Impoliteness Strategies and Rapport-Challenge Pragmatic Orientation in Competing Utterance

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Abstract

Competing utterance discusses the relevant utterance constructed by competitors in order to attain competing intentions in specific context. In doing so, competitors ordinarily implement voluminous pragmatic strategies in order to accomplish the goal of competition, among which impoliteness strategy is one of them. The study follows theoretical framework based on impoliteness, impoliteness response model and rapport management theory. Data comprises the selected three U.S. presidential election campaigns in 2016 as the corpus. Analysis of this study uses the qualitative and quantitative approaches while analyzing the impoliteness strategies and response strategies used by Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton to quantify the differences of pragmatic strategies in their utterances to explore contextual effect of impoliteness strategy and the reasons for the use of impoliteness strategy. Then it verifies the explanatory power of impoliteness theory combined with rapport management theory in competing utterance and reveals the rapport-challenge pragmatic orientation in it.
Keywords: competing utterance; impoliteness strategy; impoliteness response; rapport-challenge pragmatic orientation

1. Introduction

Politeness reports the norm and impoliteness as the "pragmatic failure" for a long time (Beebe, 1995). Culpeper, Bousfield, and Wichmann (2003) defines that politeness is a common phenomenon in many different situations of interaction--in conversations, at work, in school, in television, in movies, social network, between friends, lovers, and people in general, rather than just a violation of the norm. He defines impoliteness as "a negative attitude towards specific behaviors occurring in

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specific contexts" (Culpeper, 2011). He believes that impoliteness can either be intentional or unintentional, with the potential to offend and even have negative consequences for the receiver. Limberg (2008) also pointed out that impoliteness is the negative attitude of the speaker towards a certain behavior or event, and it is the verbal or non-verbal face attack intentionally taken in a specific context to achieve a certain communicative goal, which is characterized by systematic, strategic and face threatening. Impoliteness is known as "strategic or instrumental politeness" rather than a negative linguistic phenomenon in subjective perception of the addressee. In daily situations, impolite utterances are at a relatively marginal position whereas occupy a central position in other specific situations. In certain activity events such as courts of law, military training scenes and entertainment programs, impoliteness often occupy a central position due to the power, distance and particularity of communicative content. However, most of the impoliteness in the above situations is based on asymmetric power relations. In fact, impoliteness phenomenon is not always based on asymmetric power relations, it may also occur in political conflicts, public debates and election campaigns.

Impolite utterance is a kind of pragmatic strategy, namely, impoliteness pragmatic strategy (impoliteness strategy for short). Culpeper et al. (2003) pointed out that impoliteness is "communicative strategies designed to attack face, and thereby cause social conflict and disharmony ". The study of impoliteness is a hot topic in pragmatics, but at present it mainly focuses on the study of impoliteness in daily utterances (Bousfield, 2008; Culpeper, 1996; Culpeper et al., 2003; Meier, 1995; Mills, 2009). Current research does not pay enough attention to impoliteness in formal situations and existing research only touches the edge of impoliteness on formal occasions, mainly focuses on politeness or face mitigation and impoliteness or face aggravation. There is no research on impoliteness strategies in competing utterance combined with rapport management theory.

Competition and competing utterance Social psychologists refer to competition as the psychological needs and behaviors of individuals or groups trying to overcome or overwhelm each other. In other words, it is the behavior of each relevant participant to maximize personal benefits at the expense of others, with the purpose of pursuing attractive goals (Yu Guoliang, 2006). Competition can be divided into various types. From the perspective of related themes, there are political competition, economic competition, military competition, educational competition, cultural competition and so on; In terms of the scale involved, there are small competition between people and large competition between countries;

According to John Searle and Searle (1969), the Felicity Conditions1from the perspective of speech act according to which we identified "competing utterance" are as follows:

1. Preparatory condition: The speaker feels the need to compete and believes he/she has sufficient competitiveness;
2. Propositional content condition: Utterance explicitly or implicitly conveys information related to competition goals;
3. Sincerity condition: The speaker has a sincere competitive attitude and a sincere desire to defeat the other in a given speech activity;
4. Essential condition: Competing utterance can be interpreted as an attempt to establish a favorable image in the hearts of (potential) decision groups/judges.

According to types of verbal communication（1-way or 2-way; cooperative or competitive）and the purpose of communication (exchange of information, transmission of information, expression of emotion, establishment of relationship, etc.), communication can be roughly divided into the following four types (David W. Angel, 2017). Among them, campaign debate is a two-way speech activity with competitive nature aimed at persuading (potential) decision groups/judges.
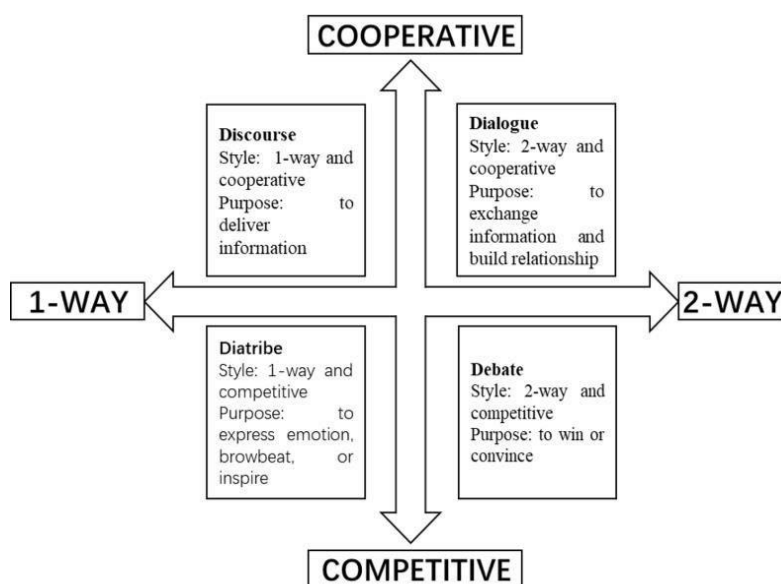

Figure 1. **The Four Types of Conversations** （David W. Angel, 2017）

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1 the term felicity conditions refer to the conditions that must be in place and the criteria that must be satisfied for a speech act to achieve its purpose.

Campaign debate is typical competing utterance, which is both confrontational and conversational. The purpose of the competing utterance is to persuade the audience so as to win the election. Therefore, all the language choices of the candidates in the election process are based on their campaign motivations, and all the speech activities generated are directly or indirectly aimed to persuade people to vote. As-Garcia-Pastor (2002) points out, through a persuasive speech event, the goal of a campaign is to convince the audience.

