

The Pragmatics of Dystopia: Linguistic Impoliteness as a Tool for Power and Resistance in “Alephia 2053” movie

Pragmatik Distopia: Ketidaksantunan Berbahasa sebagai Alat Kekuasaan dan Perlawanan dalam Film “Alephia 2053”

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Abstract

This study fills a gap in pragmatic research by applying the theories of Bousfield, Terkourafi, and Locher to analyze linguistic impoliteness as represented in the animated movie *Alephia 2053* by Rabi' Sweidan. This approach contributes new insights to Arabic fictional media by demonstrating that impoliteness reflects power relations within a dystopian narrative. The study aims to identify various forms of linguistic impoliteness in the dialogues of *Alephia 2053*. A descriptive qualitative method is employed to analyze the movie's dialogues, focusing on the integrated framework of Bousfield, Terkourafi, and Locher, which combines speaker intention, social norms, and interpersonal relations to explain the complexity of impoliteness in political cinematic discourse. The primary data consist of dialogues from Rabi' Sweidan's *Alephia 2053*, while the secondary data include books and journal articles relevant to the research topic. Data collection techniques involve observation, note-taking, and documentation. The analytical process includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal five categories of impoliteness: carelessness (2 utterances), face play (9 utterances), face degradation (30 utterances), face threat (19 utterances), and face attack (11 utterances). The results indicate that face degradation is the most dominant form, with 30 utterances, highlighting that *Alephia 2053* not only presents linguistic impoliteness but also represents power relations, social criticism, and resistance to authoritarian regimes within mediated political discourse.

Key words: *Pragmatic, language impoliteness, Alephia 2053 movie*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengisi celah kajian pragmatik dengan menerapkan teori Bousfield, Terkourafi, dan Locher untuk menganalisis ketidaksantunan berbahasa yang direpresentasikan melalui media film *Alephia 2053* karya Rabi' Sweidan. Pendekatan ini memberikan kontribusi baru dalam media fiksi Arab dengan menunjukkan bahwa ketidaksantunan mencerminkan relasi kuasa dalam narasi distopia. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengidentifikasi berbagai bentuk ketidaksantunan berbahasa dalam dialog film *Alephia 2053* karya Rabi' Sweidan. Metode kualitatif deskriptif digunakan untuk menganalisis dialog dari film *Alephia 2053* dengan berfokus pada teori terpadu Bousfield, Terkourafi, dan Locher, yang memadukan aspek intensi penutur, norma sosial, dan relasi interpersonal untuk menjelaskan kompleksitas ketidaksantunan dalam wacana sinematik politik. Sumber data primer berupa dialog film “*Alephia 2053*” karya Rabi' Sweidan. Sedangkan sumber sekunder berupa literatur buku, jurnal-jurnal yang berkaitan dengan tema penelitian. Teknik pengumpulan data melibatkan teknik simak, catat, dan dokumentasi. Proses analisis ini data mencakup tiga tahapan utama, yaitu reduksi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan lima kategori ketidaksantunan, yaitu kesembronoan 2 tuturan, bermain-main dengan muka 9 tuturan, melecehkan muka 30 tuturan, mengancam muka 19 tuturan, dan menghilangkan muka 11 tuturan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa bentuk melecehkan muka paling dominan dengan 30 tuturan, menegaskan bahwa *Alephia 2053* tidak sekadar menampilkan ketidaksantunan linguistik, tetapi juga merepresentasikan relasi kuasa, kritik sosial, dan resistensi terhadap rezim otoriter dalam wacana politik yang dimediasi.

Kata kunci: *Pragmatik, ketidaksantunan berbahasa, film Alephia 2053*

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a fundamental aspect of human social life. Through communication, individuals convey ideas, build relationships, and negotiate interests within various social contexts (Anas and Sapri 2021). In practice, the communication process does not always proceed harmoniously. Various factors such as emotional pressure, social inequality, and the intensity of conflict can influence the way individuals communicate, including their choice of words. One prominent manifestation of communication dynamics is the emergence of linguistic impoliteness (Narsiwi and Ariyana 2019).

Impoliteness may involve violations of politeness norms, the use of offensive language, or verbal expressions intended to demean or intimidate the interlocutor (Bahari 2020). This phenomenon is influenced not only by the speaker's psychological state but also by the underlying social constructs and power relations. In some cases, impoliteness serves as a communication strategy to assert dominance, express anger, or even resist authority (Nikmah 2023). The phenomenon of linguistic impoliteness can be observed in everyday social interactions. In some cases, impoliteness functions as a communicative strategy to assert dominance, express anger, or even challenge authority. These dynamics make its study particularly significant, especially when manifested in mediated discourse such as movie. (Hadi, Jumadi, and Rafiek 2022).

As a popular medium with a wide-reaching audience, movie not only serves as a source of entertainment but also plays a significant role in reflecting the social and cultural values of a society. Beyond providing engaging narratives, movies hold the potential to convey various aspects that can be extracted from the stories they present. One important aspect is the representation of language used by its characters (Angelita and Saiful Mukminin 2023). The use of language in movies including word choice, intonation, and speech style can reflect how a society perceives the world and interacts with one another (Ardiana et al., 2024). Alephia 2053 serves as a concrete example of how popular media portrays social values through a narrative of resistance against a repressive regime (Rarasati and Zawawi 2024).

The movie, set in a fictional country called Alephia 2053, tells the story of a resistance movement against a tyrannical ruling regime. Such themes of resistance often appear in Middle Eastern literature post-Arab Spring, reflecting the strong desire of societies for freedom and democratic governance(Cahyani, Masnani, and Ramadhan 2025). Alephia 2053, directed by Rabi' Sweidan, centers on a group of fighters striving to overthrow the regime. They struggle under highly repressive conditions, where civil rights are restricted and strict government surveillance is imposed. Their fight symbolizes the aspirations of the people of Alephia to achieve justice and freedom (Dinanti and Sobari 2023).

