor of the forum in his response to a male participant delivering some illegitimate information of money making from an online corporation. The general supervisor made the observation of the bad effects that can be generated to the corporation mentioned earlier because of this kind of illegal work with it. The conversation with a male nicknamed participant called **Saheralialy** who supplied the following illegal kind of working. He starts as follows (appendix5):

Saheralialy

To get contributors free in Bayt.com for your account Hello,

This is an idea to gain money for members of Arabic cash and it is the exchange of registering between the members.

it means the member puts his link of registration here and he registers the other members. Exchange of registration

This is My link of registration

http://www.bayt.com/afftrack?sec_id=...502707&lang=ar

However, there is condition of completing the curriculum vitae and the one who registers he puts his own link of registration in a comment

Note: the first 10 members who contribute with us, I will register for them an additional membership.

The general manager whose nickname is **rm�nnjh** felt annoyed with this kind of work with this company and which can hurt it. So he responds politely to the one who posted this information in saying what follows:

rm�nnjh

Where is the amateurship here? If the company bayt.com was your company or you own a company like it and you pay the members in face of registering in it, do you accept that people would be registered in it in this way? Do you know that this way of work is hurtful to the company and to its benefits? Do you accept that something like this will happen with your company? I ask you to be an amateur in working because you will learn more and develop more, I advise you just as a brother, bye.

Thus, if we analyze deeply the manager's disagreement mentioned earlier, we find that although he was against the idea of the post giving information on how to register illegally in an online corporation to make some profits, he delivered his critique politely and disagreed in a form of advice-giving in the end. That is to say, it is not suitable for the general manager of this online forum to post something overtly impolite on his forum in order not to gain bad reputation and hence lose participants which can affect his/ her forum and financial profit making.

The other forms of polite disagreements were under the form of polite criticizing about the kind of the information posted describing it to be outmoded and old-fashioned. This, as mentioned earlier did not make any kind of problems between the participants. Some polite disagreements (translated from Arabic to English) are the following:

A: I am sorry but this information is somewhat old and not new.

A': I think that the information you just delivered is not new. But thanks, anyway!

This example shows how this person says his opinion in a polite way in order not to offend the one who posted the information.

4.2.2.3. Politeness prevalence and impoliteness scarceness

Polite linguistic behavior shown in the findings corresponds to the previous literature where the participants did use a lot of impoliteness forms as indicated earlier. However and in general terms, politeness theory in relation to language online has been claimed to tolerate a lot of impolite linguistic behavior due to the reasons of anonymity and the non- existence of social accountability created by the geographical distances between online participants. Although this is generally true, the findings of this forum study have shown a small amount of impoliteness use in opposition to a higher degree of politeness frequency by both males and females in spite of anonymity and the long distances existing between them. In this respect, impoliteness online is also socially governed and context-bound. In trying to figure out why such politeness prevalence in is forum, one can find some hided reasons that make this forum full of polite language forms. According to some previous literature and some use of analysis, I referred this politeness prevalence to three important reasons which are *online netiquette, information community based practice, and profitability*. I will explain each one individually to clarify what this means.

a. Online netiquette

First of all, the fact that partners of some forums impose rules of politeness on the participants, when they register so as to ban impolite linguistic behavior in their forums, might help to answer the question. The participants and members have to respect the rules of politeness of these forums in fear of being sanctioned by cancelling their contributions. Sage Lambert (2008a), in studying ChurchList FAQ (frequently asked questions) refers to a whole manual for (im) politeness that participants should follow so as not to be in problem and hence be rejected by the community of practice she studied. This fact is also referred to as 'Netiquette' or 'online etiquette' and which started with the development of computer communication to reduce impoliteness online and mainly flaming. Shea (1994) refers to some guidelines of Netiquette that call for respect and being polite online. In fact, forum managers make all participants aware, before subscribing to the forum, that breaking these guidelines can result in cancelling their contributions. So, almost, all forum participants are aware of these Netiquette rules. In this respect, cancellations of contributions on impolite behavior participations are made in some forums instead of engaging in impolite turn- takings with them. This can be seen as the first cause of politeness prevalence in some forum community practices in general and this forum in special. So if we suppose that impolite behavior is cancelled by these forum partners, we can perceive why politeness prevails in this forum and some other discussion boards.

b. Information community based practice

Second, and as noted earlier, one might relate the fact of impoliteness rareness in this forum to its nature, which is information-based at a one hundred percent rate. That is to say, the participants' interest is on information finding and giving and not discussions which mainly lead to disagreeing and hence misunderstandings which might include impolite linguistic behavior. The language used is mostly technical in the threads generating thanking comments in most of the cases. This also has a relation to the notion of community practice where the members of a certain group share the same interests (Wenger, 1998). In the online setting, Nishimura (2008) argues that community-hood online can be created when members' mutual expectations are satisfied by sharing information and experiences with other members of an online group. Here the participants of this forum share the mutual interest of knowledge search and exchange as well. The nature of the forum and the reason for which it is created is

so important to the point that if the forum loses its credibility, it might shut down. This might help to explain why impolite behavior in the use of rude language in some forum discussion boards does not have a negative effect on them as in the case of political and news forums where the nature of its controversial subjects fuels its participants leading them to allow rudeness in most of the cases.

c. Profitability

Third, one of the most other important reasons is profitability. Online forum setting that attracts visitors and participants is something difficult for someone to accomplish, and especially to gain popularity which cannot easily be grasped. Popularity and visitors of forums online are the central fact that can help forum partners make profits through their online contributions. The number of visitors adds profitability and this is why partners have to preserve their popularity through the smoothness of politeness linguistic behavior. So a manager of any forum of this kind may not engage in impolite linguistic behavior with any participant so as to preserve a good reputation for his/her forum, thus popularity, and hence profitability. In this respect, it is preferable for impolite linguistic participations to be cancelled and not responded disrespectfully so as not to disturb and/or shock the other participants and lose their contributions. That is to say, one cannot respond impolitely when s/he is a manager, a general supervisor in this type of forum because this fact affects negatively her/his online social environment and hence his/her profitability. The same is true for the members who publicize for their blogs in forums. So, one can say that in spite of the existence of the long geographical distances and anonymity, social accountability exists in this case. It is not always allowed for someone to use impoliteness when s/he is anonymous online with unknown participants. We have to note that the members of this forum and even the forum owner are mostly bloggers who have their own blogs where service of blog design and informatics information of successful blogging is supplied. These members exchange information, comment on one another, and publicize for their own blogs through this forum. So, if one visits some of these blogs, s/he might find that some of them offer design in blogging in exchange of payment. However and what is noticeable is that not all of them make it clear, on their own blogs, that blog design is payable. What is noticeable also, it that most of them compete for successful blogging. This also has a direct link with profitability that can make corporations such as Google publicize on one's successful blog or forum thanks to the number of visitors who frequently visit it. For this service too, forum owners and bloggers receive payment in

return from such corporations. What we have to note also is that this kind of restricted new informatics science is not accessible to all ordinary people and needs a lot of efforts, work, concentration and experts in the field too so as one could succeed in this domain and be inventive. This makes it valuable that requires payment in return. However, these efforts have to be preserved through the smoothness of polite linguistic behavior on the part of forum and blog owners, no matter what their gender is to enhance their success. In this respect, along with the reason of the nature of this forum which is an information-based one, the reason of profitability seems also important to stand behind the use of politeness in this forum.

To confirm more with strong and concrete evidence, I interviewed one of the persons who gain money through online communication. I have to note that he does not belong to the members of the forum under study. He works on developing games and sites. I asked him if politeness is central in his communication with online addresses, he said it is very important to be polite when you want to gain money through working in online community practices. I sent the following questions to this person and he responded to them in quite detailed way (see appendix6)

(Me=A and him=B)

A: do you have an official site or something like?

B: I do not have an official site or blog, I work on developing sites.

A: do you gain money through this site or blog (even if a small amount)? B: I get money from my sharing colleague in Canada.

A: is this money related to the kind of work, time, or what?

B: it is related to the time of working in addition to the kind of working. A: is there a company which pays you or it is your private job?

B: this is a private job, I get money from my partner.

A: what kind of job are you doing? Is it selling for a company, a mental work, or what? B: it is a job which is based on game programming and site developing.

A: suppose you have a blog, can you use impolite expressions with the one who is impolite with you or no?

B: I do not have a blog and I do not use insult words but mostly I use scientific words and codes.

A: if you use insults will this affect your gains or not?

B: this kind of work needs a lot of seriousness and the use of insults can affect the cost of the advertisement.

A: in face of this, do you think the use of polite expressions can improve your popularity and hence the rate of your gains?

B: generally, I use polite expressions when advertising for my own projects. A: so, do you think that politeness online is important to gain money?

B: yes, this kind of work needs politeness to get the most of followers you can.

The respondent to my questions who is said to gain a lot of money from the internet has clearly shown that the use of politeness in online communication needs a lot of carefulness in choosing the suitable expressions with others so as not to lose money and by contrast to gain more and more.

4.2.2.4. Gender, politeness, female presence and contribution to knowledge

As far as gender is concerned, one might observe that gender does not have any relevance when it concerns being polite on one's own discussion board and especially in this technical kind of forum which is made for information giving and blog designing that can raise one's own profitability. This costly information depends upon a lot of efforts and time that make them done in exchange of payment. However, these efforts have to be preserved through the smoothness of polite linguistic behavior on the part of this forum and blog owners, no matter what their gender is, to amplify their success online. In this respect and in this case specifically, gender has no relevance in (im) politeness negotiation if the fact is related to profitability.

Gender in relation to thanking in this forum sample studied has shown female participants as highly polite in the use of their intensified thanking in response to the information supplied in the forum. The females participated with polite thanking intensified by either praise or letter doubling, and even post response doubling at a one hundred percent showing no kind of impolite language. On the opposite side of the coin, the males' linguistic behavior ranged from intensified to simple polite thanking. Gender

based differences in thanking are not really great in the forum under analysis. In both polite and impolite disagreements too, gender difference are not great since only one male contention comment is found impolite in relation to other male polite disagreements (not diagrammed). All of these do not exceed three percent of the language used in this forum. In what concerns the presence of the female participation, one can find it very little in comparison with the male participation and contribution too. The male presence is greater if compared with the female one in the sense that the males dominate the public arena as indicated previously by some researchers (Mills, 2002; Oliveira, 2003). The females participating in this forum under study did not supply any kind of post of knowledge- giving. This might be explained with reference to Herring (1996) claiming that males are experts and more professional in informatics and related scientific fields.

4.3. Part two: The news forum

This time, the data is taken from the forum news of Al-Arabiya, a well-known forum newspaper, and which is the online official site of the well-known TV channel of Al- Arabiya mainly interested in news broadcasting of essential world as well as Arab political events. This online newspaper is edited in the Arabic language and can be translated into Farsi, Urdu and English languages. The data which is under analysis is the comments that respond to the news report about banning Saudi Arabian women to drive. This gender- related issue of driving in Saudi Arabia has its own reflection on the linguistic behavior of males and females across a lot of social media sites. One of these sites that witnessed a great contribution from male and female participants is the news forum of al-Arabiya where the news is launched. The news goes as follows: '*Al-Turki to al-arabiya.net: Women are forbidden to drive in Saudi Arabia*'. This news report propagated a number of 318 comments in four days after its deliverance.

4.3.1. Results

I chose to analyse this news because it directly relates to gender in the social background of Saudi Arabia. It has a relation to the female gender in Saudi Arabia where the woman is prevented from driving the car in the streets of the country. As a result of this ban, some women activists decided to take action against this law. They asked women to drive in a collective way on 26th, of October in 2013. However, the Interior Ministry spokesman whose name is Al-Turki stressed firmly that any violation of this law will strictly be dealt with, whether demonstrations or the driving collectively

by women. He added this law should be applied before and after the date of the demonstrations.

The issue of gender (equality) in the Arabic culture is such a vital subject that has a relation with both traditions and religion. So whenever, a call for a women's right is raised by women, an opposing (generally fierce) male voice results. This has been noticed in the comment soft his study where I was expecting the women or female comments to outnumber the male ones, but astonished with the reverse. The males were concerned with this issue to a higher degree than females. One can explain this with reference to Herring (2012) that males oppose fiercely whenever the subject is related to equality between women and men for the reason that men feel threatened socially for their position and statues in society. It is a kind of men's resistance to women's rights calling in society. Men, in these kinds of subjects feel threatened by the female gender and fear of equal status between them and their female counterparts.