Campaign debate is a kind of speech activity which is to prove who has more leadership and aims to damage the other party's public image and score points for themselves and their party (Martin Rojo & Van Dijk 1997(Shaw, 2000). The candidates represent different parties' interests, they hold very different positions and views but share the same competitive goals-- to win the election. During the campaign, the host requires the candidates to state their views and refute the other candidates' views within a specified time. Therefore, the candidates usually adopt various strategies to defend their positions, among which the verbal strategy we term *pragmatic strategy*. *Pragmatic strategy* refers to the means or approach by which language users achieve communicative goals by making use of the specific meaning generated by the choice of language structure in a certain context (Liu Senlin, 2007), "The use of language is always strategic" (Brown, Levinson, & Levinson, 1987; Verschueren, 1999) campaign debates are even more so.

Campaigning is a zero-sum game, inherently conflicted and institutionalized, inevitably involving impoliteness. Intentional impoliteness on one side of a campaign is a threat to both positive face (the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others), and negative face (the want of every 'competent adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others (Brown et al., 1987) on the other. As Culpeper (1997:354) points out, "in some cases, it is clearly not in the interest of the participants to preserve the other party's face," which is especially true in campaign debates.[2]

2. Theoretical Framework of Competing Utterance

2.1 Impoliteness Theory

Culpeper (1996), following Brown et al. (1987)

proposed the impoliteness superstrategy corresponding to the polite strategy, and divided the impoliteness superstrategy into five types: *Bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm or mock politeness, and withholding politeness),* which marks the impoliteness turning point in politeness research.

1) *Bald on record impoliteness*—the FTA is

2) performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way in circumstances where face is not irrelevant or minimized.
3) *Positive impoliteness*—the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's positive face-wants.
4) *Negative impoliteness*—the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants.
5) *Sarcasm or mock politeness*—the FTA is performed with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere, and thus remain surface realisations.
6) *Withhold politeness*—the absence of politeness work where it would be expected.
   Positive impoliteness output strategies
   Disassociate from the other—for example, deny association or common ground with the other; avoid sitting together.
   Seek disagreement—select a sensitive topic.
   Call the other names—use derogatory
   Negative impoliteness output strategies
   Condescend, scorn, or ridicule — emphasize your relative power. Be contemptuous.
   Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect s—personalize, use the pronouns 'I' and 'you'.

Among them, *Bald on record impoliteness* refers to threatening face in a direct and unambiguous way in threatening situations involving face (*Face Threatening ACTS*). Positive impoliteness refers to deliberately hurting the other party's positive face, which is manifested as ignoring the other, excluding the other from an activity, disassociating from the other, using inappropriate

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Positive face is "the positive consistent self-image or "personality" (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants". Negative face is "the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-

distraction-i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition" (Brown & Levinson, 1987[1978]:61).

identity markers, using obscure or secretive language, seeking disagreement and using taboo words, etc.

2.2 Rapport Management Theory

Conflict and harmony coexist in interpersonal communication. Language can not only build, maintain and strengthen interpersonal relationships, but also ignore, threaten and challenge it. Based on this, proposed and improved *rapport management theory* successively. Rapport management examines the way that language is used to construct, maintain and/or threaten social relationships but also includes the management of sociality rights and interactional goals (Spencer-Oatey, 2002). In this theory, relationship refers to

the subjective perception of participants in interpersonal relationship of harmony-disharmony, stability-fluctuation, warmth-hostility. Spencer-Oatey (2008) believed that the perception of relationship was affected by three interrelated potential factors: face sensitivity factor (abbreviated as face), social rights and obligations, and interaction goals.

According to *rapport management theory* (Spencer-Oatey, 2000:32), speakers can hold the following four types of rapport orientation which influence the choice of pragmatic strategies in communication:

1) Rapport enhancement orientation: a desire to strengthen or enhance harmonious relations between the interlocutors;
2) Rapport maintenance orientation: a desire to maintain or protect harmonious relations between the interlocutors;
3) Rapport neglect orientation: a lack of concern or interest in the quality of relations between the interlocutors (perhaps because of a focus on self);
4) Rapport challenge orientation: a desire to challenge or impair harmonious relations between the interlocutors.

The harmonious interpersonal relationship is mainly affected by face-threatening behavior and social threatening behavior. Spencer-Oatey (2000:13) defined face as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. In other words, face is associated with personal/relational/social value, and is concerned with people's sense of worth, dignity, honour, reputation, competence and so on. Face includes individual face, relational face and collective face. In other words, face orientation could be individual, collective or mutual (also known as relationship). Face threats include the threats of quality face (connected to one's social personal attributes) and

social identity face (connected to one's social role in a particular communicative setting). Quality face involves personal self-esteem and personal image. It means that the communicator expects his/her appearance, intelligence, ability, conduct and other personal qualities to be positively evaluated by the other party.

Sociality rights and obligations, on the other hand, are concerned with social expectancies, and reflect people's concerns over fairness, consideration and behavioral appropriateness. Interactional goals refer to the specific task and/or relational goals that people may have when they interact with each other. Social threats include

equity rights threats and association rights threats. Equity rights refers to the relationship in which the communicative agents are equal and have the right to be treated equally and not driven or commanded by others in communication, which is also termed equality principles, including cost-benefit principles, equality – reciprocity principles, and autonomy – control principles.

Based on *impoliteness theory* and related concepts in *rapport management theory*, this paper redefines impoliteness as the negative attitude that people intentionally or unintentionally threaten the face or identity of the addressee during communication in specific context.

3.Methodology

3.1 Data

Data used in this study were collected from an American government official website, three TV debates of the 2016 US Presidential election are selected as the data. Democratic nominee Hillary

Clinton and Republican nominee Donald Trump held three televised debates on September 26, October 9 and October 19. Each debate lasts 90 minutes. The first debate consists of six parts, each of which lasts 15 minutes. At the beginning of each part, the moderator will ask a question. In the second debate, half of the questions will be asked by the audience, the other half will be asked by the moderator based on social media and other sources of general interest, with the candidates given two minutes to answer and the moderator given one minute for further questions. The third debate took the same form as the first. The three debates covered American prosperity, diplomacy, the economy, terrorism, nuclear weapons, race, national security, immigration, jobs, taxes, Muslims and Syria. There is a total of 48,944 words in the three debates. Excluding questions from the moderator and the audience, there are 40,971 words in total. The specific distribution is as follows.

|	First	Second	Third	Total
Hilary	6417	6155	6825	19397
Trump	8533	7029	6012	21574
Total	14950	13184	12837	40971

Figure 2. **The Word Count Distribution of The Data**

3.2 Research Questions:

Three main research questions are addressed for the study:

1) What are the impoliteness strategies adopted by the two candidates in the debate and how are they achieved in competing utterance?