The integration of impoliteness theories proposed by Bousfield, Terkourafi, and Miriam A. Locher is essential because each offers a distinct yet complementary perspective for understanding the dynamics of impoliteness in modern communication contexts, such as those portrayed in the movie Alephia 2053. This integrated approach allows for a more comprehensive analysis of the forms, functions, and strategies of impoliteness that emerge in character interactions. Various theories of linguistic impoliteness have been developed by several scholars, including Locher and Watts, Terkourafi, Culpeper, and Bousfield (Bousfield and Locher 2008). This study focuses on linguistic impoliteness based on the theoretical frameworks of Bousfield, Terkourafi, and Miriam A. Locher. These three theories complement one another and together form an integrated framework for the present research. As noted by Bousfield in (Fauzi and Fatonah 2020), impoliteness is defined as "the issuing of an intentionally gratuitous act," emphasizing intentionality an utterance deliberately produced to harm the hearer without any relevant justification. This perspective provides the foundation for identifying utterances that explicitly target interlocutors in a negative manner.

According to Miriam A. Locher, as cited in (Rahardi, Setyaningsih, and Dewi 2016), impoliteness is viewed through a relational pragmatic dimension and is understood as "impoliteness behaviour that is face-aggravating in a particular context." In this perspective, impoliteness refers to verbal actions that actively intensify or worsen the interlocutor's "face" in specific communicative situations. Meanwhile, Terkourafi highlights the perceptual aspect of impoliteness. As stated in (Suhadak, Salam, and Didipu 2023), she argues that "Impoliteness occurs when the expression used is not conventionalized relative to the context of occurrence; it threatens the addressee's face but no face-threatening intention is attributed to the speaker by the hearer." Thus, from her viewpoint, a speech act is considered impolite if the utterance is perceived as face-threatening by the hearer, even though the speaker's intention is not interpreted as such by the hearer. Based on these three theorists, it can be classified that linguistic impoliteness is not solely determined by the form of utterance but

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also by context, speaker intention, and interlocutor perception. Their theory of impoliteness encompasses five types: carelessness, playing with face, face affront, face threat, and face attack.

The researcher conducted a review of previous studies and applied a new theoretical framework to the movie *Alephia 2053*. This study aims to make a significant contribution to pragmatic research by offering a deeper understanding of how impoliteness functions as a critical linguistic tool in cinematic narratives, particularly in depicting power struggles and social commentary within dystopian settings. The dystopian narrative in *Alephia 2053* presents an extreme pragmatic context in which violations of politeness norms directly reflect structural oppression and political resistance, making it an ideal object for the application of impoliteness theory. This study also seeks to enrich broader understandings of linguistic representation in popular culture. Several studies with related themes have been conducted previously. For instance, (Khoironi, Santosa, and Arifuddin 2024) examined strategies and responses to impoliteness in the Arabic series *Omar* through a pragmatic approach. Their study highlighted patterns of impoliteness and corresponding responses but did not explicitly relate them to broader ideological or power constructions within the Arab sociocultural context. Meanwhile, (Cahyani, Masnani, and Ramadhan 2025) employed a sociological approach to literature to uncover social criticism in *Alephia 2053*, focusing primarily on the content and social messages conveyed through the fictional narrative.

Helnisza and Aslinda (2024) applied a psychopragmatic approach to analyze impoliteness in the webtoon *The Secret of Angel*, focusing on the psychological conditions of the characters and their impact on language strategies. (Maulana, Qonit, and Dayudin 2024) examined positive and negative impoliteness in dubbed movies, finding that differences in strategies emerged in response to intercultural contexts and shifts in meaning during the translation process. Further research by (Suwignyo et al. 2022) explored the use of linguistic impoliteness in the issue of racism in the movie *Two Distant Strangers*, revealing that impoliteness was employed as a representation of racial conflict and as an expression of social tension between structurally unequal groups. Lastly, (Hadi, Jumadi, and Rafiek 2022) analyzed politeness and impoliteness in the movie *Preman Pensiu* using Leech's maxims. They found that impoliteness strategies arose through violations of maxims such as tact, agreement, and sympathy, reflecting the social dynamics between characters in the context of a transforming underworld life.

Based on previous research, this study shares similarities with several earlier works in terms of its material object, namely the movie *Alephia 2053* by Rabi' Sweidan. However, the main distinction lies in the theoretical approach employed. This study specifically examines the phenomenon of linguistic impoliteness by applying an integrated framework derived from the theories of Bousfield, Terkourafi, and Locher an approach that has not yet been applied to the analysis of this movie. While prior studies have explored *Alephia 2053* through the lenses of literary sociology, ideology, and social criticism, a research gap remains in the field of pragmatics, particularly concerning systematic analysis of the strategies, functions, and contexts of linguistic impoliteness. This gap involves a limited understanding of how forms of impolite utterances contribute to constructing power relations, shaping the ideological positions of characters, and reflecting dynamics of resistance against oppressive social structures. Therefore, this study addresses that gap by conducting a comprehensive pragmatic analysis of impoliteness as both a communicative mechanism and a form of social representation in *Alephia 2053*.

This study aims to identify various forms of linguistic impoliteness found in the dialogues of *Alephia 2053* by Rabi' Sweidan. In addition, it seeks to analyze the pragmatic functions of these impoliteness forms as mechanisms for representing power relations, ideological resistance, and social criticism within a cinematic dystopian narrative. Furthermore, the researcher positions this study as both a continuation of and an innovation upon previous research, offering renewed insights into the same object of study through the application of similar or relevant theoretical approaches. Accordingly, this study is expected to contribute to linguistic scholarship within the context of digital communication and to enrich the understanding of how linguistic impoliteness is represented in popular culture.