This news comes as a hard reply to the Saudi Arabic women who want to ask for their legal right to drive. As noted earlier, women in Saudi Arabia have called for a demonstration to protest against the law which forbids women to drive. Not only this, but these social activists asked women to get behind the wheel (to drive) on October, 26th and drive in groups. This call has faced a great feedback in both positive and negative ways. This news, in our news forum which is under study, has generated a lot of comments in comparison with some other news. I counted the general number of the participants and considered their gender according to their nicknames. So, they are divided into male, female, and neutrally nicknamed participants. The chart and figure below show the results, in numbers as well as percentages, of the presumed male, female and neutrally nicknamed participants. The results are presented in table 14

	Numbers	Percentages
Total number of participants	318	100%
Nicknamed male contribution to Comments	216	67.92%
Nicknamed female contribution to comments	42	13.20%
Participants with neutral Nicknames	60	18.86%

Table 14: Male, female and neutrally nicknamed participation in commenting

As far as the issue of driving seems to concern women in Saudi Arabia more than men, I was expecting the female comments to outnumber the male ones. Surprisingly

enough, the reverse is true. That is to say, the number of the presumed male comments exceeded the number of the presumed female ones in commenting with five times. That approximates two thirds of all the comments. So, as the chart shows, the total number of the comments is 318. The number of 216 in the above chart corresponds to the male nicknamed participants in the comments and which makes a rate of 67.92% of all the participations. The contribution to commenting on this news on the part of the female nicknamed participants is around 13.20%. This makes a number of 42 female participations. As it is mentioned earlier, there exist some participations under nicknames corresponding to neither females nor males. I called these participants neutral nicknamed participants. They contributed to commenting with a number of 60 giving a rate of 18.86% out of all the contributions to comments.

4.3.1.1. Polite vs. impolite language

4.3.1.2. Impoliteness in the comments

As noted earlier, since the problem is about the issue of driving for Saudi Arabic women, it is then a gender identity problem and offensiveness is expected to dominate in most of the comments. It is expected that offensiveness (impoliteness) predominates in the male, female, and neutral nicknamed participants. I started with the male comments, the female ones and then the neutral nicknamed participants. The aim is to prove that this gender related problem creates more and more offensiveness mainly group offensiveness. In this respect, what we will try to prove is the high degree and frequencies of offensiveness and impolite language because of the identity problem (gender in this case), mainly the group identity.

b. The domination of impoliteness within the male nicknamed commentators

In this sample under study, the total number of the male comments is two hundred and sixteen (216). One hundred and twenty (120) comments seem to be against driving, however, seventy two (72) of them can be considered to support and side with the subject of women driving. The remaining twenty four (24) male participations have contributed with comments which can be regarded out of the subject. The following table 15 can illustrate the results of what has been said.

	Numbers	Percentages
Males total number	216	100%
Against driving	120	55.55%
With driving	72	33.33%
Out of scope	24	11.12%

Table 15: Male nicknamed comments with and against driving

So, as the results in the above table display, the readers of this news who are against the case of women driving in Saudi Arabia are more than the half of all the male nicknamed comments. On the opposite side of the coin, the male nicknamed comments who seem to side with the case of women in their legal right of driving do not exceed the third of all the comments. The remaining male nicknamed commentators have shown no clear stance nor a relation to the problem posed in the news. As it is already said in the section of first order politeness, the male nicknamed commentators siding against driving can be seen as offensive for they contribute to violate the women's right of driving in Saudi Arabia. These results can tell us a lot about the hegemonic male society that has long been in an oppositional stance in face of women's rights in a lot of world places exactly in the same way as in Saudi Arabia. I chose to present three examples of those who are against the right of women to drive since they constitute the majority and followed them by an example of those who are with driving. These comments are translated one after the other in what follows (see appendix 7):

1- The news Talal (visitor)

The woman in the era of Sahhabah was but now she has become full of shame except some women. There must be a wise leading of the country to punish those people. I am sure that any woman who asks for the driving is not a true Saudi and she is a parasite who got the Saudi Arabic nationality. I am the first who fights and against the right of women to drive.

2-I wish God would stabilise them Abu Mohammed (visitor)

God would protect Ben Naif. The saying is true: that cub is from that lion! I wish God would help them and as the proverb says: if dogs bark, they would never touch the clouds!

3- Rebellion without any motivation Salem (visitor)

I am against driving in Saudi Arabia in the current situation and the current traffic code. Those who feel annoyed of the laws he had better get out of Saudi Arabia and don't make a lot of problem that means I am Antar Ibn Shaddad.

4- The solution is easy Al-yamani (visitor)

If women get gathered put some insects in their place of demonstrations and you will see the result, none of them will stay hhhhhhhhhhhhhhh do you see how do I think?

So these are just some examples to display how those who are against driving use impolite and offensive language forms in their linguistic behaviour. The next comment is an example of those who are not against driving (See appendix 8).

5- Ride your car and do not let the driver take you Mubarek (Visitor)

I am with the right of women to drive but I am against this offending way either on the part of those who are against or those who are with. However, what is certain is that everybody knows that driving has its benefits and drawbacks on the woman either at home or outside. One of the main drawbacks at home is the reliance of the husband on her in everything. And if the right of driving is given to the woman, this should start at a certain age.

c. The domination of offensiveness within the female nicknamed commentators

Although the number of the female nicknamed participants in the comments is low, offensiveness seems also to prevail in the same way of the male nicknamed participants' comments. First of all, we are going to separate between those who are against the issue of driving and those who side with. Thus, the total number of the female nicknamed participants who commented is forty two (42). Those who are against driving are twenty three(23) making a rate of 45.23% while those who side with the issue of driving are nineteen(19) and which gives a rate of 54.76% .The chart below shows in details the results. See table16

	Numbers	Percentages
Female total number	42	100%
Number of females against driving	19	45.23%
Number of females with driving	23	54.76%

Table 16: Female nicknamed comments with and against driving

The results of this table show a very striking result concerning female Saudi Arabian linguistic behavior. As it can be clearly seen, the number of the comments against driving on the part of the female nicknamed participants could be regarded as high as those who commented in favor of the subject of the right of women to drive. Thus, the difference of percentage between the two opposing opinions of those female commentators does not exceed ten percent (10%). By contrast to this, the females siding with their legal right of driving in their commenting exceed the half of the female nicknamed comments in general. However, and the question that can be asked in this regard is about the highness of the number of the female nicknamed comments against driving, i.e. against themselves. In other words, why are the female nicknamed participants siding against their legal right of driving? One of the very logical answers to this question is that the commentators against driving signing in under female nicknames, could be in reality male participants and not females at all. This can easily happen in virtual world where the one typing behind the screen cannot be physically known or seen. In reality, gender masquerading is one of the black swans of studying gender in online community practices. In this respect, a lot of researchers have studied this phenomenon in online settings and the results can be said to be mixing where the researchers' claims differ from one study to the other. Gender masquerading can be said the result of anonymity in online communication. So the problem of gender masquerade must firstly be referred to anonymity that covers the user and hinders him/her from being known by their counterparts. One of the examples about suspecting a gender masquerade is an offensive comment of a female participant against one of the users who is signed in under the female nickname 'Rym' and suspected to be a male user in the following conversation (See appendix9):

1-Against the right of Saudi women to drive***Rym(visitor)***

The demonstrations of October 26th do not interest us. Whether we drive or not (it is not important). The one of us just needs the contentment of God and the obedience to her parents and a good husband who protects her as well as a good rising of her children.

2- to Rym***With the right of women to drive (visitor)***

The right place for you is the kitchen and cleaning and sweeping. Stay at your place and let others develop their lives.

3-to Rym***Iraqi woman (visitor)***

Is this what you really think? Just here! Some women are driving space shuttles.

4-Rym= a fossilized man***With the right of women to drive (visitor)***

'Play another game you such an impersonated!'

So this conversation in this forum news shows clearly that the users have got a real doubt about the identity of gender of their counterparts. The conversation starts with a participant under the female nickname 'Rym' which is a name of a girl in Arabic and who gives no importance to the subject of the right of women to drive in Saudi Arabia where she prefers staying at home to raise her children and obey her God, parents as well as her husband. This comment had been faced with two other comments. The first is signed in under the nickname of 'with the right of women to drive' and the second in under the nickname of 'Iraqi woman'. Both of the comments oppose the idea of staying at home and chose to side with the legal right of women to drive. Also, both of these two replies underestimate this participant and accuse her to be primitive and non-developed. Also, this participant is accused to be a man and not a woman commenting. In this respect, the opposing user under the nickname of 'with the right of Saudi women to drive', which is the last comment above, clearly accuses this commenter to be a man who impersonated a female identity in order to use it against the

right of women to drive.

Another clear example showing that those comments under female nicknames and who oppose the right of women to drive are suspected to be referred to male participants and not females at all. This following example also shows a suspected gender masquerade. It goes as follows (see appendix10):

1-To be alone with the driver

Oum Sulaiman (visitor)

'To be alone with the driver is prohibited and we are obliged for this, none has thought of this subject!!!!!!'

2-A right word meant for evil

Hanane (visitor)

'My sister Oum Sulaiman, people of today are using buses and most of the government departments make buses available for women workers and if it is not free it is symbolic; so why are you rotating like this?'

3- Where?

Hanane(visitor)

'Where is the transportation you are talking about?? I am a working Doctor and every some months I get moved to a different hospital... no buses, no transport, and nothing at all...I go with a driver who used to ride a bicycle in India.'

This short conversation is between two female nicknamed participants where the first is called Oum Sulaiman who seems to work as a doctor at hospital and is need of driving and asking men to think about the working women who are obliged to go with drivers (men) whom they do not know and might be exposed to danger as a result of this. However, the comment (n 14) which comes as a reaction to this one is made by a female nicknamed participant who opposes the right of driving and who asks this doctor to use public transportation to go to her work. As a result of this, the doctor replied offensively and attributed the one opposing her in the second masculine pronoun in the Arabic language (this is used to attribute males in Arabic). In this respect, this can be considered as a clear example that shows that those female nicknamed users against

driving are suspected to be males and not females.

However, if we suppose that these participants under female nicknames who oppose the right of women to drive in Saudi Arabia as real females and not males, we might interpret the phenomenon in totally a different way. This interpretation is related to the Islamic religion that is deeply embedded in the Saudi Arabic society and which affects a lot of male as well as female individuals. Not only this, but the social and daily motives also seem to have their effects on the female Saudi Arabic individuals to stand against the right of driving. I will start with the religious interpretations which are supported with these examples from the forum. They are translated one after one because they are just comments having received no replies in the sense of not being in the form of conversation (see appendix 11).

4- God bless our country Aicha bint El-dammam (visitor)

'Saudi Arabia is a pride to all Arabs and Muslims. There is no country containing Muslims which has not received aid from Saudi Arabia just to serve Islam and Muslims. This cannot be denied except by someone who is spiteful towards Islam and Muslims and wants to devastate Saudi Arabia via creating problems like the right of women to drive... God protects our country from any spiteful people; Amen.'

5-Who are those Saudi activists?

Salwa el-atibi (visitor)

'I hope I could hear a Saudi activist defending a good right for the Saudi nation. This means if they talk about the problem of homing, working or making marriage easier, etc. but most of them have got bad aims.'

6-Really?! Driving?

Fatima el-kahetani (visitor)

'They must be nationalists. Otherwise why don't they talk about problems like opening enterprises for women or asking for pays to our mothers? I wish God would put them away from us. They are just selfish people.'

In putting these comments under analysis, we could find one common denominator between them and even most of the other comments opposing the right of women to drive in Saudi Arabia. This common denominator is that related to the

Islamic religion and enemies working to destroy the religion of Islam. They all share the concept of the existence of people who alien to Saudi Arabic Muslim and who have bad and malignant purposes to devastate the society of Saudi Arabia by spreading problems like women's rights to drive. This fact can be also referred to the culture of Saudi Arabic people and who always try to embed the idea of the existence of enemies who have bad aims and who threaten the Muslim nation in general. These alien threats are said to start with spreading social problems between women and men, old and young people, etc. This can happen at the level of schools through education, homes and more importantly mosques. There is a loaded and consolidated embedding of such concepts and ideas in the brains of the members of the Saudi Arabic people starting from childhood stage and never end and continuously gets repeated to be born in mind so as to face these alien waves and problems. So, for this reason we find that most of comments under female nicknames in opposition of the right of women to drive share the same idea of the existence of aliens who want to devastate the stability of their nation.

However and as I mentioned earlier, there are proofs from society (out of this forum) which prove that there are females and women in general who oppose the right of driving in Saudi Arabia. Line Stange Ramsdal (2013) wrote a report about gender segregation in Saudi Arabia and claimed that we have to know that there are some women who want this segregation to continue. When the revolts against the driving ban in Saudi Arabia were triggered in 2011, there was a movement called *Women2drive* which urged women to get behind the wheel, and which was faced with a large group of women objecting the *Women2drive* campaign. Line Stange Ramsdal (2013: 3) says the following:

'In response to the campaign calling for a lifting of the driving ban in Saudi Arabia hundreds of women from an anti-driving movement launched a counter-campaign with the curious title "I don't want to drive...I want my rights". The women supporting this campaign advocated to maintain the ban on female car driving in the Kingdom and instead argued for the development of a public transport system (note: for women only!).'