2) What kind of contextual effect does the use of impoliteness strategy produce and how does it

we find that in presidential debates the other four strategies[3] were used rather extensively throughout the three debates in addition to withholding politeness strategies (see figure 3). Among them, the frequency of *negative impoliteness* is the highest, accounted for 60%, followed by *bald on-record impoliteness* and *positive impoliteness*, accounted for 17% and 18% respectively. The frequency of
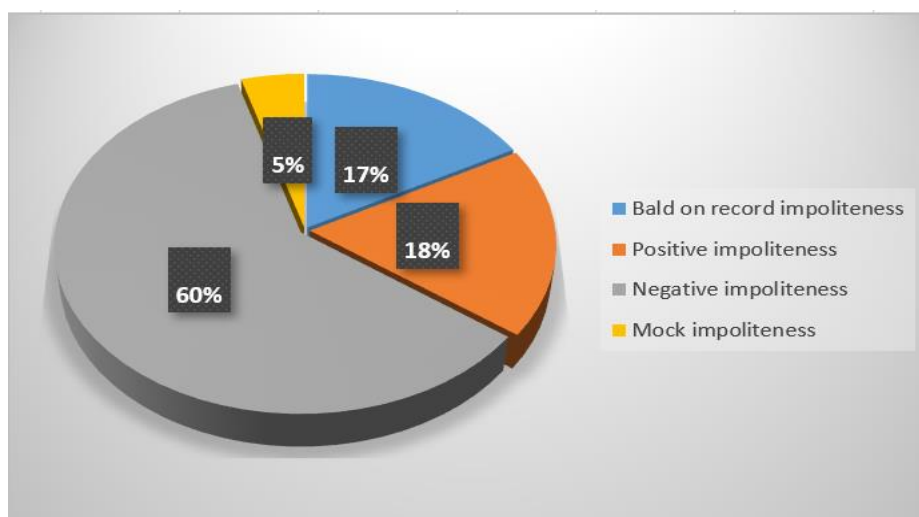
reflect the harmonious-challenge orientation in competing utterance？

3) What are the reasons for both parties to adopt impoliteness strategies in competing utterance?

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Impoliteness Strategies in Competing Utterance

Competing utterance is a kind of utterance attempt and there are a variety of verbal expressions, impoliteness is one kind of them. It is clear that each community has its own rules of communication and ways of showing impoliteness, but campaign impoliteness is different from daily impoliteness and has its own unique language expressions.

Based on the observation and analysis of the data,

mock impoliteness is the lowest, accounted for only 5% of the total cases. In addition, we find that Trump uses impoliteness strategies more frequently than Hilary (see Figure 4).

Culpeper (1996) also creates output strategies of impoliteness strategy, and points out that the judgement of impoliteness depends on context to a large extent. Different linguistic environment will lead to different ways of displaying impoliteness. Culpeper (1996, 2005); Culpeper et al. (2003) and Bousfield (2008) successively proposed 20 kinds of impoliteness output strategy, we found thfollowing eight in three campaign debates[4]. Among them,

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[3] *bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness and mock impoliteness*.

[4] Because campaign debates take place in particular

context and have rules that must be followed, candidates are less likely to use impoliteness strategies such as threats or taboos.
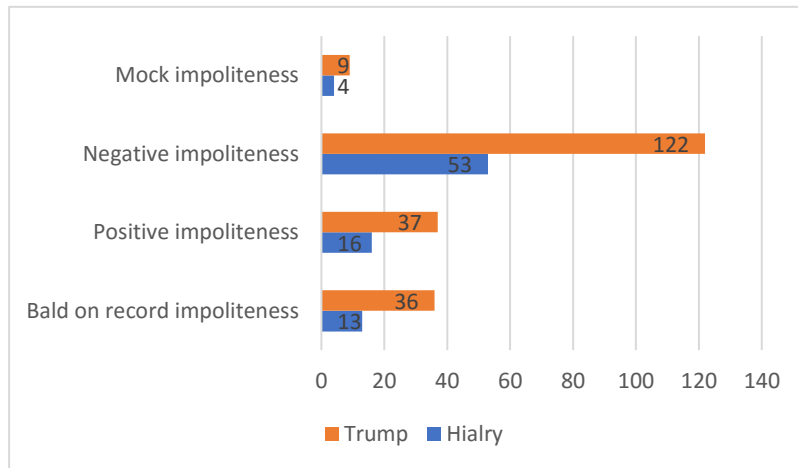
Figure 3. **Distribution of Impoliteness**

Figure 4. **Comparison of Impoliteness Strategies Between Two Candidates**

seek disagreement, disassociate from the other, condescend, scorn, ridicule or belittle, explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect are the original classification of positive impoliteness and negative impoliteness while criticize, avoid agreement, hinder / block and challenge are the category added by Bousfield (2008). Bousfield (2008) also points out that in real life, participants tend to combine, or 'mix' together, impoliteness strategies within a single utterance.
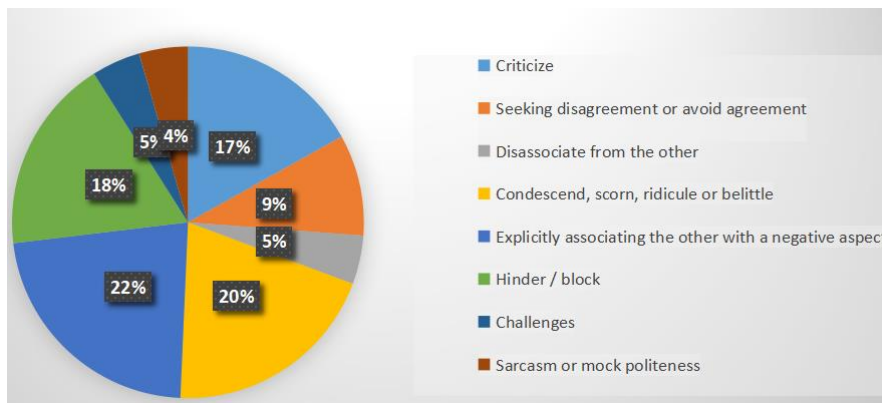

Figure 5. **The Overall Situation for The Use of The Impoliteness Output Strategy**

Figure 5 shows the overall distribution of the impoliteness output strategy, among them, the strategy that explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect is the highest, accounted for 22%, followed by condescend, scorn, ridicule or belittle, hinder / block and criticize, accounted for 20%, 18% and 17% respectively, mock impoliteness appear frequency of the lowest, only 4%. In the three campaign debates, the impoliteness output strategy appeared 290 times, 128 times in the first, 69 times in the second and 93 times in the third. It was discovered that both candidates adopt impoliteness strategies to varying degrees, but Trump's use of impoliteness strategies is much higher than Hilary's, as shown in Figure 6[5].