METHODS

The method employed in this study is a descriptive qualitative approach, as the researcher seeks to describe and analyze in depth the forms and functions of linguistic impoliteness in Rabi' Sweidan's movie *Alephia 2053*. The research data consist of two types: primary and secondary data. The primary data were obtained from the complete dialogues of *Alephia 2053*, which has a total duration of 59 minutes and 39 seconds, comprising 71 utterances that explicitly or implicitly contain forms of linguistic impoliteness based on the applied theoretical framework. The analysis includes all

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characters main, supporting, and minor whenever they are involved in impolite speech acts. Accordingly, each utterance representing the five categories of impoliteness was analyzed to reveal its pragmatic functions. Meanwhile, the secondary data were collected from relevant literature, including books and scholarly journal articles related to the topic of this research.

This study focuses on Rabi' Sweidan's movie *Alephia 2053* by employing the theories of linguistic impoliteness proposed by Locher, Terkourafi, Culpeper, and Bousfield. According to (Bousfield and Locher 2008), impoliteness encompasses five main forms: carelessness, face play, face degradation, face threat, and Face Attack, all of which are examined in depth in this research. The combination of Bousfield's, Terkourafi's, and Locher's frameworks was selected because they complement one another and are particularly relevant to the political and mediated nature of *Alephia 2053*. This integrated framework is considered more robust, as the movie's dystopian setting demands an analysis of impoliteness as a relational act of power (Locher), an intentional face-damaging act (Bousfield), and a socially negotiated form of critique (Terkourafi). Such integration allows impoliteness to be understood not merely as a violation of politeness norms but as an ideological representation of domination and resistance, providing a more comprehensive perspective than single-theory applications such as Culpeper (1996) or Brown and Levinson (1987).

The data collection techniques employed in this study include observation, note-taking, and documentation. The observation technique was carried out by watching the movie *Alephia 2053* three times to ensure the accuracy of observations and the consistency of the data. The focus of observation was directed at character dialogues that contained indications of linguistic impoliteness, whether explicit or implicit, as well as those reflecting power relations or verbal conflict. The note-taking technique was conducted systematically by recording the forms of impoliteness that appeared, the context of the conversation, the identities of the speaker and hearer, the communicative situation, and both verbal and non-verbal responses from other characters.

The documentation technique involved collecting and organizing the movie's dialogue transcripts as the main data source. The researcher manually transcribed the dialogues by directly watching *Alephia 2053* on the official YouTube channel of Spring Entertainment, which has garnered over 8.1 million views. All dialogues were transcribed verbatim, accompanied by relevant non-verbal cues such as raised voice, angry intonation, or dominant expressions. This transcript served as the primary basis for analyzing the forms and functions of impoliteness in *Alephia 2053*.

The data analysis technique in this study follows the model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the data reduction stage, all dialogues in the movie were transcribed, then selected and categorized based on Bousfield's five forms of impoliteness: carelessness, face play, face degradation, face threat, and Face Attack. The initial coding process employed the concepts of Terkourafi and Locher to identify violated social norms, hearers' perceptions, and directions of power relations, ensuring that the analysis was not merely classificatory but also contextual. The data display stage involved presenting the analytical findings in thematic tables containing the impolite utterances, the characters who produced them, the conversational context, the category of impoliteness, and their corresponding pragmatic functions for instance, how threats or mockery were used to assert dominance or resistance. The final stage, conclusion drawing, was carried out by interpreting recurring patterns of impoliteness to explore the relationship between linguistic forms, power relations, and the ideological messages represented in *Alephia 2053*.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After conducting the data analysis, several research findings were identified as follows. Based on the dialogues in the movie, 71 instances of linguistic politeness were identified. The forms of linguistic impoliteness found in the movie *Alephia 2053* by Rabi' Sweidan consist of five forms: carelessness, face play, face degradation, face threat, and Face Attack. In brief, the research findings can be summarized in the following table:

Table No. 1
Impoliteness in Language in the Movie Alephia 2053 by Rabi' Sweidan

No	Form of Impoliteness	Category	Amount	Subtotal
1.	Carelessness	Sarcasm with Mockery	2	2
2.	Face play	Cynicism with Mockery	5	9
		Insulting with Mockery	4	
3.	Face Degradation	Criticizing with Sarcasm	12	30
		Insulting with Mockery	9	
		Swearing with Harsh Words	1	
		Commanding with Harsh Words	8	
4.	Face Threat	Prohibiting with Intimidation	6	19
		Ordering with Harsh Expressions	4	
		Scolding with Mockery	3	
		Warning with Offensive Language	6	
5.	Face Attack	Ordering with Insults	3	11
		Warning through Sarcasm	1	
		Commanding with a Harsh Tone	4	
		Insulting with Derogatory Remarks	3	
		Total		71

The research findings in the table show that there are five forms of linguistic impoliteness found in the movie *Alephia 2053* by Rabi' Sweidan, each with the following categories: 1) Carelessness, with a total of 2 instances, categorized as Cynicism with Mockery; 2) Face play, with a total of 9 instances (Annoying with Cynicism 5, Deriding with Mockery 4); 3) Face degradation, with a total of 30 instances (Cursing with Cynicism 12, Deriding with Mockery 9, Swearing with Vulgar Words 1, and Commanding with Vulgar Words 8); 4) Face threat, with a total of 19 instances (Prohibiting with Intimidation 6, Ordering with Rude Expressions 4, Rebuking with Mockery 3, and Warning with Rude Expressions 6); 5) Face Attack, with a total of 11 instances (Ordering with Insult 3, Warning with Sarcasm 1, Commanding with Harsh Tone 4, and Insulting with Derision 3). The data findings will be explained in detail, along with an analysis of the linguistic impoliteness present in the dialogues of the movie *Alephia*, categorized based on the five forms as follows:

1. Carelessness

In the movie *Alephia 2053*, the form of linguistic impoliteness categorized as carelessness is manifested through sarcastic remarks, mockery, or rhetorically arrogant questions. Such utterances indicate the speaker's indifference toward the hearer's feelings or face, further reinforced by suprasegmental features such as stress, intonation, and pitch. According to Bousfield, carelessness constitutes a speech act that disregards norms of politeness and is considered a face-threatening act, although it may not always be intended as a direct attack. From Terkourafi's perspective, this form violates social expectations regarding how politeness should be displayed, whereas Locher interprets carelessness as reflecting power dynamics, in which the speaker employs casual or sarcastic language to assert dominance over the interlocutor.

Thus, carelessness in *Alephia 2053* is classified as a form of impoliteness because it involves verbal acts that neglect social norms, damage the interlocutor's face, and reinforce asymmetrical power relations. These utterances function not merely as expressions of disdain but also as ideological strategies that highlight the tension between the regime and the resistance group within the movie's dystopian narrative. The following section presents specific instances of impoliteness categorized as carelessness.

a. Cynicism with Mockery

Cynicism is an expression of attitude that belittles or mocks a viewpoint or idea, and shows doubt about the goodness of humans (Simanjuntak 2022). In the context of Carelessness as a form of linguistic impoliteness, cynical utterances can be interpreted as language behavior that contains elements of insincerity (Lestari and Savitri 2024). In the context of Carelessness as a form of linguistic

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impoliteness, cynical utterances can be interpreted as language behavior that contains elements of insincerity

Data (1)

A rhetorical question from an arrogant leader

"كيف يجرؤ أحد على أن يتحدىني؟"

(How dare someone challenge me?)

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00.39.25)

This utterance arises in the context of a moment when the leader's authority is being challenged due to an ongoing rebellion. The rhetorical question "كيف يجرؤ أحد على أن يتحدىني؟" (How dare anyone challenge me?) contains elements of sarcasm and arrogance, signaling a rejection of the opposition's legitimacy. Pragmatically, the utterance violates politeness principles particularly by threatening the hearer's positive face, as it devalues their courage, integrity, and very existence. This act of impoliteness is strategic: it does not merely express anger, but aims to weaken the opponent through a cornering and degrading verbal act.

From a linguistic standpoint, the utterance is marked by suprasegmental features such as a high intonation, emphasis on the word "يتحدىني" (challenge me), and rapid delivery, all of which indicate heightened emotion and dominance. The stress placed on the key verb reinforces the speaker's dismissive attitude and leaves no space for meaningful response. Furthermore, the use of a rhetorical question highlights the speaker's lack of genuine intent to engage in dialogue it functions instead as a declaration of superiority and reaffirmation of power.

The pragmatic effect of this utterance is the creation of relational distance between the speaker and the hearer. The leader reinforces a hierarchy of dominance while simultaneously rejecting the possibility of equal dialogue. This kind of impoliteness thus operates as a tool not only for silencing dissent but for reasserting ideological control.

2. Face Play

Face play is a type of impoliteness characterized by making the interlocutor feel annoyed. Another feature of this behavior is the presence of cynicism, sarcasm, and insult, all of which lead to actions that irritate and confuse others. From a linguistic perspective, impoliteness in the form of playing with face is also marked by suprasegmental features such as pitch, stress, duration, and intonation. Meanwhile, from a pragmatic perspective, its markers can include the situation, atmosphere, purpose, medium, participants, and other aspects of pragmatic context (Ramadhan, Mulawarman, and Rijal 2022). Impoliteness in the category of playing with face can be further classified into the following subcategories.

a. Annoying with Cynicism

Impoliteness in the category of playing with a face that is annoying refers to utterances made by the speaker due to feelings of annoyance or irritation towards someone's character or behavior. The implementation of playing with face in the subcategory of annoying with cynicism in the movie "Alephia 2053" by Rabi' Sweidan can be found in the following data:

Data (2)

When someone who feels superior responds to a question with a condescending answer:
"ولم تكتشف القوى الأمنية أمركم حتى الآن؟"
("Has the security forces not found you until now?")
"أنت الأدرى"
("You know better.")
"هل أخبرتمني بما تنوون فعله؟"
("Have you told me what you intend to do?")

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00.27.55)

In this context, this answer does not provide the information requested by the questioner. Instead of explaining what will be done, the speaker shifts the responsibility for knowledge back to the questioner.

The utterance "أنت الأدرى" ("You know better") in response to a question about plans is a clear example of playing with face in the subcategory of annoying with cynicism. The speaker, with a condescending tone, refuses to give the requested information and instead implies that the questioner should already know. This is an act that displays superiority, avoids the responsibility of providing information, and belittles the interlocutor by mocking their ignorance.

b. Insulting with Mockery

Impoliteness in the form of insulting with mockery is an impolite act that uses harsh mockery or swearing. This kind of insult is expressed with a tone full of emphasis. Utterances that contain insults have the potential to cause annoyance and anger in the interlocutor. The implementation of playing with face in the subcategory of insulting with mockery in the movie "Alephia 2053" by Rabi' Sweidan can be found in the following data:

Data (3)

A character speaks to Miyar's mother:

"أيتها الحشرة ستدمين على الساعة التي ولدته فيها"

("Oh, you insect, you will regret the hour you gave birth to him.")

"ي"

("No.")

"سوف تمنين الموت، أتفهمين؟"

("You will wish for death, do you understand?").