These women justified their position by arguing that the calls for lifting the ban on driving are not the demands of all Saudi women but of a small minority of the Saudi society. They argued that such lift of ban would hurt the Islamic religion and destabilize

the country.

However, Line Stange Ramsdal doubt about such claims on the part of Saudi Arabic women and claims that *'the unofficial reason behind the anti-driver movement could lie in the fact that these women are afraid to lose the comfort of being driven around by a driver (ibid)*. These women, in support of the driving ban in Saudi Arabia generally come from upper middle class who have financial resource to engage a driver. So, instead of spending some of their time driving, they are claimed to prefer spending it on socializing with the relatives and female friends. As a result of this, these women prove the multi-faceted character of the gender debate in Saudi Arabia.

d. The domination of offensiveness within the neutral nicknamed commentators

The neutral nicknamed commentators are those who decided to hide their gender of whether being a male or a female. The number of these neutrals who commented is sixty (60). They can also be divided into those who are against, those with driving, and those who were out of scope. So, a number of thirty (30) comments were against driving while only sixteen (16) of them were for. The remaining fourteen (14) neutrally nicknamed participants were out of scope. That gives a percentage of 50% who were against the issue, 26.66% who were for, and 23.33% being out of subject. See table '17' below:

	Numbers	Percentages
Neutrals total number	60	100%
Against driving	30	50%
With driving	16	26.66%
Out	14	23.33%

Table 17: Neutrally nicknamed participants with and against driving

As can be easily seen in the table above, a quite important percentage which is fifty percent (50%) of the neutrally nicknamed participants are against the right of women to drive. Also, only 26.66% of the comments are siding with the case of women to drive in Saudi Arabia. This approximately makes a quarter of the whole neutrally

nicknamed comments against driving. The remaining of the comments is out of the subject. Here, one could ask the question of why such a high rate of neutrally nicknamed participants being against the right of women to drive. One might answer such question by the simple answer that some users online do not care about showing their male or female identity or do not want the other users to identify them as males or females. However and since most of them are against the right of women to drive, they are suspected to be males under such unidentified nicknames. This can be implicitly taken from the comments and their replies. This short conversation is translated as follows (See appendix12).

1- Morocco Zaksmart(visitor)

I am against driving, the woman is responsible of a lot of accidents and her driving is not balanced because she is fearful in nature. So she might lose control of the car and gets surprised... I am not going to talk about religious matters but the experience in Morocco confirms that a high percentage of accidents are caused by women.

2- God might help you!!

Free Christian Syrian woman (visitor)

The woman has become able to drive the plane, the bus, and trains in the West and you tell me 'she is fearful'!!!! The good experts as women drivers do not get scared... however about accidents... try to ask those who do car shows!!

Although the conversation is started by neutrally nicknamed participant, the reply from the other user considers him as a male user and not a female at all. This is because of the use of the second personal masculine pronoun in the Arabic language in attributing this participant. Another example in this respect might well help understand better (see appendix 13):

3- Let it down

Not important (visitor)

The world is advancing and wants to go and live in another planet and we are still discussing women's case of driving. Please, try to be open-minded. Second, the woman

has her conscience and if she wants to cheat on you, she will do it while you are with her, so it is not the car which affects her.

4-

Alekhandro khossee (visitor)

Do you see that civilization is in driving; try to think in what is after it. Girls are not the doll of Lujain and her liberalists!

In this example too, the participant who commented under a neutral nickname has been responded in the second personal masculine pronoun of Arabic. So the expression used by the respondent which is underlined above تشوف انت must be تشوفين انت if the attributed person is regarded as a female. However, and surprisingly enough that even when the neutrally nicknamed comments siding with the right of women to drive, they are answered as if they were male participants and not females at all. This has been experienced frequently whenever a neutral nicknamed participant asks for legitimate reasons to forbid women from driving. These two examples can help understand what has just been said (see appendix 14)

5-Nationalists

..... (Subscribed member)

They are all nationalists... I wish the government would deprive them from the nationality and get back to their home lands and drive the ... and the so as they could know the goodness in this country...You nationalists, try to respect a country which has embraced you!

6-Note

?? (Visitor)

What???? And you pretend yourself to be a Saudi!! A lot of aliens are following the Saudi news.

In this short conversation, the one who responded has also considered the unidentified participant to be a male and not a female where instead of using the third personal singular pronoun used to female attribution in Arabic, the respondent used the second personal singular pronoun. This means instead of using the form ومسوية as underlined above, the respondent used ومسوي which is used for attributing males and

not females in the Arabic language. Another example would also help consolidate what is said. It is the following (see appendix 15)

7- !

(Visitor)

Why is it prohibited you Al-turki? Give us only one convincing reason. The religion does not prohibit and the law does not criminalize.

8- Response

Abu al-jawhara (visitor)

'Please read in the social sciences to know the reason, and I wish you would have an idea on the social composition of the society so you can know the reason too.'

In this respect, and as I said before, the one who responded to the unidentified commenter above also used the second masculine singular personal pronoun instead of the third feminine personal pronoun of the Arabic language. So he used اقرأ instead of اقرائي and instead of تطلعي. As can be easily understood here is the fact that the participants consider those commenting on the news in this forum to be males and not females. I think that that this fact can be referred to the reason that only males who generally use the internet with more and more frequencies.

4.3.1.3. Gender inequality, religion and impoliteness

The focus of this section is not to compare the differences at the level of impoliteness between the two genders. This is due to the fact that impoliteness is residing at the level of most of commentators whether female or male. The problem that has been noticed here is the tight relation between gender and religion. As it is noticed in the comments of the participants, the religious side in explaining why women do not have the right to drive takes the largest part of the linguistic behavior in the comments of the participants.

So far, it is proved that the existence of impoliteness and offensive language use on the part of male, female, and neutrally nicknamed participants with higher frequency. The next step is to see the relation between impoliteness between the two sexes and gender as a social construct. This is due to the fact that offensiveness is believed to exist with a high degree because of the struggle between the two genders in matters of

inequality. In this respect, the offensive language use is expected to revolve around gender as a strong social factor between the males and females of this forum. However and after analyzing the language used by the participants, a number of reasons between the two genders have tackled that do not relate to the factor of gender. In this respect, and surprisingly, the language used by the participants registered a higher degree of its relatedness to the religious reasons of Islamic laws. All of the male, female, and neutral nicknamed participants showed a high percentage of religious explanations in their offensive language use. So, most of their offensive (free of insults) linguistic behavior carried a lot of Islamic background. Also, the other reasons which dominate the offensive language use of all the participants are related to the society and the environments of the Saudi Arabian region. Here again, a considerable rate of the linguistic behaviour of the participants had a tone which is related to things like the deserted nature of the Saudi Arabian region, the naturalization of some strangers coming from different parts outside Saudi Arabia, etc. finally, the comments related to the gender inequality problems between the two sexes comes to register considerable rates of the impolite and offensive linguistic behavior of the male, female, and neutrally nicknamed participants. Here are some examples from the comments. The first example is of a female nicknamed participant who commented with a kind of offensive language mainly related to sexism and the gender problems between males and females (see appendix 16)

1- Saudi (women) and the nationality is a witness Saudi woman (visitor)

Get out of this subject. This subject is purely for women (sexist)and by the way you mister Saudi in origins, (the woman is rectifying one of the male commentators for the orthography mistakes he made in writing the words 'woman' and 'happened'). First, you should fight your ignorance by writing Arabic well; at that time we might take your opinion into consideration..... those last people do not know how to write the word woman and make fatwa.

The second example is related to the social side. It is written by a neutral nicknamed offensive commentator against women driving in Saudi Arabia. This commentator is accusing those who have recently had their Saudi Arabic nationality to be behind the issue of the demonstrations of women to ask for their right of driving. This comment takes a social side in explaining the cause of hindering women from driving in Saudi Arabia. It is the as follows (see appendix 17)

1-

..... (Visitor)

If neutralized get out of the country.....you will be a zero on the left side.

The following comment is related to the religious reasons that are proclaimed to forbid women from driving. It is written by a male nicknamed participant. It goes as follows (see appendix 18):

2-Strange!

A controller.... (Visitor)

The woman is a strange creature and she is the cause of every evil and the problem is that she does not know!

After having exposed some examples, I am going to analyze the data in terms of statistics in rates and percentages. Thus, I chose to support this view with statistical data from the comments of the participants. In the analysis, and as explained earlier, I found that the male, female, and neutral nicknamed participants used offensive and impolite linguistic behavior in relation to three main reasons supplied earlier which are the religious, the social, and that of gender inequality.

a. Male nicknamed participants' offensiveness and gender inequality

I started with the male nicknamed participants opposing driving. As shown in table 2, the males opposing the women's issue of driving is 120. Those users gave reasons for opposing this kind of issue. They take a religious, gender, and social biases. The religious reasons shown in the linguistic offensive behavior of them has the highest percentage of 59%. The second percentage is that related to gender inequality with a frequency of 18% of the offensive language use. The language related to the social side of the participants has a percentage of only 09%. The remaining offensive language use is a kind of laughter, insults, etc. The following table shows the results in both numbers and rates. See table 18

	Numbers	Percentages
Religious background	79	65.83%
Gender inequality Background	18	15%
Social background	09	7.5%
Other (insults, laughter, etc.)	14	11.66%

Table 18: Gender inequality and male offensiveness

As it is clearly seen in the table above the problem is relate to gender at a one hundred percent of rate but the results found do not show a high gender relation to the problem. Thus the religious identity dominates the perspectives from which the participants treat this problem of the right of women to drive. The religious identity which is present in the pretext of the users is close to reach three thirds. The gender relative explanations used in the comments is very low (15%) if compare with the religious identity. The social reasons presented to explain the reasons behind the objection of the woman to drive in Saudi Arabia are also very low (7.5%). The remaining are just insults and jokes having no relation to the problem. The following examples show how the religious identity is embedded in the comments of the explanations of more than 65% of the comments. Here are some examples (see appendix 19):

1- Logic

Sultan (visitor)

Good morning, unfortunately for all what happened in social media in what concerns the right of women to drive which is seen as a challenge to the leadership and government of Saudi Arabia and the Ministry of Interior Affairs. This means that it comes from those who do not respect the laws and who are considered to be harming the Saudi Arabic monarchy and its entire people. It is a duty for everybody to use legal ways to ask for their rights to serve these rights either in driving or anything else. Those who are making problems will again nothing in contrast to the Saudi Arabic people who are more superior and mature to get touched by those problems. And at last, they have received the decisive response from the Ministry of Interior Affairs to get rid of their bad intentions. I wish God would protect our country from any evil.

2- Saudi Explicit (visitor)

Saudi Arabia rules the country by the Quran and Sunna.... And the people are Muslims who are governed by the decisions of scientists... it is not a secular country and it is difficult to apply this orientation to free the woman because Islam prohibits that...

The gender related explanations used in the male nicknamed comments do not exist with abundance. I presented this example which is directly translated as follows (see appendix 20):

3- No driving Amer (visitor)

“No driving! We reject this; moreover, why does a woman drive? She does not need to. Thanks God! Her man is serving her and if women drive we will explode their tires”

As shown above in the table the social identity is present in the comments of the male nicknamed users even if with lower frequencies. I chose this example which is directly followed by its translation (see appendix 21).

4- The subject got beyond its limits Amun (visitor)

Firstly, are the roads well equipped? We suffer from unsupportable car traffic. Try to make the roads better and then you can drive. Secondly, all those who get out to drive will be considered out of the laws and I wish they will be punished at full.

In this respect, the comments of the male nicknamed participants in this news forum have been found to focus on pretexts of Islamic tendencies with higher frequencies in comparison with those related to gender and social ones. The following section will discover those comments by neutrally nicknamed participants.

b. Neutral nicknamed participants' offensiveness and gender inequality

The same thing is done with the participants who commented under neutral nicknames in opposition of the women's right to drive. They showed a greater tendency towards the religious explanations to justify their opposing stances against women to drive in Saudi Arabia. Thus, the percentage of this latter is close to one third of all the comments. The second reasons causing impoliteness in the comments takes a gender

inequality bias with a rate of 21.73%. The third background that has been presented behind the impoliteness use of the users is related to the social characteristics of the area of Saudi Arabia which is pretended to be different and difficult at the same time. Table 19 shows the results clearly.

	Numbers	Percentages
Religious background	14	46.66%
Gender inequality Background	05	16.66%
Social background	06	20%
Other	05	16.66%

Table 19: Gender inequality and offensiveness in neutral nicknamed comments

As seen above, the results of the neutrally nicknamed participations at the level of explaining their opposition to the right of driving for women are quite similar to the one of the males. Again, the Islamic identity and religious tendencies are dominating in illustrating why women are not given the right to drive in Saudi Arabia. I chose three comments from the neutral nicknamed ones where the first is related to religious identity, the second to gender and the third to the political and social one (See Appendix22).