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5 Due to the difference in the number of words in the two candidates' debates, word frequency is standardized in this article.
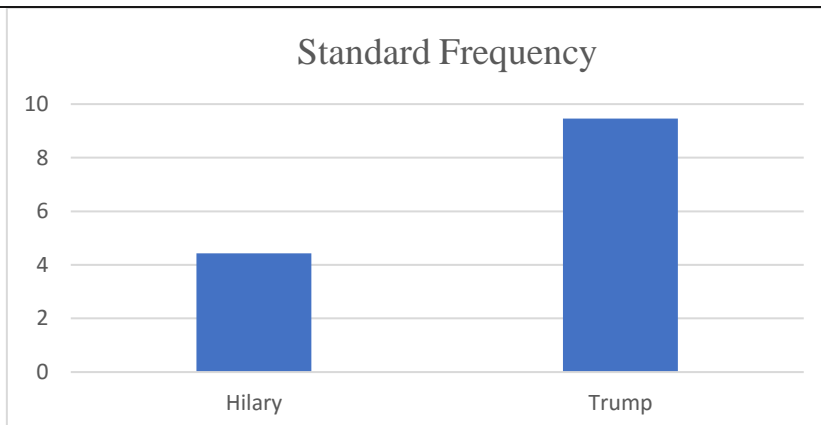
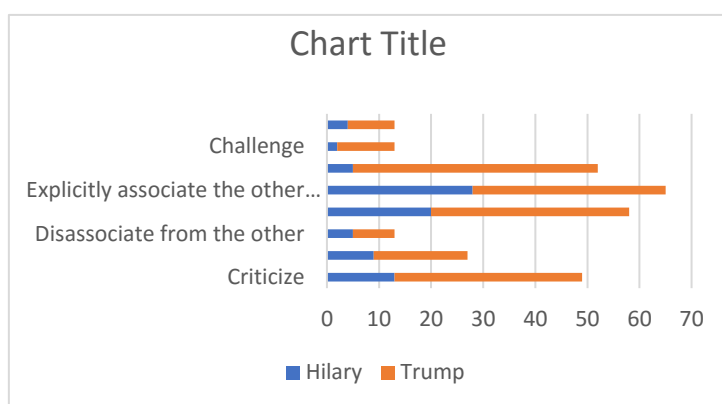Figure 6. **Overall Comparison of The Impoliteness Output Strategy**

Figure 7. **Comparison of The Use of The Impoliteness Output Strategy**

Figure 7 further shows that there are individual differences between the presidential candidates and the preferred impoliteness strategy. For example, the most frequently used impoliteness strategy by Trump is the hinder / block strategy (47 times), followed by the condescend, scorn, ridicule or belittle strategy (38 times), and the least used strategy is disassociating from the other (only 8 times).

Moreover, we found that the most common impoliteness strategy used by Hillary is to explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect, which is 28 times in total, followed by derogatory and mocking strategy, which is 20 times in total. The least impoliteness output strategy is the challenge strategy, which is only used for 2 times. Further detailed examples of impoliteness strategies are presented below.

4.1.1 Bald on Record Impoliteness

1) Trump: Typical Politician. All Talk, No Action. Sounds good, doesn't work. Never going to happen（1）. Our country is suffering because

people like Secretary Clinton have made such bad decisions in terms of our jobs and in terms of what's going on（2）……because the fed is not doing their job. The fed is being **more political than Secretary Clinton（3）**.

Campaign debates are essentially confrontational, which determines the disharmony-pragmatic orientation of the two candidates to challenge each other. *Bald on-record impoliteness* appears driven by such pragmatic orientation. *Bald on-record impoliteness* is a conventional impoliteness strategy, the expression of which is direct, clear and unambiguous. It is a pragmatic strategy of naked threat to face and usually used in situations where power is not equal, especially when the speaker intentionally hurts the other party's face to express his dissatisfaction.

In the first debate. Trump used a brief straightforward sentence pattern to accuse Hilary Clinton of being *all talk and no action* (1), and blamed her bad decisions for the country's problems (2), belittle her personal values and leadership skills,

among which, "*more political than Secretary Clinton*" linking Hilary Clinton to the federal government. While attacking the federal government, it also attacked Hillary Clinton's social status and face as secretary of state, which is a further face-threatening speech act.

Criticize

2) Trump: Lester. And **with a little leadership**, you'd get it in here very quickly, and it could be put to use on the inner cities and lots of other things, and it would be beautiful. But **we have no leadership**. And honestly, **that Starts with Secretary Clinton**.

    Clinton: I have a feeling that by, the end of this evening, I'm going to be blamed for everything that's ever happened.

    Trump: Why not?

    Clinton: Why not? Yeah, why not? You know, just join the debate by saying more crazy things.

The criticizing strategy was not originally included in the list constructed by Culpeper (1996) 6, but was added by Bousfield (2008). According to Brown et al. (1987), face is a key driver of politeness and the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself. This image or face can maintain the need to enhance or lose the face of certain communicative behaviors such as critical commands that essentially threaten the participants in a conversation.

Face is something a person can 'lose' or 'maintain', and, therefore, one must constantly

attend to face in interactions Brown et al. (1987). According to Brown and Levinson, maintaining it in interaction is probably one of the main reasons why people usually cooperate with each other. It is based on the "mutual vulnerability" of face. In other words, a person's face depends on the fact that everyone else's face is maintained, and when defending their own face while threatened, they will, in turn, end up threatening the other's face, thus creating a rather challenging circle (Brown and Levinson 1987: 61).

Criticism is a typical face-threatening speech act. According to Zhao Yingling (2004) 's classification of critical speech act, the criticism in this case belongs to public criticism strategy (*on - record*) of moderate class, namely, the critics think that there is no need to take care of other's face, bluntly give expression to his own opinion, they simply express their opinions and point out exactly what's wrong with the other side.

In this case, Trump criticize that it's "bureaucracy" and heavy tax policies that lead to

some companies cannot take money which earned in overseas countries back, and he blamed the situation on the "lack of leadership" (*we have no leadership*), and argues that the lack of leadership starts with Secretary Clinton, Denying her achievements while in office, which is a negative assessment of her competence and a threat to her credibility, threatened her quality face directly.

4.1.2 Positive Impoliteness

3) Trump: **She doesn't have the look. She doesn't have the stamina. I said she doesn't have the stamina, and I don't believe she does have the stamina**. To be president of this country, you need tremendous stamina.