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00.04.14)

The utterance of this character to Miyar's mother is a clear example of playing with face in the subcategory of insulting with mockery. The use of the word "حشرة" (insect) as a dehumanizing insult, combined with harsh mocking threats, shows the character's intention to belittle, intimidate, and emotionally hurt Miyar's mother. The implied tone further supports the interpretation that this utterance is delivered harshly and authoritatively, reinforcing the aggressive and degrading nature of the interaction. This verbal act significantly threatens Miyar's mother's "positive face," namely her desire to be respected, honored, and treated as a person of dignity.

3. Face Degradation

Face degradation is a form of linguistic impoliteness characterized primarily by causing the interlocutor to feel irritated. Other traits of this behavior include excessive cynicism, harsh sarcasm, and deeply hurtful insults and mockery, all of which contribute to actions that frustrate and confuse the other person. As a result of such aggravating and bewildering behavior, the interlocutor is likely to feel wounded and emotionally hurt, potentially even harboring resentment (Suwignyo et al. 2022). Impoliteness in this category of degrading the face can be further classified into the following subcategories:

a. Criticizing with Sarcasm

Utterances delivered with a cynical tone directed at someone have the potential to hurt their feelings. This emotional pain arises from a diminished sense of self worth caused by being spoken to cynically. Therefore, criticizing with cynicism can be categorized as a manifestation of linguistic impoliteness in the form of degrading the face (Suhadak, Salam, and Didipu 2023). The implementation of degrading the face in the subcategory of criticizing with Sarcasm in the movie Alephia 2053 by Rabi' Sweidan can be found in the following:

Data (4)

When a subordinate downplays the situation by saying:

"سيدي، إنه مجرد شعار"

("Sir, it's just a slogan.")

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00.06.45)

The subordinate's utterance reflects face-degrading impoliteness in the form of *criticizing with cynicism*. In the context of a tense and anxious leader, the remark "it's just a slogan" comes off as dismissive, implying that the leader is overreacting to something unimportant. This undermines the leader's authority and judgment, potentially embarrassing or belittling him. In such situations, a respectful subordinate would typically respond with empathy or caution. However, the cynical tone here disregards the emotional weight of the matter. Thus, even a seemingly simple statement can become face-threatening when delivered insensitively in a charged atmosphere.

b. Insulting with Mockery

Linguistic impoliteness aimed at degrading face through insults represents a form of rudeness characterized by intense mockery or even verbal abuse. Such insults may be expressed in a raised voice and delivered in a direct or commanding tone. Utterances of this nature have the potential to evoke irritation in both the speaker and the hearer (Anjani 2022). In the movie Alephia 2053 by Rabi' Sweidan, an example of face-degrading impoliteness through the subcategory of *insulting with mockery* is found in the following data:

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Data (5)

The interrogator addresses the accused with extreme harshness:
"أكتب شعارات تحريضية وتهرّب؟ ولد حقير"
("You write inciting slogans and run away? You filthy bastard/lowborn.")
(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00.11.51)

This utterance represents an extreme example of a deliberate and conscious act of face degradation. Within the asymmetrical power relation between the interrogator and the prisoner, the insult functions as a form of verbal domination, reinforcing psychological control over the weaker party.

According to Locher, the expression "ولد حقير" ("despicable boy") clearly threatens the prisoner's positive face by damaging his social image and self-worth in front of authority. Within Bousfield's framework, this utterance is categorized as an intentionally gratuitous act a speech act deliberately produced to inflict verbal suffering without any constructive communicative purpose, such as seeking information. From Terkourafi's perspective, the use of such coarse insults violates social norms and expectations of politeness, even in formal interactions like interrogation, thereby reinforcing the pragmatic perception of impoliteness.

Thus, the utterance functions not merely as an emotional expression but also as an ideological strategy aimed at humiliating, dominating, and reinforcing hierarchical power relations within the dystopian order of Alephia 2053.

c. Swearing with Harsh Language

The subcategory of swearing with harsh language in the movie Alephia 2053 represents a form of linguistic impoliteness that directly involves face degradation. Within Bousfield's (2008) framework, such utterances are categorized as positive impoliteness strategies, referring to speech acts that aim to damage the hearer's positive face through insults, denigration, or rejection of personal and social identity. Meanwhile, according to Culpeper (1996), the use of harsh or taboo language corresponds to bald on-record impoliteness, where the attack is performed openly and without mitigation, thus indicating the speaker's deliberate intention to be offensive.

In the context of Alephia 2053, instances of swearing with harsh language are not merely emotional outbursts of anger, frustration, or disgust, but also function as ideological symbols of resistance against an oppressive regime. Therefore, the use of harsh language serves not only as an expression of emotion but also as a linguistic strategy to assert the characters' ideological stance and power position within the dystopian conflict. This aligns with (Bahari 2020) argument that offensive utterances in cinematic discourse often reflect the interplay between domination and resistance. The realization of face degradation through the subcategory of swearing with harsh language in Rabi' Sweidan's Alephia 2053 is illustrated in the following data:

Data (6)

When someone realizes that Miyar is missing, they say:
"أين إختفي؟ اللعنة"
("Where did he disappear to? Damn it!")

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00. 02.39)

This utterance contains swearing that expresses strong negative emotions. The phrase "أين" ("Where did he disappear to?") reflects confusion and a lack of knowledge, the speaker is looking for Miyar and feels anxious or frustrated by his absence. The word "اللعنة" ("Damn it!") is a swear word used to express anger, frustration, or deep disappointment. It carries a negative and offensive connotation. In this context, "اللعنة" reveals that the speaker is not merely confused but also visibly upset or angry about Miyar's disappearance. The speaker may perceive this disappearance as creating serious problems or consequences.