1- Do you compare our mother Aisha to the women of today? I love my religion
(visitor)

Do you compare our mother Aisha to the women of today who got out of modesty and humility?

The gender related explanation which is generally relied on between males and females of any society are also not very frequent. I translated this example as follows (see appendix 23):

2- What is the relation of Iran to the subject? Iran? (visitor)

There are a lot of violations of women's rights in Iran. Infinite violations!

The last pretext related to the political and social identity in explaining why

women do not have the right of driving in Saudi Arabia is present in the male nicknamed comments. I selected the following example which I translated directly as shown below (see appendix24):

3- Nationalists

..... (Subscribed member)

They are all nationalists... I wish the government would deprive them from the nationality and get back to their home lands and drive the tick tack and tanks so as they could know the goodness in this country...You nationalists, try to respect a country which embraced you.

This time again, the results show the high relatedness of the explanations to the Islamic identity and the religious thinking embedded in the society of Saudi Arabia. Those related to gender and society exist with low frequencies. Now we are going to see the comments of the female nicknamed participants and their relatedness to religion, gender and society.

c. Female nicknamed participants' offensiveness and gender inequality

Following the same way of analysis, I analysed the comments of the female nicknamed participants who are opposing the women's case of driving. As shown down in table '7' the female nicknamed commentators also used a lot of religious pretexts to justify their siding positions to the right of women to drive in Saudi Arabia. In this respect, their rates go beyond half of the comments out of all the comments. The gender inequality problem is not tackled a lot and has a rate of just 10.52% of all the comments. The social reasons which pretext the use of impoliteness in siding with such a case does not exceed one third of the comments. See table 20

	Numbers	Percentages
Religious background	11	57.89%
Gender background	02	10.52%
Political and social background	06	31.57%

Table 20: Offensiveness and female nicknamed comments

Again, as clearly shown in the table above, the religious identity in the comments is dominating the general conceptual thinking of the society of Saudi Arabia. Over fifty seven of the comments are related to religion. Those related to gender do not go beyond 11 percent while those explanations related to the political and social sides of the Saudi Arabic nation are above 31 percent and which is also quite a high percentage. I chose this example which is related to religion and translated it as shown below (see appendix 25).

1- The truth is clear

Asdia- Bilad Al-haramin(visitor)

They do not want the freedom of the women but they want to reach her like the other countries. The women there had driven cars and went to the same schools with boys and they study with boys side by side. These countries have become like western ones with no difference except in language with the idea that western countries are more civilized because they think the freedom of women is in gender equality. Have they benefited anything? Have we? Are we a nation that deserves to raise the reputation of Islam with this kind of openness and civilization letting the woman drive and go with men? Does this raise the nation? I think this would make our nation collapse.

The second comment is a contribution of a participant used as an example to show the relatedness of explications to gender as an identity which creates problems between the two poles of society of men and women. I chose this example which I directly followed it with its translation (see appendix 26).

2- No driving for girls Dalal (visitor)

No, I hope she would not drive, the girl is an evil, I swear!

The third type of identity which is the political and social one has been found to be used very frequently as it is said earlier. I choose the following example to represent this kind of interpretations of the problem when opposing the right of women to drive (see appendix 27).

3- Not now

Nashwa (visitor)

Dear the Saudi woman, the one who encourages you to drive opposing your

country is the one who will make others do other things which the country opposes. If it continues like this we will be living in mess and then we will regret the loss of our homeland.

As it has been clearly shown in the tables above, the religious identity dominates the different pretexts and explanations hiding behind the concepts that are embedded deeply in the society of Saudi Arabia. We will discuss later the subject of religion and gender inequality in Saudi Arabia.

4.3.1. 3. Discussion of the results

First and second order politeness

Before discussing the results, I have to note that all of the comments do not include swear language. Also, I have to explain on what basis I considered some comments as offensive and some other ones as inoffensive. Given the second order basis of politeness and which should be reinforced with a first order politeness basis, I had to put this apart since I have another parameter that can be taken instead to see the comments as impolite. By this, I mean that expressions calling for depriving the women from their legitimate right are enough to be seen as cruel and offensive. So, I considered any comment which is against the women issue of driving as offensive in essence (for it contributes to violate one of her rights). The right of women to drive is legitimate and certainly when someone's right is breached, any related expression can be regarded impolite and offensive. This might include even the explanations related to be seen as rude although holding no insults sometimes. Also, these online community participants of males and females are stranger to one another and impoliteness cannot be seen as a sign of closeness between the participants. In addition to this, and when I interviewed some Saudi Arabian girls and whose number is limited to ten (10), they all said that they consider any comment which breaches their legitimate and legal right as impolite and offensive. I have to note that this interview was not done online but in a real situation of face to face communication with these Saudi Arabian females.

Impoliteness in the comments

The first observation one can make here is the domination of impoliteness by the male, female and, neutrally nicknamed participants. That is to say, gender does not play a role in politeness use at the level of differences in politeness between the two sexes. However, from another perspective, gender might be seen as the engine driving of all

the related impolite expressions because the news attacks the right of the female Saudi Arabic women. The fact of impoliteness freedom use by both males and females might be referred to the anonymity factor where the users have the freedom to be as impolite as they desire since there is no social accountability of this online setting. What I have to note before is the fact that offensive language can be found in comments siding or against the driving issue of women in Saudi Arabia; however, I did confine the impoliteness use of the users in my study to those comments which are clearly against the right of women to drive in Saudi Arabia. That is to say, I focused only on the comments breaching the women's right of driving with no clear reason in Saudi Arabia. These opposing comments can be loaded with tough and cruel expressions in addition to their stance in face of the women driving issue in Saudi Arabia. I cited some examples from the news forum below. This comment is as follows (see appendix 28):

1- Driving

Amer (visitor)

“No driving! We reject this; moreover, why does a woman drive? She does not need to. Thanks God! Her man is serving her and if women drive we will explode their tires”

Also, these comments can hold expressions full of sarcasm to underestimate the woman and hence be unfair with the woman's right of driving legitimacy. The 35th, comments might well be used as an example for this (see appendix29).

2- Everybody Sari (visitor)

“I advise the Interior Ministry to be strict and put cockroaches, mice and reptiles. They will scatter in seconds! Otherwise, tell them the “the authority has come!” and they will all escape especially those who have justice precedents!”

4.3.1.4. Gender and commenting

In taking into consideration the number of comments, one would observe two main striking results. The first is the high number of the comments under male nicknames. Normally, anyone whose right is violated is expected revolt against the law makers in order to get his/her right back. This is what was expected from the female participants to comment in great rates where the case is not. A glance at table '01', it unexpectedly shows that the number of the male nicknamed participants commenting

on the issue of the women driving in Saudi Arabia is higher than the female and neutral nicknamed commentators. In this respect, the comments under male nicknames have a rate 67.92% which make two thirds of all the comments. By contrast, the comments under female nicknames have a rate of 13.20% and this does not go beyond a fourth out of all the comments. So, although the case is purely related to the female gender in Saudi Arabia, the participants under the male nicknames commented with higher rates and with some kind of offensive and impolite linguistic choices. In this respect, it was expected from the females in Saudi Arabia to be present with great numbers to defend their right of driving whether in commenting on this news or anywhere else. Here, one could inquire about the reasons that pushed the commentators of male nicknames to register such high frequencies of percentages in commenting about the news while participants with female nicknames are present with lower rates. The case might be similar to a lot of cases across the world where any attempt from women to ask for their rights is faced with a higher resistance from their male counterparts. Herring (2002), in her work on an online feminist discussion board, she draws attention to the male disruptions of female spaces online. She says:

“When women gather online, and especially when they attempt to discuss feminism, they are not uncommonly the target of negative attention from individuals, mostly men, who feel threatened by or otherwise uncomfortable with feminism.”

In this respect, whenever any case is linked to female legitimate rights, men feel jeopardized and in danger. This, in fact, is related to the social status of women which can be raised to reach the one given to men in society. If so, a competition and sometimes conflicts between the two sexes would result.

The second striking result one could notice is the abundance of the comments in general about this news in comparison to some other news which are not commented on at all. So a number of 318 comments in a short time cannot be found everyday if the news does not touch an interesting problem in society. One can refer this fact to gender as an identity and/or group identity. As it is known, gender is an identity which can be referred to males and females. Normally, one can consider the males, here in this case, as having one group identity which is maleness and females as one group identity which is femaleness. Since the news, in this case, touches a problem related to gender, one can understand the numerous contributions of males and females in the discussion of the forum. So, we can say that the problem raised touches one' or group's identity (the

females/ Saudi Arabian women), a high number of participants have contributed with their own opinions, discussions, etc. This is because identity is something which is very sensitive and any compromising of the identity is a kind of threat to the person him/herself. In this respect, a compromising to the identity of only one of the participants of the news forum is a compromising to the whole members of the group. In this case, any impolite use of language to a female Saudi Arabian will eventually touch all the Saudi Arabian females, and among them the ones who comment in this news forum. Normally if an identity related problem is raised and an attack is made to a group (like in this case), then a great number of the group members is expected to respond and hence the comments multiply. In their study of rudeness in discussion fora, Kleinde and Bos (2015) claim the following:

“Quite commonly, an insult to a thread-internal addressee is 'offensive' or 'impolite' to the members of his/her group in the thread. In turn, an insult directed at the entire group will be perceived as offensive by an individual member. On the other hand, rudeness tokens directed at thread-external targets can also have an offensive effect on members of thread- internal groups affiliated with that target.”

So, this fact of group identity attacks from one another (that is between males and females) can help explain the numerous contributions to the discussion of the Saudi Arabian law that forbids women from driving in the country.

4.3.1.5. Impoliteness and gender

Gender differences at the level of (im) politeness in this news forum are worth analyzing. A brief look at the results in the tables can easily show that the comments of the male, female and neutral nicknamed participants opposing the women's case of driving are in essence offensive because they contribute to violate the women's legal right of driving. As seen in the results above and mainly in tables '2', '3' and '4', impoliteness exists with high frequencies within the male, female, and neutral nicknamed participants. For instance, in the male comments, the frequency of impoliteness exceeds 55% and this is more than the half of all the comments. With regard to the female nicknamed users of this news forum, the comments with an impoliteness tendency approximate the half of the comments. Concerning the neutral nicknamed participants, their impoliteness use also goes beyond 50% out of all the comments. One might ask the question of why concerning such high impoliteness frequency and with approximately equal rates of offensiveness. The first question can

be answered with reference to the anonymity factor and the nature of the forum communication under study. Since commenting in computer mediated communication lack in physical contact and hinders any other user online from seeing the one commenting, one feel free to write whatever he/ she wants with no fear of being sanctioned. This is called anonymity in CMC which is claimed to make people less aware of politeness use and hence be less polite than in face to face communication. The reasons presented by Herring (2000) are that text-only communication with no voice and gestural cues reduces social awareness. Also, internet facilitates communication between strangers at a geographical remove and hence reducing social accountability. A lot of previous studies about CMC and politeness strategies, the participants were found to use a lot of off- record and bold-on record ones when they are online. This is referred to the asynchronic environment of the forum communication that allows its users to be more expressive in giving their opinions (Chang, 2003; Dalton, 2013).

4.3.1.6. Gender inequality and offensiveness

This part of study is trying to answer the question of gender inequality relatedness to the offensiveness of the comments. That is to say, it is attempted to see if the offensive linguistic behavior is related to gender as a social construct or not. This is due to the fact of the existence of social problems between the two sexes which are based on gender, creates tension between the two genders. A glance at tables ‘5’, ‘6’ and ‘7’, can easily show that the offensive linguistic behavior is not closely related to gender as it was expected. In this respect and surprisingly enough, the linguistic behavior of the commentators carried a lot of religious explanations in expressing their offensiveness and impoliteness. Let us start with the male nicknamed participants’ comments in opposition of the women’s right of driving in Saudi Arabia, the percentages of the closely related language to religion outgoes 65%. Those comments which revolve around the subject of gender inequality do not exceed 15% out of all the comments. There exist also another reason or pretext that is used to explain why women do not have the right to drive in Saudi Arabia and which is the social background where reasons like the deserted area are used to claim different from other regions in the world.

In the same sort of way for the female nicknamed participants against driving, their offensive and impolite language is related to religion with a high degree of frequency also. Thus, more than half of the comments do revolve around the religious

pretext in explaining why women do not have the right to drive in Saudi Arabia. The exact percentage is 57.89%. Concerning gender inequality relatedness to language; it does not exceed 11%. The socially related reasons of Saudi Arabia as being a difficult region are presented with a frequency of 31.57% in the linguistic offensive behavior of the commentators.