Positive impoliteness strategy is unconventional impoliteness strategy with strong intentionality. It is put forward for the positive face in face theory. Positive impoliteness damages the other party's positive face needs and threaten his positive face, the expression forms of speech are mostly negative comments. When Trump learned of Clinton's nomination in 2016, he declared that "*she doesn't have the look* ". In the first debate, when the moderator asked him to explain that, instead of holding back, he stressed four times in a row that *she doesn't have the look,* threatening Clinton's self-concept and quality face.

Seeking Disagreement or Avoid Agreement

4) Trump: **Well I think it is terrible**. If you go with what Hillary is saying, in the ninth month you can take baby and rip the baby out of the womb of the mother just prior to the birth of the baby.

    Now, you can say that that is okay and Hillary can say that that is okay, **but it's not okay with me.** Because based on what she is saying and based on where she's going and where she's been, you can take baby and rip the baby out of the womb. In the ninth month. On the final day. **And that's not acceptable**.

    Clinton: Well that is not what happens in these cases. And using that kind of **scare rhetoric is just terribly unfortunate**. You should meet with some of the women I've met with. Women I've known over the course of my life.

Seeking disagreement is a way to emphasize differences between two parties. This strategy is usually caused by differences with others, for example, selecting a sensitive topic (Culpeper,1996:357). There is a "flip side" to the *seek disagreement* strategy, that of *avoid agreement*. Such a strategy could be one variation or output strategy not explored by Culpeper (1996) for the

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6 he does not consider criticism to be an

impoliteness strategy adopted by an individual.

seek disagreement strategy Bousfield (2008). *Seeking disagreement* is one way to discuss the topic further, which is a strategy designed to highlight the opposing positions, views, feelings and so on. In this case, Hillary Clinton, supports women's right to an abortion, and says it will not overturn Roe v. Wade (Roe v. Wade), while Trump opposes abortion（*it's not okay with me*）（*that's not acceptable*）-- and his suggestion that women should be punished for having abortions – which is the complete opposite of Clinton's, threatening her demand for quality face.

Disassociate from The Other

5) Clinton: **Independent experts** have looked at what I've proposed and looked at what Donald's proposed, and basically they've said this, that if his tax plan, which **would blow up the debt by over $5 trillion** and would in some instances **disadvantage middle-class families compared to the wealthy**, were to go into effect, **we would lose 3.5 million jobs and maybe have another recessio**n. They've looked at **my plans** and they've said, OK, if we can do this, and I intend to get it done, we will **have 10 million more new jobs**, because we will be making investments where we can **grow the economy.**

Disassociate from the other is one of the most effective ways to emphasize differences. One may deny association or common ground with the other.[7] (Culpeper, 1996:357). In a campaign, the two candidates will point out each other's problems, to differentiate themselves with each other. In this case, Hillary focused the public's attention on the problems in Trump's plan by drawing on the

professional identity of other experts, and made a sharp contrast with her plan approved by experts to highlight the rationality of her plan, thus demonstrating her leadership and effectively countering Trump's verbal attacks.

Challenges

6) Trump: I ask Hillary, **why doesn't she** make $250,000 by being in office? She used the power of her office to make a lot of money. **Why isn't she** funding. Not for a hundred million, **why don't you** put 10 or 20 or 25 or $30 million into your campaign. It's $30 million less for special interests that will tell the you exactly what to do and it would really be a nice sign to the American public. **Why aren't you** putting some money in? You have a lot of it. You made a lot of it because of the fact that you've been in office. You made a lot while you were secretary of state, actually. So why aren't you putting your own

money into your campaign, just curious?

Challenges are always issued in the form of a question. For example, ask the hearer a challenging question, question hearer' s position, stance, beliefs, assumed power, rights, obligations, ethics, etc. to question his authority and position of power (Bousfield, 2008:132). In the second debate, Trump confronted Clinton four times in a row, which is the equality threat of the social threat[8]. The real purpose of this formal questioning is to show the public Clinton's political image as corrupt, incompetent and abusive, in which the personal pronoun changes from "*she*" to *"you"*, aggravating the threat to the other side's face. To a certain extent, it not only deconstructs Hillary's political image of being diligent and honest for the people, but also further challenges the harmonious interpersonal relationship between them.

4.1.3 Negative Impoliteness

7) Clinton: Well, here we go again. I've been in favor of getting rid of carried interest for years, starting when I was a senator from New York. But that's not the point here.

Trump: **Why didn't you do it? Why didn't you do it?**

Clinton: Because I was a senator with a republican president.

Negative politeness is the threat to negative face demand, namely, "disrespect of rights, obligations, etc". reject the actions, values, and opinions of the listener. To put it simply, a competitor rejects any compelling proposal or proposition from the other party. In this case, Trump asked Hillary "*Why didn't you do it*" twice, which made the other

party feel the verbal oppression, aggravated the offensive degree of the impolite utterance, and threatened the negative face wants and equality right of the other party.

Condescend, Scorn, Ridicule or Belittle

8) Trump: And look at her website. You know what? It's no difference than this. She's telling us how to fight ISIS. Just go to her website. **She tells you how to fight ISIS on her website. I don't think General Douglas MacArthur would like that too much.**（1）

Holt: The next segment, we're continuing...

Clinton: Well, **at least I have a plan to fight ISIS. [Interruption]**（2）

Holt: ... achieving prosperity...

Trump: No, no, **you're telling the enemy everything you want to do**. [Interruption]（3）

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[7] There is also a physical alienation, such as avoid sitting together with the other person.

[8] The right to be treated equally in communication and not to be driven or commanded by others.

Clinton: No, we're not. No, we're not.

Trump: See, you're telling the enemy everything you want to do. **No wonder you've been fighting -- no wonder you've been fighting ISIS your entire adult life.** [Interruption]（4）

Clinton: That's a -- that's -- go to the -- please, fact checkers, get to work.

Emphasize your relative power. Be contemptuous. Do not treat the other seriously. Belittle the other (e.g. use diminutives). As Culpeper (1996:358) points out, this is a highly impolite and offensive strategy, in which a person emphasizes their relative power or reduces the relative power of the other person. When one party uses this strategy to undermine the relative power of others, the other party is likely to use other strategies to fight back (*see 5.2 Analysis of impoliteness response strategies*).

In this example, Trump satirizes Hillary for teaching the American people how to fight ISIS on the website (1) and telling the enemy how to deal with them (3). *"no wonder you 've had been fighting"*. From the speaker's point of view, *"no wonder"* this compound cause expresses Trump's negative feelings and attitudes. Its real purpose is to strike a chord with the American people and threaten Hillary's social identity face.