Overall, the utterance indicates that the speaker is in a state of emotional instability. The swearing term "اللعنة" intensifies the expression of anger and frustration, making it clear that the situation is significantly troubling for the speaker.

d. Commanding with Harsh Language

The pragmatic function of giving orders inherently carries the potential to diminish the hearer's face, particularly when such commands are delivered using impolite or aggressive language. Giving orders, which aims to direct someone to perform a specific action, becomes a form of impoliteness when laced with harsh or demeaning words (Anjani 2022). This type of face-threatening act is exemplified in Alephia 2053 by Rabi' Sweidan, as shown below:

("Come on, catch that boy!")

"هيا امسكوا بذلك الصبي "

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00.02.28)

The context of this utterance begins with an incident involving the boy, possibly because he was engaged in an act deemed to violate the regime's rules, such as spreading propaganda, staging a minor protest, or simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time. The words "هيا" (come on) and the imperative form "امسکوا" (catch him) constitute a direct command. While the sentence does not explicitly include vulgar language, in the context of panic and possibly raised tone, the command can be harsh and demeaning, particularly when directed at subordinates with lower social or institutional status.

The phrase "هيا امسكوا بذلك الصبي" ("Come on, catch that boy!"), Despite the seemingly inviting particle "هيا" (come on), it is followed by the imperative "امسکوا" (catch him), making it a forceful directive. Within a scene likely charged with urgency and anxiety, this command may be perceived as degrading and impolite, especially when addressed to individuals of lower rank.

4. Face Threat

Face threat is a form of impolite language behavior characterized by making the interlocutor feel pressured, threatened, and without any other options. Other features of this behavior include elements of threat, pressure, coercion, cornering, and attempts to bring someone down (Beden and Jamilah Rosly 2022). Related to the concept of face, threatening the face can be divided into two types: threatening positive face and threatening negative face. An act is said to threaten a positive face when it disrupts a person's dignity. Conversely, an act threatens a negative face when it disrupts a person's personal space, freedom, or autonomy (Saimon et al. 2024).

From a linguistic perspective, impoliteness in threatening the face is also marked by suprasegmental features such as tone, stress, duration, and intonation. Meanwhile, from a pragmatic perspective, the markers can include the situation, atmosphere, purpose, media, participants, and other contextual aspects. Several utterance excerpts from real interactions can be classified as manifestations of face-threatening impoliteness. Below are examples of impoliteness in the category of threatening the face, along with subcategories that explain its pragmatic meaning:

a. Prohibiting through Scare Tactics

Impoliteness in language that threatens the face through scare tactics involves utterances that threaten the interlocutor, either explicitly or implicitly. Scaring tactics in this context refer to utterances aimed at causing fear, concern, or anxiety in the interlocutor about something (Al-Mubarrok, Wagiati, and Darmayanti 2023). In the movie *Alephia 2053* by Rabi' Sweidan, this can be found in the following data:

Data (8)

Order Miyar and Layla when they are captured:

"توقف! أي حركة نطلق النار مكانهما"

(Stop! Move even slightly, and we will shoot you both.)

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00.10.50)

The utterance occurs during Miyar and Layla's arrest, a situation marked by a clear power imbalance between the armed captors and the unarmed captives. The command "توقف! أي حركة نطلق النار مكانهما" (Stop! Move even slightly, and we will shoot you both) illustrates face-threatening impoliteness, specifically Prohibiting through Scare Tactics. The imperative "توقف" (Stop) is harsh and forceful, while the explicit threat of violence reflects verbal aggression and a disregard for human life. This highlights the captors' dominance and lack of empathy toward the powerless.

b. Ordering with Harsh Expressions

An individual's freedom or autonomy can be disrupted when commanded by another person to act. In the context of linguistic impoliteness, such commands are categorized as disrespectful behavior, especially when expressed with harsh language (Irawati et al. 2023). An example of this type of impoliteness can be found in the movie *Alephia 2053* by Rabi' Sweidan in the following data:

Data (9)

An order given with an aggressive and intimidating tone:

"تكلمي سأقتل عينيك يا غبي "

(Begin speaking, I will gouge your eyes out, you fool.) (Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00.12.04)

This utterance is made during an interrogation, arrest, or hostage situation, where one party has full control over the other. The reluctance of the one being commanded to speak triggers a violent response. The speaker also uses the harsh insult "يا غبي" (you fool), which aims to degrade and humiliate the target, showing a disregard for their dignity. This is coupled with a very specific and horrific threat of physical violence: "سأقلع عينيك" (I will gouge your eyes out). This threat not only implies physical violence but also the loss of a vital function, causing extreme pain.

Overall, this utterance illustrates the abuse of power, where individual freedom is ignored, and violence and humiliation are used as tools to enforce obedience. This is a clear example of how language can be used to threaten, degrade, and violate human rights.

c. Reprimanding with Insults

Linguistic impoliteness in the subcategory of reprimanding with insults is marked by utterances that question or raise issues regarding something that the interlocutor should have done, but in reality, did not. The pragmatic meaning of reprimanding with insults becomes evident with the introduction of such questions or issues (Gustiani, Aslinda, and Usman 2022). An example of this form of impoliteness can be found in the movie *Alephia 2053* by Rabi' Sweidan in the following data:

Data (10)

When someone reprimands by belittling the ability or understanding of the interlocutor:
"لم تكن تعرف أن أختك متورطة؟"
(Didn't you know that your sister was involved?).

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00.12.07)

The context of this utterance is when a colleague rhetorically asks a question. The speaker implicitly indicates that they already possess this information and considers the interlocutor's ignorance as strange or unacceptable. This creates an unbalanced power dynamic in the conversation.