The neutral nicknamed participants against driving also commented offensively as indicated in table '7'. The percentage of the comments carrying the religious background in their offensiveness also approximates 50% out of all the comments. Those reasons related to gender inequality as a problem have a frequency of 16.66% out of all the neutral nicknamed participants' comments. At last, the social and regional problems related to the region of Saudi Arabia presented in impoliteness use of those comments have a rate of 20%.

As it is clearly found, but not expected, the religious background in the linguistic offensive impoliteness is the highest among all the participants whether male, female or neutral nicknamed ones. What was expected is the fact that gender problems between the two sexes in Saudi Arabia about driving score better. The question to be asked here is why such a high presence of the religious pretext, in explaining why women are prevented from driving, and not the one related to gender. The explanation can be referred to the tight and very close relationship between the religion and gender in the Islamic education of any Islamic society and more specifically the society in Saudi Arabia. In the Islamic religion, the status of the woman in society is special and very sensitive. For instance, the cultural background of the Islamic religion urges and encourages the woman to stay at home and not work or go out for any other reason. Not only that, but the woman is obliged to cover herself when she wants to get out also. In addition to that, in the Saudi Arabic society especially, women and men are not allowed to be in mixed spaces like school, the university, cafes, and many other places. The Islamic culture also sees that dating between men and women without official relationships is not allowed to the point that there exists a special kind of police, in Saudi Arabia, that attacks and prevents this kind of gatherings by presenting the doers to the police. These are only some of the blatant and strict laws that the Islamic society is obliged to apply concerning the fact of gender. The religion gives details of any problem and refers to gender in any of the cases. So, whenever any case or problem requires another judgment for the woman, the Islamic religion gives details about it. So because of the load of the Islamic laws that give the woman a sensitive and special

judgment of behavior in every case, it has become normal that whenever a gender problem arises, it is discussed with reference to the Islamic religion. This can explain the presence of the numerous comments of the participants who identify themselves as religious when discussing a problem related to gender like this.

4.3.1.7. Gender inequality, driving and religion

Saudi Arabia is the only country in the world that does not allow women to drive. It is a social norm and traditional custom that has been passed down from one generation to the other. In this respect, it has no relation to the Islamic religion. That is to say, Islam does not forbid women from driving. In this respect, there is no clear verse in the Quran or Hadith which prohibits the woman from movement or driving a car. Moreover, the reliance of women on stranger drivers has got very risky results at the level of safety as well as moral ones. Not only that, but there are even economic results in the sense that some families in Saudi Arabia cannot afford for a driver to live in their homes and pay him every month. So, if women were allowed to drive, all these bad results on the society of Saudi Arabia would be avoided. Thus, it is a matter of necessity and not luxury at all when the subject is related to women driving.

The religion of Islam does not forbid women their right of driving and there are a lot of Islamic researchers like Sheikhs and Sharia experts have declared their strong support to lift the ban on women driving. This got stronger with the growing concerns with regard to drivers and the problems of recruiting a driver for each household. In this respect, a lot of Sharia experts made it explicit that driving is a right and there is no legitimate justification which prevents women from driving. One of these experts is Sheikh Abdullah al Mutlaq who is a professor of Comparative Jurisprudence and a former judge of the Court of Hail in Saudi Arabia. He wrote on this subject in Okaz newspaper on June 4, 2009 to side with the right of women to drive and emphasized that young people should be made aware through campaigns to accept the idea to respect women who drive.

Concerning our results, they show that most male, female, and neutral nicknamed participants use religious pretexts to justify their opposition to the legal right of women to drive. However, none of these opponents have used a legitimate and clear justification from the Quran or Hadith to support his/her views standing against women driving. They relied on only their opinions and did not supply any clear text from the religion of Islam which clearly prohibits women from driving. We have to note that this

stance against the right of women to drive does not come from vacuum. It stems from the Sharia experts and Sheikhs who oppose the idea of having women driving in Saudi Arabia. We have also to note that these opponents seem to own the power of law making and passing in Saudi Arabia.

4.4. Conclusion

Taking into consideration the fact that conclusions of second-order politeness are based on first-order politeness elicitation relying on the meta discourse in and out of this forum, we could have some concluding points. In brief, the reasons behind such politeness prevalence in the first forum and impoliteness in the second news forum are several. In the first forum, cancellation of impolite comments might be one of the causes of politeness prevalence in addition to the nature of the forum, which is information based and the same interests of the members of this forum community. On the other hand of the second news forum, impolite comments dominate the board of commenting by the participants. Given the fact that impoliteness prevails online due to the non-existence of social accountability caused by anonymity and distance is true only in some contexts in contrast to the first technical forum case. The analysis has shown that (im) politeness negotiation online is governed by the context the participants find themselves in. So, since profitability is important to this kind of community members, impoliteness is not a suitable behavior to choose in case one of the members wants to attract visitors for himself in blog or site design. By contrast, the news forum participants are not interested in anything but showing their opinions and this is why anonymity helps them chose impoliteness since they have no short or long-term goals to attain (Mills, 2003). As far as gender is concerned, one cannot be sure of the one typing behind the screen but when relying on the participants' nicknames we found that the male nicknamed users participated more and contributed by information posts more in both forums under study. The female nicknamed users of the technical forum, on the other hand, used polite praised thanking more and never disagreed (either politely or impolitely) but those of the news forum used impoliteness exactly as the male commentators. When gender is related to profitability, the forum members of the first technical forum retain politeness use for their own benefits whether they are males or females. However, the female users of the news forum have only one aim which is the contribution with their opinions and discuss the problem of driving of Saudi Arabic women. The first technical forum did not generate a lot of comments, whether polite or impolite, since it only delivers new information about blogging and does not touch a social problem like group

Chapter Four: Gender and Politeness negotiation in Discussion Boards

identity. By contrast, the second news forum propagated a lot of comments for the posted news of the case of driving because it is related to identity, mainly that of the female gender and hence the whole group of Saudi Arabic women is touched.

General Conclusion

Politeness negotiation according to gender in these two discussion boards is based on the context of situation. In this respect, politeness use is fundamental in the first forum communication since its users are interested in exchanging information between them although they are anonymous. However it is not very important in the second forum since its users have no goals to achieve but only opinion revealing. The present thesis looked at the negotiation of politeness from a discursive viewpoint which takes the context of situation into consideration and sees politeness and gender from a perspective in discourse rather than regarding them as abstract expressions and constructs. In what follows, I summarise the content of each chapter in this thesis.

The present work is divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, the study of language and gender has been introduced. The factor of gender and its effects on language use have become the focus of debate in many subjects apart from sociolinguistics. We followed the subject from its first steps of analyses until the current issues under study. We started from the early thoughts of folklinguistics about gender and its relation to talk with references from both western and eastern cultures. After that, we shed light on academic work on language and gender in both early and modern time. In modern time, we started with feminism and tackled the ways of approaching gender such as the deficit and dominance approaches by Robin Lakoff and Dale Spender (1975) and following this with the difference approach introduced by Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borker (1980). Then, we introduced the notions of context, community of practice, discourse, identity and gender identity. The second chapter is a kind of literature review of the ways of approaching politeness and impoliteness and gender offline and online. Thus, we started with presenting the different theories of Robin Lakoff (1975), Geoffrey Leech (1983) and Brown and Levinson's theories of politeness (1978). We followed this by introducing the criticisms of the recently more influential theory of politeness and which goes under the heading of discursive approach to politeness research and interactional approach. After that, we introduced the most influential theories of approaching politeness gender online such as those of Herring (1994, 2000, 2003, 2004). Finally, it was quite interesting to introduce the theories of gender, politeness and forum communication.

General Conclusion

The third chapter introduces the methodology as well as the different research methods and approaches used in the investigation of (im) politeness negotiation and gender in discussion boards. Structurally speaking in this chapter, we started with discussing the methodology of analysis and approaches used in this analysis. After that, we gave the research design used in this study online and followed this with the research procedure and finished by introducing the background of the participants in this study. After this, we presented the ways of data collection followed for this study such as observations, content analysis and interviewing. Next, we gave a glimpse on how the data collected was analysed as well as the analytical framework. In this respect, computer mediated discourse and analysis of virtual community is introduced. Finally, we introduced the current methodology of first and second order politeness which is used to approach politeness. Theoretically speaking, this study consists of a discussion of different qualitative data used in this study, such as content analysis, observations, and interviews. It was claimed that, by analyzing the qualitative data, this study had the aim to explore how politeness and gender were negotiated in forums. In particular, this study explored how the interactants, whether male or female, negotiated politeness and used language forms according to the context. This research has provided newer concepts about gender and politeness negotiation in forums through the analysis of computer mediated discourse. In this study, two forums have been analysed, a technical forum and a news one. The comments of the participants were analysed in a form of content analysis. The first forum, we analysed 122 comments while the second forum, we analysed 318 comments of male, female, and neutrally nicknamed participants. The comments were analysed quantitatively to support this qualitative casestudy. The last chapter is the investigation of (im) politeness negotiation in relation to gender in the two online forum communications of this study.

The aim as said earlier was to investigate politeness and gender in discussion boards. Thus four questions were raised. The first was to detect the extent to which anonymity helped the users to use impoliteness in these platforms. The second was related to gender and it was about how gender could affect the linguistic behavior of males and females in the use of (im) politeness in those platforms. The third question was about the situations in which the users had to keep polite although being anonymous. The last question was about the extent to which the female character was attacked in online community practices in general and in discussion boards in special.

General Conclusion

The findings confirmed what was stated before in the sense of impoliteness use in discussion boards was contextual and not absolute. This contrasts with the literature of computer mediated communication and its impoliteness prevalence thanks to anonymity, distance and the absence of social accountability. This was due to the nature of the forum the user finds himself in. That is to say, if the user is interested in making profits from the forum, he will automatically choose polite linguistic behavior to deal with his counterparts in the forum. This was found true in the studied forum called ‘The Arab Blogger; Arabic Cash Academy’ which is a forum, in the Arabic language, made for the benefits of bloggers to provide them with information on how to set up one’s own blog in a way that can be seen as “professional.” So, this type of forum gives one access to the recent applications made to improve the quality of one’s blog. Its basis is to teach professionalism within blog setting and designing. It was found that approximately ninety (90%) of the comments were polite. The comments that were in the form of thanking were the biggest part in the forum (69.42 %). The comments which were in the form of praise language had a frequency of (14.87 %) in the forum while the last category of comments that was frequent too was in the form of polite disagreements (05.78 %). Impoliteness occurred with very few frequencies (02.47 %). We found no insults and swear language forms except in some cases especially at the level of disagreements. This study found only few impolite disagreements in the comments that were offending. The case was about a member in the forum who introduced a fraudulent company known by its thefts on its users. When, the general manager disclosed its secret, that member started insulting the general manager to be a loser, non-expert in working online and new in the market of this business. However the general manager did not respond impolitely because he was the one who created the forum and used to advertise for his own blog through it. He had the aim of attracting visitors and followers and this might have been the reason for why he kept polite for most of the time knowing well that he was not known to others. The same thing happened with the others who used to visit this forum to ask for information about blogging and ways to benefit from online working. In this respect, the use of impoliteness thanks to anonymity is not absolute as was demonstrated by previous literature, mainly Herring (2004). By contrast it is context based and users negotiate politeness according to the situation, nature of the forum, and their own goals from visiting a certain forum communication.

General Conclusion

The testing of the second hypothesis claiming gender having no effect on the male and female characters to behave politely or impolitely showed the importance of context of situation at a discourse kind of level. We found that gender was irrelevant in the first forum, especially if the males and females had financial aims to attain. In this respect, both males and females had to keep on politeness mode as much as they could to achieve certain long-term goals; they had to use a lot of politeness cues to get information and advertise for their own blogs to attract visitors in the first forum. By contrast, the finding showed a kind of freedom of expression, especially impoliteness use by both males and females in the second forum. Since the subject was related to gender inequality (the right of women to drive in Saudi Arabia), offensiveness between women and men in the forum was in the form of reciprocal attacks. This also was the case with those who opposed the right of women to drive (whether men or women) and those who were with. The female, male and even neutral nicknamed participants used a lot of offensive linguistic behavior towards one another in the comments. Over 55.55% of males who were against the right of women to drive insulted women to be the cause of all evil and problems; they used a lot of sarcasm against women; they even threatened them of not letting them make the legitimate demonstrations they asked for (drive collectively in the Saudi Arabic country). Concerning the women commenting on the news, over 45.23% of them were clearly against their right of driving. They claimed that the naturalized women were the ones who wanted this kind of right in the Saudi Arabic kingdom in addition of accusing women to be shameless and full of dishonor. However, one can refer this to anonymity which allows for gender masquerade in which males can comment using fake accounts of female nicknames. Also, in the comments, there were examples of women commenting and accusing men to use fake accounts to comment against the right of women to drive. Half of those who used neutral nicknames were against the right of women to drive and commented offensively considering the woman as someone who has to raise children telling her to stop those kinds of demonstrations which were seen as riots. They also accused them of being from outside Saudi Arabia who recently got the nationality asking their government for depriving them from it.