Explicitly Associating the Other with A Negative Aspect

9) **Clinton:** He raised the 30 years of experience, so let me just talk briefly about that. You know, back in the 1970s, I worked for the children's defense fund and I was taking on discrimination against African-American kids in schools. He was getting sued by the Justice Department for racial

discrimination in his apartment buildings. In the 1980s, I was working to reform the schools in Arkansas. He was borrowing $14 million from his father to start his businesses. In the 1990s, I went to Beijing and I said women's rights are human rights. He insulted a former Miss Universe, Alicia Machado, and called her an eating machine.

Clinton: And on the day when I was in the situation room monitoring the raid that brought Osama bin laden to justice, he was hosting The Celebrity Apprentice. So, I'm happy to compare my 30 years of experience, what I've done for this country, trying to help in every way I could, especially kids and families, get ahead and stay ahead, with your thirty years and I'll let the American people make that decision.

This strategy is similar to "*disassociate from the other party*", used to emphasize a position by showing the other side in an unfavorable way in order to focus public attention on the differences between the two candidates. But the strategy is more straightforward than associating the other side, and often use different pronouns '*I*' and '*you*' to show divergences (Culpeper, 1996:358).

In this case, Clinton contrasted her three decades of political experience with Trump's three decades of life, noting that Trump was accused of racism when she worked for the *Children's Defense Fund* to fight discrimination against African American children; When she worked on school reform in Arkansas, Trump borrowed $14 million from his father to start the business; Trump insulted the former Miss Universe while she was fighting for women's rights; A series of parallelism all linked Trump with negative things, thus focusing public attention on the sharp contrast between the two candidates, which effectively threatened Trump's quality face and challenged the harmonious interpersonal relationship between them.

Hinder / block

10) Clinton: Well, Donald, I know you live in your own reality, but that is not the facts. The facts are -- I did say I hoped it would be a good deal, but when it was negotiated...

Trump: **Not. [Interruption]**

Clinton: ... which I was not responsible for, I concluded it wasn't. I wrote about that in my book...

Trump: **So, is it President Obama's fault? [Interruption]**

Clinton: ... before you even announced.

Trump: **Is it President Obama's fault? [Interruption]**

Clinton: Look, there are differences...

Trump: **Secretary, is it President Obama's fault? [Interruption]**

Clinton: There are...

Trump: **Because he's pushing it. [Interruption]**

As a strategy, the idea of being impolite through interruptions was initially touched upon by Culpeper (1996) but was not named. It is referred to as hindering in Bousfield (1999) but Culpeper et al. (2003) later adopted the term blocking in Bousfield (2008) Interruption was the most frequent impoliteness strategy in competing utterance (18%),

One goal is to bring the other to its knees. Culpeper (1996) mentioned the interruption strategy in the negative impoliteness strategy, arguing that as an impoliteness strategy, interruption can attack the other party and cause disharmonious interpersonal relationship. On the one hand, the interruption strategy indicates the intention of one party to get the turn, and on the other hand, it implies that the other party's opinions are incorrect and unimportant.

In this case, Trump interrupted Hillary's speech five times to show his clear position, enhance the appeal of his own words, and shape a strong personal identity, which not only damaged the negative face of the other party (*by blocking the other party's words*), but also threatened the positive face of the other party (*disrespecting the will of the interrupted party*). In addition, the interruption strategy combined with three rhetorical questions, accusing Hillary via "*Is it President Obama's Fault*" , further aggravated the offense of the impolite utterances, indicating that in real life participants tend to combine, or 'mix' together, impoliteness strategies within a single utterance (Bousfield, 2008:146).

4.1.4 Sarcasm or Mock Politeness

11) Trump: ……Wait till you see what happens in the coming years. **Lots of luck, Hillary. Thanks a lot for doing a great job.** And, Hillary, I'd just ask you this. You've been doing this for 30 years. Why are you just thinking about these solutions right now? For 30 years, you've been doing it, and now you're just starting to think of solutions.

Culpeper (1996: 356) considers sarcasm more equal to the term '*mock politeness*', but feels it can, nevertheless, also convey impoliteness. *Sarcasm*, in Culpeper's terms, is the performance of "*politeness strategies that are obviously insincere and thus remain surface realizations*" (1996: 356). Sarcastic remarks are generally immediately obvious to hearer and they only have a face-saving capacity if the hearer decides to ignore the obvious sarcasm. In other words, because sarcasm is a straightforward manner of expressing one's thoughts, the speaker cannot later take her or his words back (Beebe, 1995).

Mock politeness follows the refinement maxim of politeness principle on the surface, but at the same time violates the quality maxim of cooperation principle. Some speech acts are ostensibly polite, but the hearer can clearly feel the offensiveness of the speech. According to the summary of Li & Ran (2014) on the occurrence conditions of mock politeness utterances, impolite utterance in this case occurs in the context where the speaker wants to create a context conducive to the construction of self-identity and face. This sentence generally expresses appreciation for others' work. This kind of polite
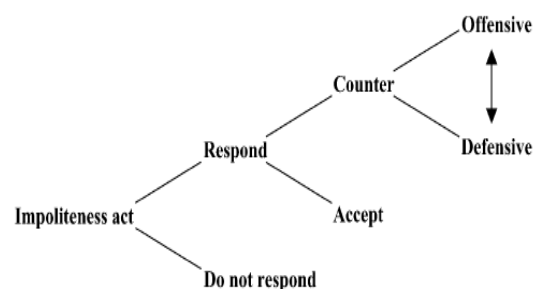

Fig. 1. A summary of response options.

language ostensibly recognizes the quality and face of the other party, but in fact it is a satire on the bad results caused by Hillary's policies. Therefore, it increases the power of impolite utterances and also a hidden challenge to the harmonious interpersonal relationship between the two candidates.

4.2 Impoliteness Response Strategies in Competing Utterance

Research on both politeness and impoliteness has tended to overlook what the recipient of face threat or face attack does. This is crucial, since, as every conversation analyst knows, the response to an utterance can reveal much about how that utterance is to be taken (Culpeper & Bousfield, 2003). In the study of impoliteness, we can find out the degree of the offense according to the verbal response of the impoliteness receiver, thus providing a basis for the interpretation of the harmonious-challenge pragmatic orientation in competing utterance.

Theoretically, when a recipient of an utterance perceives a strategic impoliteness act—an exacerbated face threatening act (FTA)—they have two choices open to them: they can either respond or not respond (i.e. stay silent) (Culpeper & Bousfield, 2003).

Participants who choose to respond to the impoliteness act have a further theoretical set of choices open to them: they can either accept the face attack or they can counter it.

In accepting the face attack, the recipient may, for instance, assume responsibility for the impoliteness act being issued in the first place (Culpeper & Bousfield, 2003).

Defensive rebuttal refers to defending one's own face against the other's face attack, including ignoring face attacks, superficial recognition, explanations, requests, and exits (these strategies are not mutually exclusive but mutually combined).