The question "Didn't you know?" subtly accuses the interlocutor of lacking information or understanding what they should have. It belittles their cognitive ability or situational awareness. This utterance is not just a knowledge question; it is a reprimand delivered in a mocking and demeaning tone. The speaker uses the interlocutor's ignorance as a tool to attack their self-esteem, making them feel inferior. This is an example of how rhetorical questions can be used to convey linguistic impoliteness in the form of insults.

d. Warning with Rude Expressions

In the category of linguistic impoliteness that threatens face, warnings are often expressed through the use of rude language. The emphasis on this rough language can naturally cause the interlocutor to feel hurt. When someone feels hurt, their self-esteem is automatically affected (Saimon, Noordin, and Hisham 2022). An example from the movie *Alephia 2053* by Rabi' Sweidan can be found in the following data:

Data (11)

An angry leader commands regarding the saboteur:
"أريدك أن تقلع عينيه من وجهه مفهوم؟"
("I want you to tear his eyes out of his face, understand?")
"يجب أن تسحق هذه الحشالة من الآن وحتى العيد الوطني لا أريد حسًا على الطرقات كلامي واضح؟"
("You must crush this trash from now until the National Holiday, I don't want any noise on the streets, do you understand?")

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00.40.10)

The context of this utterance reflects authoritarian and brutal power, where the leader feels entitled to issue inhumane orders and uses degrading language to maintain control. The use of the word "حشالة" (trash) to describe the saboteur is a very demeaning insult and an act of dehumanization. The command, accompanied by extreme violence ("تقلع عينيه" - tear his eyes out) and the emphasis to "crush" them, shows deep anger and humiliation.

Overall, this utterance is not just a warning, but also a very harsh and dehumanizing threat intended to instill terror and strip the face of anyone deemed an enemy of the regime. The use of brutal language and cruel commands demonstrates the extreme violence and injustice present in the context of *Alephia 2053*.

5. Face Attack

Face attack is a form of linguistic impoliteness characterized by making the interlocutor feel excessively embarrassed and humiliated in front of others. Other traits of face-threatening behavior include elements of anger, harshness, reprehensibility, and very humiliating sarcasm/mockery. The interlocutor tends to feel wounded and hurt, potentially leading to resentment. From a linguistic perspective, impoliteness that removes face is also marked by suprasegmental features such as tone, stress, duration, and intonation (Ans and Nugroho 2023).

From a pragmatic viewpoint, the indicators can include the situation, mood, purpose, medium, participants, and other contextual aspects. Several quotes from real interactions can be classified as manifestations of face-threatening impoliteness. Below is an example of impoliteness in the category of face attack:

a. Ordering with Insults

Linguistic impoliteness in the category of face attack is marked by expressions that have the effect of embarrassing the interlocutor. The interlocutor loses face because the humiliating expressions are typically made in front of many people. An example from the movie *Alephia 2053* by Rabi' Sweidan is shown in the following data:

Data (12)

When someone orders using an insult in public:

"اجلب هذه الساقطة"

("Bring this prostitute.")

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00.09.36)

The context of this utterance goes beyond simply instructing to bring someone. The main purpose is to insult and publicly humiliate the woman, showing the superiority and disrespect of the person giving the command. The use of the word "الساقطة" (al-saqiṭah), meaning "prostitute" or "fallen woman," is an extremely offensive and degrading choice of words. This term carries a very negative moral connotation and is intended to tarnish the reputation and dignity of the woman referred to.

Overall, this utterance is not just a command, but an act of verbal aggression aimed at belittling, humiliating, and removing someone's face in public. This is an extreme example of linguistic impoliteness that reflects unhealthy power dynamics and a lack of respect for others.

b. Warning with Sarcasm

Linguistic rudeness that strips away a face can manifest through the use of sarcasm. In societies with high cultural standards, conveying intentions indirectly is common, so the actual meaning needs to be interpreted through an understanding of metaphors or comparisons. However, when the sarcasm used is not appropriate for the context, it leads to rudeness (Samosir et al., 2025). In the movie "Alephia 2053" by Rabi' Sweidan, the following data can be found:

Data (13)

An angry protester shouts at someone considered a traitor:

"تنكر وجهي! إنه آخر وجه ستر اه هذه هي النهاية ستندم"

("Remember my face! This is the last face you will see, this is the end, you will regret it!").

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00:37:04)

The context here is a warning delivered through sarcasm, which can turn into a threat and insult that strips away face. The threat, combined with the command "remember my face" in the context of anger and the accusation of betrayal, is not just a simple request. It is a sarcastic remark containing an implicit threat that the traitor will soon meet their end, and the protester's face will be the last thing they remember.

Overall, this utterance demonstrates how anger and the desire to punish can be expressed through a very strong sarcasm that leads to threats and insults, degrading and stripping away the face. In the emotionally charged context of the demonstration, these words have the power to intimidate and convey a frightening message without using explicit language of threat.

c. Ordering with a Harsh Tone

Giving orders with a harsh tone should be avoided by a religious leader when interacting with their followers. Giving orders in a harsh tone has the potential to undermine their dignity or embarrass them. In the movie "Alephia 2053" by Rabi' Sweidan, the following data can be found:

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Data (14)

When someone gives an order in an angry and impatient tone in front of others:
"فتشوا !! المكان بأكمله" ("Search the entire place!").

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00:35:28)

The context of the utterance is in a tense situation, such as after suspicion arises over an illegal act. This emergency or suspicion may be the reason behind the angry and impatient tone. The imperative form (command verb) "فتشوا" (search) is direct and firm. The addition of "بأكمله" (entire) provides strong emphasis and indicates the broad scope of the ordered action. In a sensitive situation, this emphasis might feel like an accusation or distrust.