The testing of the third hypothesis which stated that those who wanted more and more followers to their blogs were the ones who kept being polite for most of the times was found to be true also. To prove this, I interviewed a game designer and site developer who used to work online and be paid by a Canadian counterpart about game

General Conclusion

designing. I asked him if politeness played a role in making more and more profits for someone doing this business. He said that any person who wanted the most followers and/ or wanted to promote a certain product online, he had to be very careful about his linguistic behavior with others. In working with the metapragmatics of politeness in the first forum, I deduced that the general managers and bloggers who used to advertise for their own blogs in this forum had to keep polite and honest with their followers even when they were insulted or criticized. I gave the example of the manager who had to disclose the secret of a fraudulent company introduced on his forum. He had to be honest in orienting his followers although being criticized for this.

The association of profitability with gender in the first forum, the users whether being women or men had to keep the use of politeness since their objective was related to financial ends. The results show that there existed no difference between the males and females in the use of politeness in the sense that they kept polite for most of the time in order to attract visitors to their blogs that they used to advertise for in this forum. This was for the sake of not harming the popularity of their blogs. This popularity is the key to online world business they used to aspire to. In this respect, the findings show that gender is not relevant in this case of profitability and business doing online.

The testing of the last hypothesis stating that women in those platforms were attacked when they asked for their rights went beyond what was expected. Men were claimed in gender studies Herring (2013) to oppose fiercely when women ask for their rights. This was found to be true at all levels. The men users of this forum commenting insulted, mocked at and ridiculed those women who were asking for their right of driving. Not only that they outnumbered the females in the comments being offensive for most of the times. Also, they used gender masquerade to comment pretending themselves to be women who were not interested in driving. They used religion to justify their stance against the legitimate right of women to drive. Not only religion, they also used other pretexts such as geographical problems and political ones. In the same way, they justified their positions of being against this right simply by referring this to gender. That is to say, a woman does not have the right to drive just because she is a woman.

General Conclusion

The results obtained from the analysis of these comments, interview and metapragmatics of politeness in those discussion boards confirmed the hypotheses introduced in the beginning of this study. That is to say, politeness negotiation according to gender in these platforms is context-based. In this respect, one cannot generalize the fact of anonymity giving freedom of expression all the time and there are some cases in which the user has to be careful about his linguistic behavior although being completely anonymous and not known to others. This contrasts with the literature review claiming for the reverse (Herring 2004).

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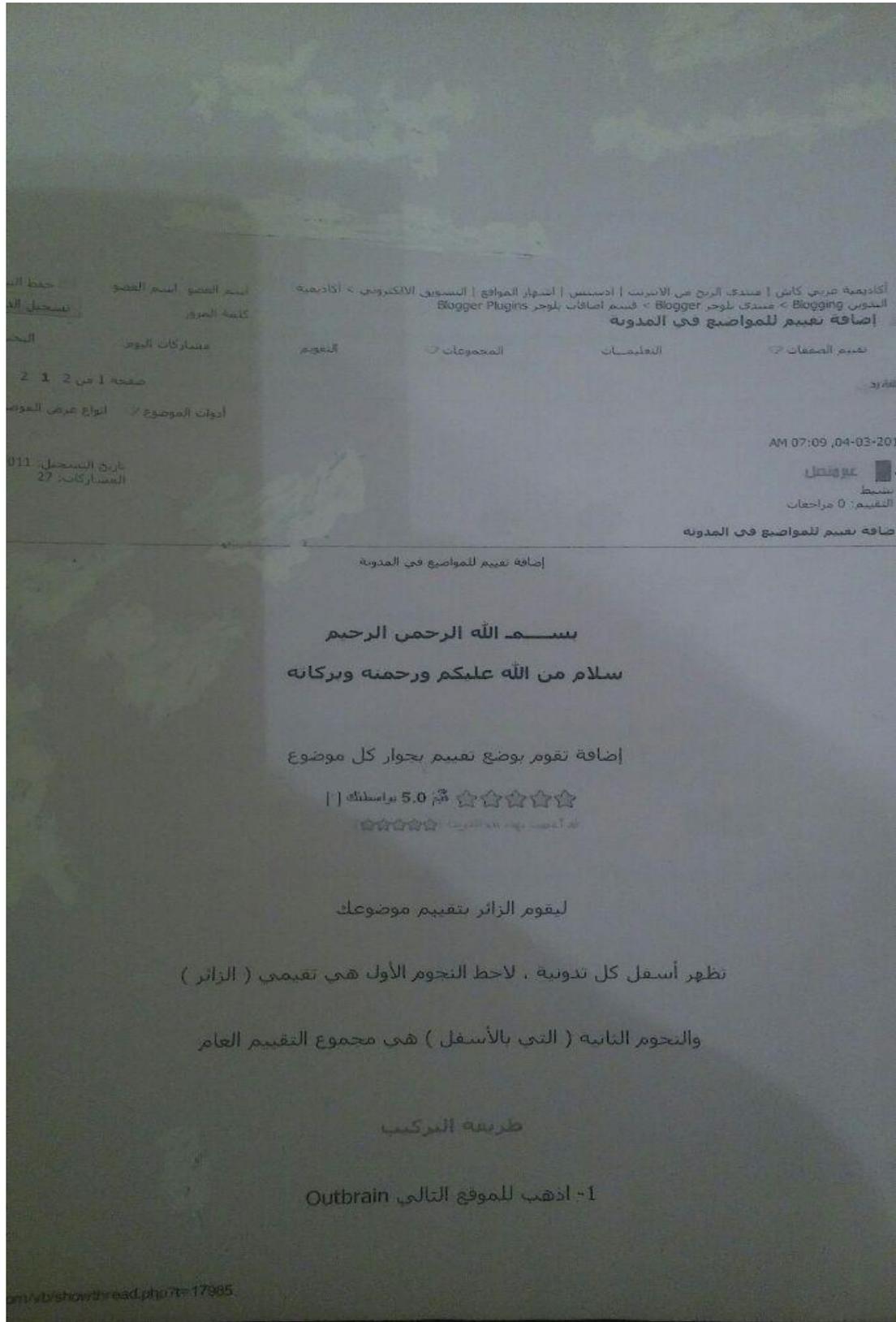
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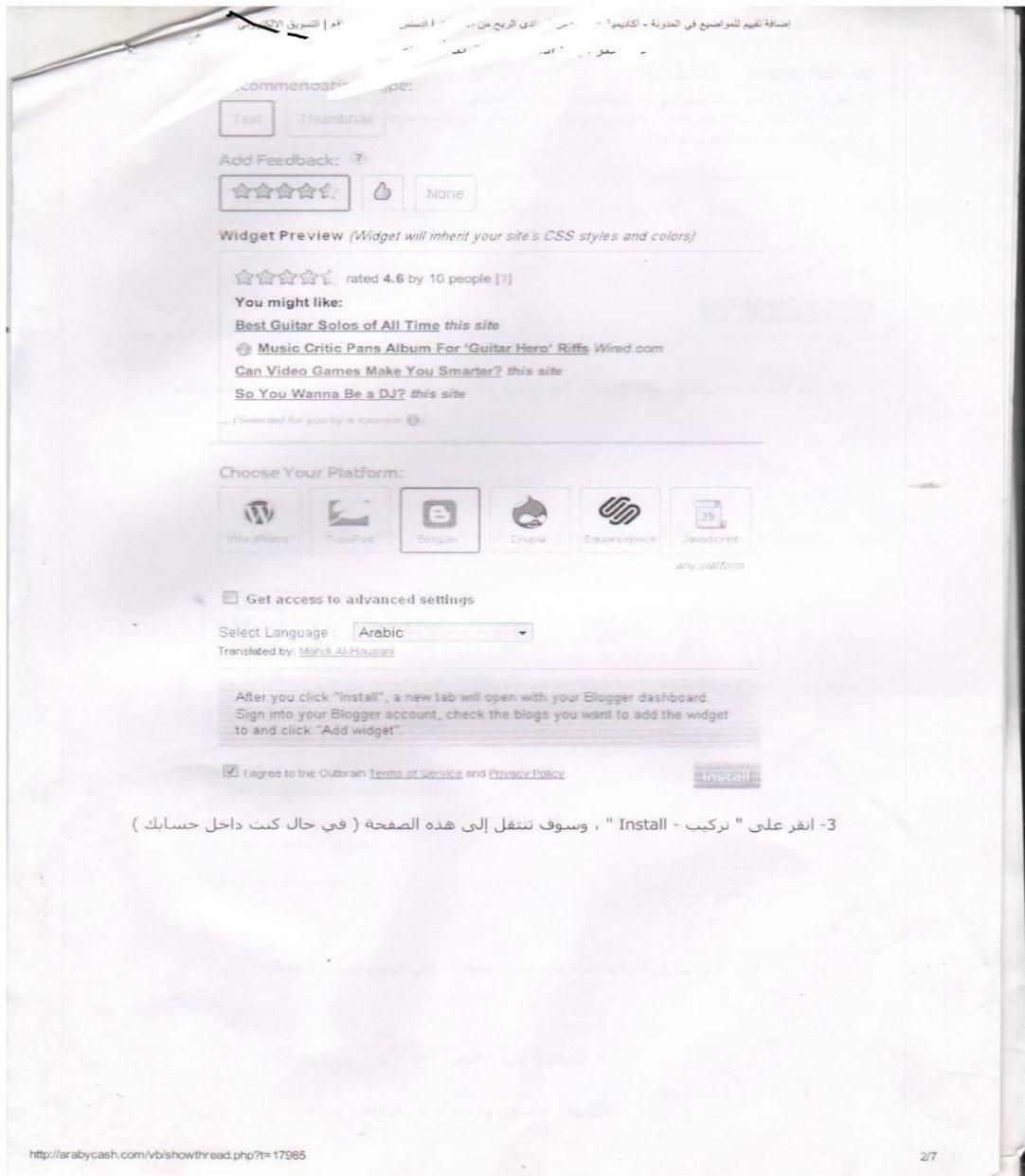
Appendices

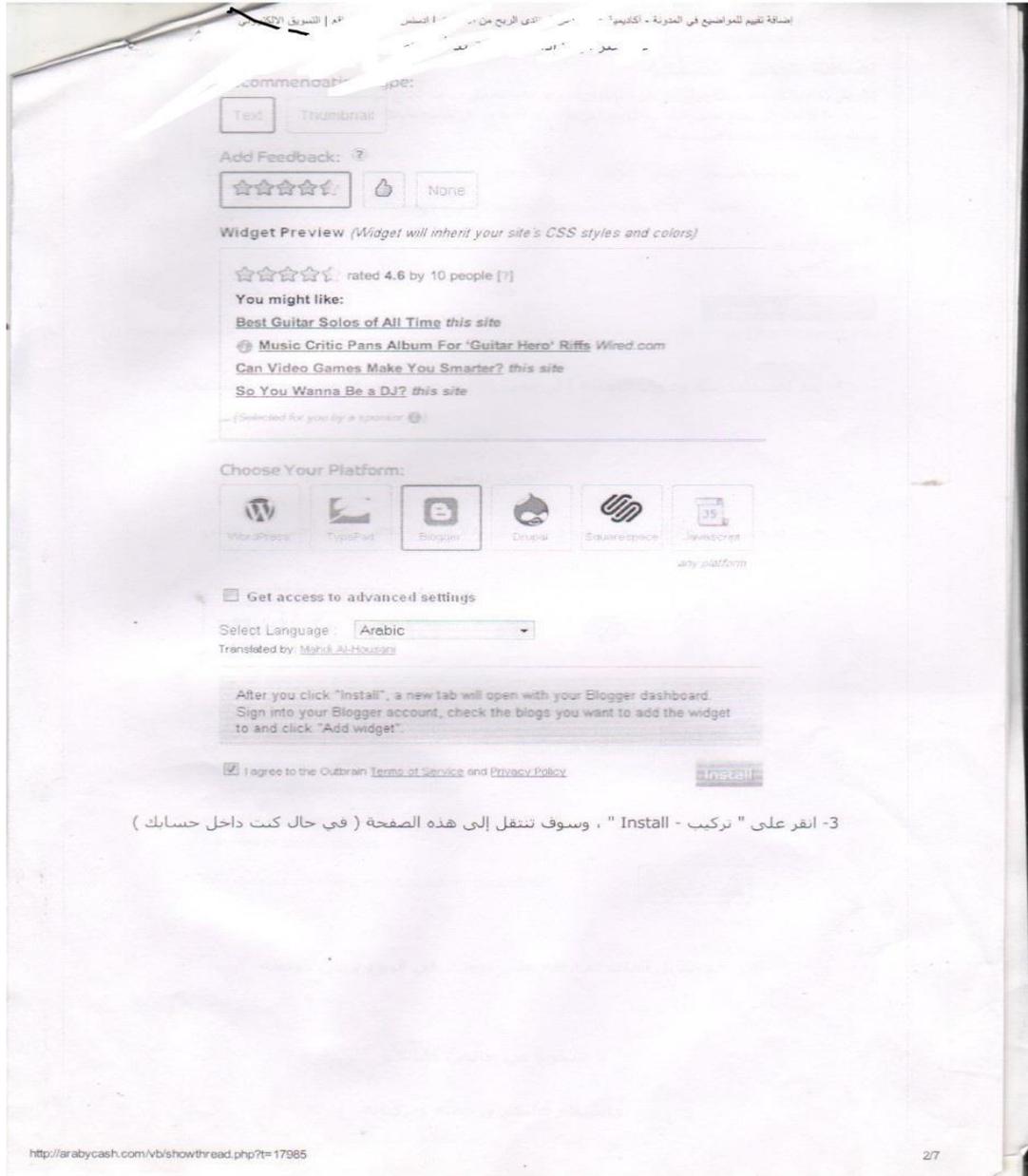
Appendix 1: Information and knowledge giving posts according to gender