Offensive rebuttal mainly refers to "face attack to refute the other party's face attack". He further points out that there is a close link between aggressive and defensive rebuttals. Offensive rebuttals take attacking the other party's face as the

primary goal and protecting one's own face as the secondary goal, while defensive rebuttals take protecting one's own face as the primary goal and attacking the other party's face as the secondary goal. Culpeper's impoliteness response framework makes a comprehensive analysis of the ways in which both parties respond to impolite utterances, which is in accordance with the actual situation of impolite communication.

Culpeper et al. （2003: 1563）

According to the observation of the data, we found that in the face of impoliteness, they adopted offensive strategies and defensive strategies respectively (see Figure 9).
Notably, we found that Trump responded more aggressively (56 times) whereas Clinton more defensively (41 times). This may have something to do with temperament, social identity, or gender[9].

4.2.1 Clinton's Defensive Strategy

12) 01 Clinton: When I was in the Senate, I had a number of trade deals that came before me, and I held them all to the same test……So I know how to really work to get new jobs and to get exports that helped to create more new jobs.
02 Trump: But you haven't done it in 30 years or 26 years or any number you want to...
03 Clinton: Well, **I've been a senator,** Donald...
04 Trump: You haven't done it. You haven't done it. [Interruption]
05 Clinton: And **I have been a secretary of state.**.. 06 Trump: Excuse me. [Interruption]
07 Clinton: And **I have done a lot...**
08 Trump: Your husband signed NAFTA, which was **one of the worst things** that ever happened to the manufacturing industry.
09 Clinton: Well, **that's your opinion. That is your opinion.** [Interruption]

Impolite response strategy	Hilary	Trump	Total
Defense	41	27	68
Attack	35	56	91
Total	76	83	159

Figure 9. **Impoliteness Response Strategy**

In this case, Trump accused Hillary of years of inaction (02, 04), threatens her social identity face (as a senator and secretary of state), and gave a negative assessment of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) signed by her husband Bill Clinton (*one of the worst things*) (08), threatened Hillary's relational face (as Clinton's wife). Faced with Trump's repeated face attacks (02, 04, 08), Hillary adopted defensive pragmatic strategies (03, 05, 07, 09), emphasizing that she was only a senator and secretary of state at that time. Hillary's defensive response has kept them from escalating their verbal skirmishes while maintaining her political image among the American people.

4.2.2 Defensive Strategies Adopted by Trump

13) Clinton: You know, Donald was very fortunate in his life, and that's all to his benefit. He started his business with $14 million, **borrowed from his fathe**r, and he really believes that the more

you help wealthy people, the better off we'll be and that everything will work out from there (1). **I don't buy that**. I have a different experience. My father was a small-businessman. He worked really hard (2) …
Trump: Well, for one thing -- and before we start on that -- my father gave me **a very small loan** in 1975 （3）, and I built it into a company that's worth many, many billions of dollars, with some of the **greatest assets in the world** （4）, and I say that only because **that's the kind of thinking that our country needs.**

We have to admit that rationality and logic are important in political campaigns, however, voters are more likely to resonate with those who express their true emotions, therefore, emotion play a pivotal role which cannot be ignored in the process of promoting elections. Successful politicians know

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[9] The analysis of the reasons for different impoliteness response strategies adopted by both

candidates is beyond the scope of this paper.

how to carry on the emotional connection with voters through language.

In the first debate, Clinton contrasted Trump's entrepreneurial experience（He started his business with $14 million, borrowed from his father） with that of her hard-working father(My father was a small-businessman) to show the difference, and pointed out that Trump would only represent the rich, while she, who comes from the middle class, understands the hardships of the middle class. In the face of the impoliteness speech act, Trump didn't refute and fight back directly, but use defensive language (a very small loan) to weaken his father's financial support and exaggerate his own business achievements (4) to prove his business ability, believing that this ability is exactly what the country needs, effectively responding to the face threat from Clinton's impolite utterances while showing voters his ability.

4.2.3 Offensive Strategies Adopted by Clinton

14) 01 Wallace: Secretary Clinton, it's an open discussion. Secretary, please let Mr. Trump speak. Go ahead.

02 Clinton: **He's unfit. He proves it every time.**

03 Trump: No**, you're the one that's unfit.** You know, Wikileaks just actually came out. John

Podesta said **some horrible things about you**, and boy was he right. He said some beauties. And you know Bernie Sanders, he said **you have bad judgment.** You do …Leaders are all gone, if you think that was good, then you do. Now John Podesta said **you have terrible instincts.** Bernie Sanders said **you have bad judgment.** I agree with both.

04 Clinton: Well you should ask Bernie Sanders who he is supporting for President.

05 Trump: Which is **a big mistake**

06 Clinton: And **he said you are the most dangerous person to run for president in the modern history of America. I think he's right.**

In order to achieve their goals, competitors will make full use of the relevant information in the context to form favorable conditions, so as to construct utterances conducive to the realization of their goals. As Harris (2001) pointed out, the best way to save face is to fight back in the face of verbal attack.

In this case, in response to a series of Trump's verbal attack, Hillary Clinton quotes other authorities' viewpoints (04) and points out that Trump is one of the most dangerous person in the history of presidential candidates, denying his rationality of being the President of the United States (02), attacking Trump and the Republican Party's quality face while maintaining her own face,

which is the effective response to Trump's impolite utterances.

4.2.4 Trump's Offensive Strategies

15) Trump: That was locker room talk. I'm not proud of it. …If you look at Bill Clinton, far worse. Mine are words and his was action. His words, what he has done to women. There's never been anybody in the history of politics in this nation that has been so abusive to women. …but Bill Clinton is abusive to women (01). Hillary Clinton attacked those same women, and attacked them viciously (02) … So, don't tell me about words. I am, absolutely, I apologize for those words, but it is things that people say, but what President Clinton did, he was impeached, he lost his license to practice law, he had to pay an $850,000 fine to one of the women (03). …And I will tell you that when Hillary brings up a point like that and she talks about words that I said 11 years ago, **I think it's disgraceful and I think she should be ashamed of herself (04)**, if you want to know the truth.

In second debate, Clinton mentioned the issue of Trump's taping event and questioned his suitability to run for President, arguing that his comments about women represent what he really is, which

threatened Trump's quality face. The host further grilled Trump about the taping, in face of the face-saving attack by Clinton and the face- threat of the host, Trump responded aggressively, turning the conversation back to former President Clinton, harking back to her sex scandal and pointing out that the tape was just "locker room talk", but Clinton had actually abused women and lost his legal career as a result. It is evident that this directly threatened Hillary's quality face (the need to be respected) and relational face (as Clinton's wife). In addition, he also used negative adjectives *'disgraceful'* to comment negatively on Hillary's behavior to express strong dissatisfaction, which is a good response to Hillary's face-threatening behavior.