Overall, the command "Search the entire place!" spoken with an angry and impatient tone in public is a form of communication that is harsh and has the potential to strip away the face of the person being ordered. It shows distrust, lack of respect, and embarrasses them in front of others.

d. Insulting with Derogatory Remarks

According to the Indonesian Dictionary, a derogatory remark or insult is an act of insulting, condemning, or criticizing. In pragmatic studies, remarks that are insulting and made in front of a public audience fall under the category of impoliteness that strips away a person's face or embarrasses the addressee (Chiew and Faizal 2023). In this context, the conversation partner feels excessively humiliated and their face is tarnished in front of many people (more than two people). In the movie "Alephia 2053" by Rabi' Sweidan, the following data can be found:

Data (15)

A woman's words to Majd about his sister:
أمي ماذَا تعرّفِينَ عَنْ لَيْلَى؟
(Mother... What can you tell me about Layla's activities?)
ماتت بين يديك وتسألني ماذَا اعرف عنها؟ تبأ لك إن أردت إجابات انظر تحت سرير
(Your sister died in your hands!!! And you come here to ask about her past? Damn you! If you want answers, go back and look under her bed.)

(Movie "Alephia 2053" Scene 00:15:57)

This utterance shows that Majd feels extremely bad. The speaker uses insults, mockery, and commands to express anger, blame Majd for Layla's death, and send him away. The statement conveys information and is meant to hurt and demean Majd emotionally. The phrase "تبأ لك" (damn you) is an insult that expresses a curse and anger. The accusation "دم اخْتَكْ فِي رَقْبَتِكْ" (your sister's blood is on your neck) is a mocking remark that blames Majd for his sister's death, making him feel guilty and disgraceful. The command "اَغْرِبْ عَنْ وَجْهِي" (get away from my face) also demonstrates insult and rejection.

DISCUSSION

The research findings indicate that the most dominant form of linguistic impoliteness in movie Alephia 2053 is face attack, followed by face threat, Face Attack, face play, and carelessness. This distribution pattern is not coincidental but reflects the ideological and power structures that underpin the movie's narrative.

The high frequency of face-attacking utterances reveals that communication within the movie is shaped by a deeply authoritarian landscape, where verbal abuse, humiliation, and degradation are dominant strategies for maintaining control. In the totalitarian regime portrayed in Alephia 2053, power is enforced not only through physical violence but also through symbolic and verbal domination over individuals' identities and dignity. This aligns with Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of Face-Threatening Acts (FTA), in which impoliteness strategies are not merely violations of politeness norms but function as tools of psychological subjugation.

Meanwhile, the categories of face threat and face attack represent more implicit forms of intimidation and identity erasure, yet they remain pragmatically effective. These forms of impoliteness reflect extreme hierarchical relationships, where the dominant party controls the narrative and minimizes the subordinate's right to expression. This reinforces the notion that impoliteness in the movie is not simply a linguistic deviation but a discursive power strategy.

The categories of face play and carelessness, though less frequent, serve as markers of resistance or subtle critiques of authority. For instance, the use of sarcastic humor or mockery disguised as banter reflects how certain characters challenge authority without engaging in direct confrontation.

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These strategies function to undermine the legitimacy of dominant discourse while still operating within a repressive communicative space. In this context, Culpeper's (1996) theory of impoliteness as power negotiation becomes relevant, framing impoliteness not merely as norm violation but as a reflection of power dynamics and identity construction.

Overall, the distribution of linguistic impoliteness forms in this movie supports the assumption that in repressive systems, language becomes a primary instrument for instilling fear, erasing resistance, and embedding ideology. This analysis demonstrates that impoliteness is not merely an interpersonal expression, but a structural mechanism for establishing and sustaining power both in fictional worlds and in real-life contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the movie *Alephia 2053* contains various forms of linguistic impoliteness, carelessness, face play, face degradation, face threat, and Face attack which reflect the dynamics of power relations and ideological conflict. Among these, face degradation appears as the most dominant form, indicating the intensity of aggressive communication among the characters. Theoretically, this study validates and extends the integrated framework of Bousfield, Terkourafi, and Locher within the context of mediated Arab political fiction, demonstrating that the dominance of face aggravation serves as a linguistic indicator of structural oppression and ideological resistance rather than merely interpersonal conflict, thereby expanding the contribution of impoliteness theory to contemporary pragmatic studies.

The findings indicate that linguistic impoliteness in *Alephia 2053* functions not only as an aggressive communicative strategy but also as an ideological mechanism for constructing power relations, resistance, and a dystopian atmosphere. Thus, this research broadens the understanding of face theory by validating and developing the integrated Bousfield, Terkourafi, and Locher framework within the context of Arab political cinematic discourse. The study further confirms that face aggravation can serve as a linguistic marker of structural oppression and social control, enriching pragmatic inquiry into the social functions of impoliteness in fictional media.

However, the findings also indicate the existence of dimensions of impoliteness that are not fully accommodated by the Bousfield, Terkourafi, and Locher framework, such as complex irony, subtle emotional manipulation, and strategic silence as forms of passive impoliteness. This limitation opens opportunities for further research employing Relevance Theory to examine implicature and hidden meanings in irony, as well as multimodal pragmatics to analyze nonverbal aspects and strategic silence in cinematic media. Such approaches are considered more suitable for uncovering the implicit layers of impoliteness, while also deepening the understanding of how power, ideology, and resistance are represented through indirect communicative strategies.

Overall, this research makes a significant contribution to pragmatic studies by demonstrating that movies particularly those set in political dystopias such as *Alephia 2053* are not merely spaces of aesthetic representation but complex arenas of linguistic interaction that sharply reflect social and ideological conflict. Understanding impoliteness strategies from a pragmatic perspective plays a crucial role in revealing how language operates as a tool for the construction, maintenance, and resistance of power within mediated political discourse.

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