Appendix 2: Information and knowledge giving according to gender







Appendix 3: Profitability and politeness in the forum

٢٠١٥/٩/٧

لغربي كاش - أكاديمية عربي كاش | منتدى الريح من الانترنت | انستغرام | اشهار المواقع | التسويق الالكتروني | رسة Troll Twitter

أكاديمية عربي كاش | منتدى الريح من الانترنت | انستغرام | اشهار المواقع | التسويق الالكتروني > الأكاديمية العامة والاحبارية > قسم الاحبار والمقالات Articles & News

رسة Troll لغربي كاش [Twitter]

قسم الصفحات | التعليقات | المجموعات | النجوم | مشاركات اليوم | البحث

صفحة 1 من 3 < 3 2 1 3

أدوات الموضوع | أنواع عرض الموضوع

#1

تاريخ التسجيل: 2011 ابريل
الدولة: الجزائر
العمر: 23
المشاركات: 467

PM 11:01, 03-08-2013

رمدننجه rmdnnjh
المشرف العام
نتائج الشغيم: 0 مراجعات

رسة Troll لغربي كاش

رسة Troll لغربي كاش

السلام عليكم , كيف الحال يا جماعة 😊 ؟
هذه اول رسة برول إلى أرسمها فحياي , و دي اعبر فيها عن الطرائف التي تحدث لي في الأكاديمية .
هذا ما أحسن به لما أكتب موضوع و لا ألقى رد يساعدي و بدفعني إلى الأمام لأقدم أكثر 😊 .

<p>حسين عاني</p> <p>يوسف باشا , اشرح لينا الموضوع ده ضروري لو سمحت لغربي كاش</p>	<p>يوسف rmdnnjh</p> <p>حاضر يا معلم</p>
<p>راح يكون أفضل موضوع إلي</p>	<p>بعد 4 ساعات</p>
	<p>لما أنهى الموضوع</p> 

http://arabycash.com/vb/showthread.php?t=334717

1/5

لغري كاش - أكاديمية عربي كاش | منتدى الريح من الانترنت | ادسنس | اشهار المواقع | التسويق الالكتروني Trol رسمه Twitter

<p>أشهر الموضوع</p> 	<p>أرجع غدا لأرى تفاعل القراء مع الموضوع فأجد الإحصائيات الرائعة التالية عدد قراء الموضوع : 132 شخص تقييم الموضوع : لم يقيمه إلا اثنان عدد الايكات : ثلاثة على الأكثر عدد التعليقات : و لا تعليق</p>
<p>YYYYEEEEEEEEAAAAA</p>  <p>SSCIIIIIEENNCCE</p>	<p>رأي أكثر القراء</p> <p>الموضوع لا يفيد و لم يعطونا أسرار</p>
<p>و ذه إحساس أنا يا جماعة</p> 	<p>NOTHING TO DO HERE</p> 

احباتي , لست هنا لأفوق , و لست هنا لأكتب مقالات ترويجية لمنح او كتاب ما !!! فليس لي كتاب أبيعهُ او منتج أو أروج له ... فمى وجهه بطري : الذي يريد أن يكسب في الوقت الحالي فليجده للأحباب الفرنسيين و الأمريكان و البريطانيين و غيرهم من الأوربيين و الكنديين .

من فضلكم , لو المواضيع التي تكتبها في الموقع الرئيسي لا تبيد أو لا تعجبك , قولوا لنا ماذا نريدون ليسرجه لكم ... صغوا استفساراتكم و تفاعلوا معنا , لكي نحس أننا لا نضع عملا هباءا و أننا لا نضع وقتنا و ...

نحبل أنك في كل يوم نذهب إلى أحدهم و نعطيهِ هدية أو شيء , حميل 😊 و هو لا يشكرك , بل يأخذ تلك الهدية و لا يعيرك أي اهتمام !!! , هل سترجع إليه مرة أخرى لتعطيهِ هدايا أو ... , هل هذا النصرف سيدفلك إلى الأمام لتقدم له أكثر ؟؟؟

نحبل أن أحدهم كل ما يحتاجك بأني إليك , و يقول لك من فضلك ساعدي في شيء , ما , و لما يساعده لا يشكرك و لا يعطيك أي قيمة و اهتمام , كيف ستحس اتجاهه ؟ و ما الموقف الذي ستأخذه اتجاه مساعدته الناس بعد فترة ؟؟؟

المصدر: أكاديمية عربي كاش | منتدى الريح من الانترنت | ادسنس | اشهار المواقع | التسويق الالكتروني

#2

AM 02:22 ,03-09-2013

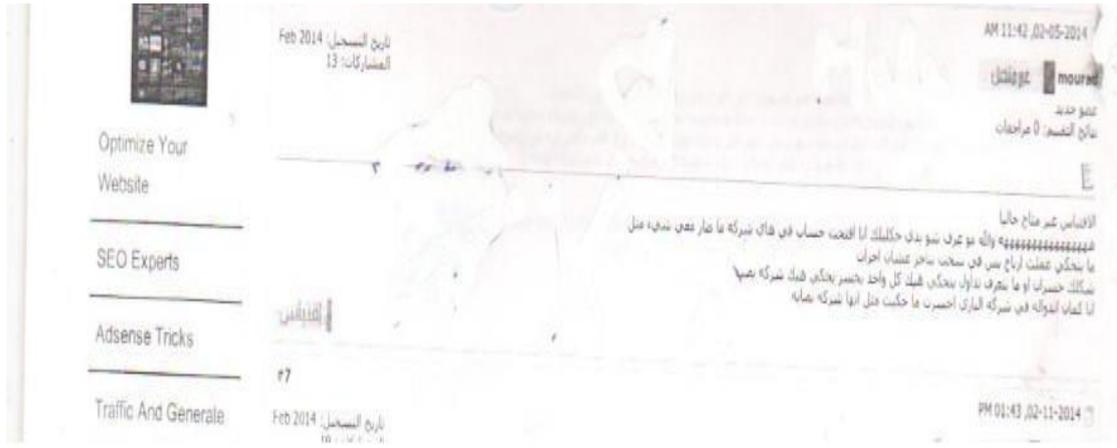
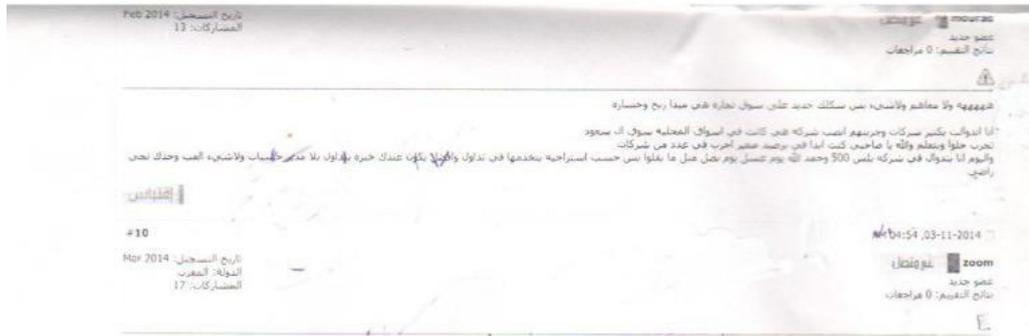
عجوز عرونتل عضو نشيط نتائج التقييم: 0 مراجعات

تاريخ التسجيل: Oct 2009
المشاركات: 58

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Appendix 6: Politeness and profitability online

هذا البحث في إطار تحضير شهادة دكتوراه لا غير

هل أنت رجل أو امرأة؟

✕ رجل امرأة

- هل لديك موقع رسمي او مدونة او ما شابه؟ ليس لي موقع اقدم و انت انا اعمل على تطوير المواقع

- هل تربح اموال عن طريق هذا الموقع او المدونة (حتى ولو كانت قليلة)؟ انا اربح مبلغ من شركتي على الانترنت

- هل هذه الارباح هي مقترنة مع نوعية العمل او ساعات العمل او ماذا؟ متوسطة بساعات العمل! انها في نوعية العمل

- هل هناك شركة ما تعطيك هذا الاجر ام هو عبارة عن عمالك الخاص؟ لا اعمل في شركة انا اعمل في اكمال مشاريع عملي

- ما هو نوع العمل الذي تقوم به؟ هل هو بيع لصالح شركة ما ام عمل فكري ام ماذا؟ كل ما يقوم على ربح و جودتها و تطويرها

- اذا كنت صاحب مدونة تجني منها اموالا هل تستطيع ان تستعمل الالفاظ سيئة مع من يسيء اليك ام لا؟ المواقع

- اذا استعملت الالفاظ البذيئة مثل كلام السوء مع الآخرين هل هذا يؤثر على الارباح ام لا؟

- بالمقابل هل استعمال الالفاظ اللطيفة و المؤدية مع الآخرين عبر مدونتك يزيد من شعبيتها و بالتالي نسبة ارباحك؟

- اذن هل تظن ان المعاملة عبر الانترنت مع الآخرين مهمة من اجل ارباح ما ام ماذا؟

- لماذا تظن ان هناك ضبابية كبيرة حول جني الاموال من الانترنت؟ هل هي حقيقة ام هي فقط صعوبة و تتطلب مجهود كبير؟

- لماذا هي مقصورة على عدد قليل من الناس؟

- اذا كان حقيقيا اتمنى ان توافيني بصورة فوتوغرافية فقط عن كيفية دفع الشركة لك مع اغفال اسمك ومع العلم ان هذا سوف يبقى سرا في اطار البحث الذي اقوم به

- في الاخير ان كنت تعرف امرأة تعمل في هذا المجال اتمنى ان تعطيتني رقمها بعد انتهائها طبعا

- هل يمكن ربح اموال من الفيسبوك؟

شكرا على تعاونك لان هذا مهم جدا لكي اثبت ان البحث حقيقي و شكرا

Appendices

Appendix 8: Male comments siding with the right of women to drive in Saudi

236- روجي علي سيارتك بدل خلي السواق يوصلك 
مبارك (زائر)

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 15:26 GMT - KSA 18:26

انا مع قيادة المرأة لكن انا ضد سياسة لوي الذراع سواءا من المعارضين او الموافقين لكن الاكيد ان الكل يجمع ان قيادة المرأة لها فوائد ولها سلبيات واضرار علي المرأة في داخل الاسره وخارجها ومن ابرز اضرارها داخل الاسره هو اتكالية الزوج عليها في كل شين والافضل ان يتم التدرج من سن معين في حال السماح للمرأة بالقيادة

رد 6 10

Appendix 9: Male masquerading as females to comment against driving

217- ضد قيادة المرء السعوديه 
ريم (زائر)

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 15:42 GMT - KSA 18:42

و ش الي يهمنى في مظاهرات 26 اكتوبر نسوق ولا مانسوق الوحد تبي من الدنيا رضاء الله عز وجل وطاعه ولديها زوج صالح يحافظ عليها واولاد تربيهم تربيه صالحه اتقوا الله

رد 24 22

218- الى ريم 
مع سياة المرأة (زائر)

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 16:09 GMT - KSA 19:09

المكان المناسب لامثالك هو المطبخ ثم الغسل والكنس خليك مراوحة في مكانك ودعي البقية يطورون حياتهم

رد 17 18

219- الى ريم 
عراقية (زائر)

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 16:14 GMT - KSA 19:14

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220- ريم = رجل متحجر 
مع قيادة السيارة (زائر)

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 16:31 GMT - KSA 19:31

العاب غيرها يامنتحل

رد 8 8 8

Appendix 10: Male masquerading as females to comment against driving

السعودية Al Arabiy
الرئيسية السعودية الأخبار نشرة الرابعة

13- الخلوه مع السائق 
ام سليمان (زائر)

السبت 20 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 26 أكتوبر 2013م 20:17 GMT - KSA 23:17

الخلوه مع السائق حرام ونحن مضطرين لهذا شي ،، محد فكر في هالموضوع!!!!