4.3 Cause Analysis of Impoliteness Strategies in Competing Utterance

Impoliteness does not spring from nowhere, and nor does it occur in pure, strict isolation (Bousfield, 2008:146). According to Francisco Fernández García（2014） , two structural characteristics of campaign debates may explain plentiful impoliteness:

a) Instead of seeking consensus, the speaker aims to defeat the opponent, and the audience is the final (and primary) speaker of the whole communicative act;

b) The speaker's main means to achieve this goal

is to criticize his opponent and his environment in order to show that he disagrees with his views, suggestions and measures, etc.

Due to the consistency of the campaign objectives, there are irreconcilable internal contradictions between the two candidates in essence, which is the root cause of impoliteness. It is clear that all impolite utterances and impoliteness response strategies are the language manifestation of this fundamental contradiction.

Impolite utterance is used to achieve the ultimate goal of both parties (winning the election) and are therefore purpose-driven. In other words, impolite utterance itself is the specific language embodiment of pragmatic strategies, that is to say, the choice of pragmatic strategies of both parties in the election is driven by the election purpose (winning the election). Pragmatic strategies further generate competing utterances (specifically, impolite utterances), which directly or indirectly affects the realization of the election purpose. The dynamic relationship between the four is shown in Figure 10.
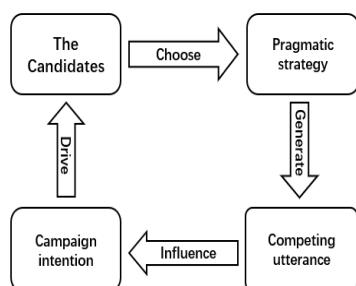

Figure 10. **Competing Utterance Generation**

The confrontational character of the campaign debates determines the inevitability of impoliteness in the campaign. Strategic use of impolite utterances is a deliberate threat and challenge to the other party's face and social rights. The harmonious - challenging pragmatic orientation in rapport management theory provides the basis for the impoliteness strategy in the campaign debate. The general performance of the presidential debates is harmonious - challenging pragmatic orientation. When there is an intention to challenge the harmonious interpersonal relationship between the two candidates, driven by this intention, both parties will adopt impoliteness strategies such as questioning, laughing, criticizing, and provoking to attack the other party's face (*quality face and social identity face*) and identity attributes (*personal identity, group identity, relational identity, etc.*), in order to achieve the purpose of the election.

According to Beebe (1995), impoliteness is a functional aspect of language that is usually used to serve two purposes: "to get power and to vent negative feelings".
Jaworski and Galasinski (2000) also pointed out that impoliteness strategies in the campaign is a way for candidates to fight for power. In other words, offending the opponent was not the goal, the ultimate goal was to show that one was better and more suitable than the opponent.

As a businessman, it is clear that Trump has little to boast about compared with Clinton, but he has gone out of his way to tap into the fear of the American people, putting them in a panic with impolite utterances and pointing out that our country is in crisis（*our country is dying" ; "our country's a mess"; "our country is a disaster"; "our country's in deep trouble"*）because of Hillary and Obama. Similarly, Hillary Clinton also used a variety of impolite utterances to show the negative image of Trump to American people compared with her positive image, so as to attract the audience, build consensus, and arouse the emotional resonance of the American people. Therefore, the use of impoliteness strategies of both candidates not only enhances the credibility of the information conveyed to some extent, but also realizes the polarization of self and the other side.

However, it is worth noting that different groups of audiences have different perceptions of the impolite speech acts. For example, in a campaign debate, the threat level of impolite utterances is relatively low, which is determined by the situation in which the impolite utterance occurs. In other words, impoliteness in political campaign is objective and predictable, so it is less offensive than that in daily communication. This is one of the important reasons for both candidates to use plentiful impoliteness strategies in the election process, and also the essential feature of political impoliteness utterances which differ from impoliteness utterances in daily life.

5. Conclusion

Based on the division of communicative forms by David W. Angel (2017), this article proposes the concept of competing utterance and redefines impoliteness. The study follows theoretical framework based on *impoliteness, impoliteness response model and rapport management theory*. Data comprises the selected three U.S. presidential election campaign in 2016 as the corpus. Analysis of this study uses the qualitative and quantitative approaches while analyzing the impoliteness strategies and response strategies used by Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton to quantify the differences of pragmatic strategies in their

utterances to explore contextual effect of impoliteness strategy and reasons for the use of impoliteness strategy. Then it verifies the explanatory power of impoliteness theory combined with rapport management theory in competing utterance and reveals the rapport-challenge pragmatic orientation in it.

It has been found that both of the candidates use a variety of impoliteness strategies during the campaign, but there are differences in the specific strategy selection. First of all, they adopted four impoliteness superstrategies, namely, *bald on-record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness* and *mock politeness*. The highest frequency is positive impoliteness, the lowest is mock politeness; Secondly, the impoliteness output strategy mainly manifested as: *criticism, blame; seek agreement or avoid agreement; disassociate oneself from one another.* But there are significant differences between them in specific strategy selection. Finally, the two candidates adopted two types of impoliteness response strategies: *offensive response and*

defensive response. In addition, the research shows that utterances in presidential debates is generally characterized by a harmonious-challenging pragmatic orientation, which has both positive and negative pragmatic effects. In particular, both candidates use impoliteness strategies to destroy the image of the other side and construct their own positive images.

The impolite utterance is a pragmatic strategy in the campaign, that is, the impoliteness pragmatic strategy. Impoliteness pragmatic strategy is restricted by politeness principles and oriented by communicative purpose. Its implementation involves the choice of language form and strategy by language users. Impoliteness pragmatic strategy is not only a level of speech act involving vocabulary and grammar, but also a level of social behavior, focusing on the illocutionary meaning and perlocutionary effect. Its implementation is a dynamic and consultative process in a specific context, that is, it manipulates the context between the speaker's intention and the listener's understanding so as to establish a connection and achieve the speaker's communicative goal. In addition, it is worth mentioning that the implementation of impoliteness pragmatic strategies is culturally restrictive, and the analysis should take into account not only the immediate context, social context but also its cultural context, and should adopt a dialectical and unified perspective.

This article is a new attempt to combine

competing utterance, impoliteness strategies and rapport management theory and sheds some light on understanding of impoliteness used in competing utterance. For further study, we can choose 2020 presidential debate utterances as the data to compare and analyze the similarities and differences of Trump's impoliteness strategies in the 2016 presidential election and the 2020 re-election.

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