رد 4 15

14- كلمة حق يراد بها باطل 
حنان الموسى (زائر)

السبت 20 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 26 أكتوبر 2013م 01:02 GMT - KSA 22:02

اخي ام سليمان العالم يستخدم النقل الجماعي واغلب الدوائر الحكومية توفر باصات للموظفات اذا ماكانت مجانا فالسعر رمزي يعني ليه اللف والدوران

رد 12 6

15- وين 
حنان (زائر)

الأحد 21 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 27 أكتوبر 2013م 09:49 GMT - KSA 12:49

وين المواصلات اللي تتكلم عنها؟؟ انا موظفه دكتوراه كل كم شهر مستشفى ... لا باصات ولا نقل ولا شي .. اركب مع سواق كان يسوق سيكل فالهند

رد 2 2

Appendix 11: Comments with reference to Islamic interpretations

50- بارك الله في دولتنا الرشيدة
عائشة بنت الدمام (زائر)

الجمعة 19 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 25 أكتوبر 2013م GMT 12:33 - KSA 15:33

السعودية فخر لكل العرب والمسلمين لا يوجد بلد فيه مسلمون إلا وفيه أثر للجهد السعودي الذي يسعى لخدمة الإسلام والمسلمين في شتى أنحاء المعمورة ولا ينكر هذا إلا جاهد حقوق على الاسلام والمسلمين ويرغب في تدمير ارض الحرمين بفتح ابواب الفتنة تحت باب سياقة النساء... الله يحمي ارض السعودية من كل حافد اللهم آمين

رد 24 7

الناشطون في المجتمع

53- من هن الناشطات السعوديات
سلوى العتيبي (زائر)

الجمعة 19 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 25 أكتوبر 2013م GMT 11:28 - KSA 14:28

نفسى اسمع ناشطة سعودية تتكلم عن شي في صالح المجتمع السعودي يعني لو تتكلم عن موضوع الاسكان وبدل السكن والتوظيف وتيسير الزواج... الخ ولكن اغلبهن متجنسات ذات اهداف خبيثة

رد 19 1

56- صادقة قالو قيادة قالو
فاطمة الفحطاني (زائر)

الجمعة 19 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 25 أكتوبر 2013م GMT 16:47 - KSA 19:47

شكلهم متجنسات الا وينهم عن المواضيع الثأية كاحافر او فتح مؤسسات نسائية للنساء فقط او طلب رواتب لامهاتنا الله يبعدهم عنا غرض في نفوسهم وبس يطلبونه.

رد 5 7

Appendix 12: Gender neutral nicknamed comments against driving

Morocco -258 
(زائر) zaksmart

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 17:37 - GMT 14:37 KSA

أنا ضد سيطرة المرأة للسيارة ، المرأة تتسبب في حوادث كثيرة و سياتها غير متزنة لأن طبيعة المرأة أنها تخاف و قد تفقد السيطرة على السيارة في أي لحظة تفاجأ فيها... لا أريد أن أتحدث في أمور دينية و شرعية و إنما التجربة في المغرب تؤكد أن نسبة كبيرة من الحوادث التي تحدث هي بسبب سيطرة النساء

رد 36 14

-260 الله يعينك !! 
سورية مسيحية حرة (زائر)

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 18:36 - GMT 15:36 KSA

المرأة أصبحت تقود الطائرة والناص والجرافات والقطارات في الغرب وتقول لي بتخاف!!!!
الانسانة المتمرسه والخبيرة بالقيادة لا تخاف .. أما الحوادث ... فاسأل عنها جماعة المفحطين!!

رد 8 14

Appendix 13: Gender neutral nicknamed comments against driving

42- فكونا 
مومهم (زائر)

الجمعة 19 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 25 أكتوبر 2013م 17:44 - GMT KSA

العالم يتقدم حتى انهم ارادو الانتقال للعيش في كوكب اخر ونحن قضيتنا الرئيسية (قيادة المرآه للسياره)
حرام عليكم انفتحوا شوي ثانيا . المرآه هي وضميرها , يعني قياده السياره بتخليها تتحرف مثلا المرآه اذا
ارادت الانحراف بتتحرف وانت جنبها

20 7 0 0

43- ... 
اليخاندرو خوسيه (عضو مسجل)

الأحد 21 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 27 أكتوبر 2013م 01:29 - GMT KSA

انت تشوف الحضارة بقيادة السياره انت فكر في ما بعد السياقه ترا البنات مو لعبه بيد لجين
ولبراليتها

1 0 0 0

Appendices

Appendix 14: Gender neutral nicknamed comments considered as males

162- مجنسات 
(عضو مسجل)

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 21:36 - GMT 18:36 KSA

كلهن مجنسات .. ياليت الحكومة تسحب منهم الجنسية واقرب مركب بالبحر يرجعون بلدانهم ويسوقون
التك ناك والدبابات منشان يعرفون طعم النعمة اللي كانوا فيها .. يا مجنسين احترموا بلد اكرمكم واحتضنكم
...

14  36  رد

163- ملاحظة 
؟؟ (زائر)

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 21:49 - GMT 18:49 KSA

منشان؟؟؟؟ومسوي نفسك سعودي!!ياكثر الشبيحة باخبار السعودية

14  8  رد

Appendix 15: Gender neutral nicknamed comments considered as males

! -206 (رد) 

الخميس 19 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 16:07 GMT - KSA 19:07
لماذا ممنوعه بالتركي؟ عطونا سبب واحد "مقتنع" للمنع لادين يحرم ولا قانون يجرم ، .. (:)

رد 9 21

-207 رد-: (رد) 

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 19:27 GMT - KSA 22:27
افراء في علم الاجتماع لتعرف السبب، واتمنى تطلع على التركيبة السكانية للسعودية وتعرف ايضا السبب

رد 3 3

Appendices

Appendix 16: Female offensive comments related to sexism

-28 سعوديات و الجنسيه تشهد
سعودية (زائر)

السبت 20 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 26 أكتوبر 2013م 21:28 GMT - KSA 00:28

اطلع من الموضوع هذا موضوع نسائي بحت و على فكره بس يا مستر سعودي أصلي
المرأة تكتب بهذا الشكل و حصلت تكتب بهذا الشكل أول شي حارب جهلك و أكتب عربي
زين بعدها يمكن ناخذ برأيك آخر زمن ناس ماتعرف تكتب المرأة صح و تفتي بأمر العامه

رد 5 12

Appendix 17: Neutral offensive comments related to political and social sides

-88
..... (زائر)

الجمعة 20 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 25 أكتوبر 2013م 05:15 GMT - KSA 08:15

لو يطلعوا المتجنسينتكونون صفر على الشمال

رد 7 8

Appendix 18: Male offensive comments related to religion

عجيب -227 
مراقب .. (زائر)

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 15:37 GMT - KSA 18:37

المرأة مخلوق عجيب سبب كل فتنة والمشكلة انها لاتدري !

رد 25 5

Appendix 19: Male offensive comments related to religion

المنطق -67 
سلطان (زائر)

الجمعة 19 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 25 أكتوبر 2013م 08:16 GMT - KSA 11:16

السلام عليكم للأسف الشديد ان كل ما حدث من ضجة في جميع مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي بما يخص قيادة المرأة هو تحدي لقياده وحكومته المملكة العربية السعودية ووزاره الداخليه وهذا يعني انها تصدر من لا يحترم القانون ومن لا يحترم القانون فهو يسيء للملكه العربيه السعوديه ولكل شعبيها فمن الاخرى ان يطالب بأي حق بالطرق المشروعه التي تخدم حقه في اي شيء سواء قياده او غيره . ولن يطال المغرضين ومثيرين الفتن الا من شاكلتهم . اما شعب المملكة العربيه السعوديه ارقى وانضج من انه يتأثر بهراءات مثيرين الفتن . وها قد اتاهم الرد الحاسم من وزاره الداخليه لتقزيم نوابهم المغرضه . اللهم احفظ بلادنا من كل شر

رد 9 7

Appendices

Appendix 20: Male offensive comments related to gender inequality

-10 قيادة المرأة 

عامر (زائر)

السبت 20 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 26 أكتوبر 2013م 03:32 GMT - KSA 06:32

مافي قيادة ترفض وبعدين ليش المرأة تسوق وش الداعي الحمد لله الرجال خادمها مو مقصر معها اذا الحريم بتسوق نفجر كفات سياراتهن

7 11 7

Appendix 21: Male offensive comments related to social sides

-196 زاد الموضوع عن حده 

امون (زائر)

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 16:29 GMT - KSA 19:29

اولاً هل الطرق مجهزه ؟ نعاني من زحام لايطاق عدلو الشوارع اول بعدين تعالو سوقو ثانياً كل من يخرج ليسوق يعتبر خارج عن القانون واتمنى عقاب حازم له

7 10 7

Appendices

Appendix 22: neutral male offensive comments related to religion

20- هل تقارن امنا عائشة بنساء هذا الزمن
احب ديني (زائر)

السبت 20 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 26 أكتوبر 2013م 12:53 - GMT 09:53 KSA

هل تقارن امنا عائشة بنساء اليوم اللاتي اغلبهن نزعن الحياء والحشمة!!!

رد 4 3

Appendix 23: Neutral offensive comments related to gender inequality

154- شو علاقه ايران بالموضوع؟
ايران؟ (زائر)

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 22:38 - GMT 19:38 KSA

المهم في ايران هناك انتهاكات صارخه لحقوق المراة. انتهاكات بلا حدود!

رد 27 14

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Appendix 24: Neutral offensive comments related to political and social sides

-162 مجنسات
(عضو مسجل)

الخميس 18 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 18:36 GMT - KSA 21:36

كلهن مجنسات .. ياليت الحكومة تسحب منهم الجنسية واقرب مركب بالبحر يرجعون بلدانهم ويسوقون
التك تاك والدبابات منشان يعرفون طعم النعمة اللي كانوا فيها .. يا مجنسين احترموا بلد اكرمكم واحتضنكم
..

14 36 رد

Appendix 25: Offensive female comments against driving related to religion

-96 الحقيقة واضحة
أزدية-بلاد الحرمين (زائر)

الجمعة 19 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 25 أكتوبر 2013م 04:15 GMT - KSA 07:15

هم لا يريدون الحرية للمرأة لكن يريدون الوصول للمرأة ولنا في دول الاخرى مثال قادات تلك المرأة
السيارة واختلطت مع ابناء جنسها بالمدارس وتدرس جنب لجنب الشاب واصبحت تلك الدول جهرا تشبه
دول الغرب تماما لا فرق بينهم الا باللهجة واللغة وصار الغرب او من يعجبهم حضارات الغرب قالوا حرية
مساواة المرأة انفتاحية تحضر وكانت برحب صدر هل استفدنا او استفادوا شئ هل نحن أمة تستحق ان
ترفع شأن الاسلام بالانفتاحية والحضارة والمرأة تقود وتختلط هل ترفع شان الامه اراها بكل وضوح
تجعلنا في أسفل سافلين.

7 14 رد

Appendices

Appendix 26: Offensive female comments against driving related to gender inequality

not now -134
(زائر) Nashwa

الجمعة 19 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 25 أكتوبر 2013م 00:17 - GMT 21:17 KSA

عزيزتي المرأة السعودية من يشجعك على القيادة ووطنك لا يسمح بهذا هو نفسه من سيجعل غيرك يفعلون أشياء أخرى لايسمح بها الوطن الغالي وهلما جرا وتكون فوضى ونرجع نندم على وطن ضاع

رد 15 9

Appendix 27: Offensive female comments against driving related to political and social sides

-209 لاتسوق البنات
(زائر) دلال

الخميس 19 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 24 أكتوبر 2013م 19:04 - GMT 16:04 KSA

لا ان شاء الله متسوق البنات مصيبه والله

رد 15 8

Appendix 28: Impoliteness in the comments

10- قيادة المرءة 
عامر (زائر)

السبت 20 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 26 أكتوبر 2013م 06:32 - GMT 03:32 KSA

مافي قيادة نرفض وبعدين ليش المرءة تسوق وش الداعي الحمد لله الرجال خادماها مو مقصر معها اذا الحريم بتسوق نفجر كفرات سيارتهن

7  11  

Appendix 29: Sarcasm as impolite offensive male comments

35- كلا على همه سرى 
ساري (زائر)

الجمعة 19 ذو الحجة 1434هـ - 25 أكتوبر 2013م 20:40 - GMT 17:40 KSA

انصح الداخلية ان تضرب بيد من صراصير وفنران وزواحف ثواني ما تشوف منهن احد واذا طفح الكيل بس قولوا "هينه" كلهن يشردن بالذات اللي لها مواقف سابقة مع الهينة وماسكين عليها بعض الامور

3  13  