

Impoliteness in British and Lebanese Comic Anthologies



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Abstract

Despite the importance of the non-verbal aspect in the realisation and interpretation of impoliteness, studies that tackle impoliteness in its multimodal fullness are rather rare. This dissertation around the multimodal realisation of impoliteness in comics is an attempt to remedy this gap. It specifically explores the forms and functions of impoliteness in British and Lebanese comic anthologies, thereby also looking into potential country-specific practices and preferences. In doing so, it addresses a secondary aim of the research, which is to gauge the applicability of the adopted impoliteness model in a multimodal medium in two disparate contexts. Informed mainly by the integrative pragmatics approach and a cognitive-based multimodal approach to the study of comics, the study focuses on the inter-character interactions that may have elicited an evaluation of impoliteness among any of the participant-characters or readers/analysts. Similarities in the realisation of impoliteness in the two countries' comics are noted, and differences and areas of interest are highlighted and examined through a cultural lens. A number of non-verbal features accompanying impoliteness behaviours are shown to occur with a frequency that suggests that they have become conventionalised for impoliteness and are an important part of the contexts that constitute impoliteness. Moreover, while serving as a source of affective release and creative entertainment, impoliteness in comics is also frequently revealed to be a resource for challenging and renegotiating the characters' power dynamics and social identities. Lastly, the aptness of the adopted impoliteness model at guiding the analysis of impoliteness phenomena in a previously unexplored medium and context is substantiated.

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation has been composed solely by myself, and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own. I also declare that the thesis is no more than 70,000 words in length including quotes, tables and footnotes, but excluding the front matter and references.

August, 13, 2018

Lina Mourad Sakr

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Studies focusing on impoliteness in its own right, rather than as a failed case of politeness or the poor relation of it, picked up some momentum with Culpeper's (1996) "Towards an anatomy of impoliteness." The last eight years in particular have witnessed significant developments in the field (Culpeper, 2015a, p. 246), leading to a plurality of theoretical, often clashing, stances and definitions, though each with valuable insights. The approach adopted in this study, integrative pragmatics (section 2.2), captures the bulk of this pluralistic legacy, enabling a multi-faceted study of impoliteness events in their entirety—form, function, and context—from both the participant/user and reader/analyst perspectives. Additionally, the object of study chosen, comics, is a genre that combines text as well as "a carefully crafted interplay of contextual signs and the body postures and facial expressions of characters" (Kindborg & McGee, 2007, p. 118). And so building on the integrative approach and the multimodal affordances of the object of study, this study will attempt to explore how pragmatic forms, functions and contexts associate and interact in achieving impoliteness in comics. This exploration also has a comparative aspect to it, as impoliteness is compared in and across the periodical comic anthologies of two countries, Britain and Lebanon.

1.1 Thesis Rationale: Why a Study of Impoliteness in Comics?

The nature of comics makes them a fitting medium for the study of impoliteness. First, comics provide a rich, multimodal context for the depiction of interactions and events. In addition to the linguistic component, the visual component of comics allows an infinite potential for meaning-making combinations and variations. Backgrounds, panel shapes, texture, lines, cartooning, lettering style, colouring and colour saturation, pictures, words, balloons, pictographs, pictorial runes—all integrate to construct a multi-sensory complex reality, complete with suggestions of sound, movement, and emotions.

In addition, because comics involve the "static representation of something dynamic" (Kindborg and McGee, 2007, p. 103), they enable the close examination of unfolding interactional dynamics. Also by encapsulating certain positions, gestures, and expressions, the comic panels further allow the freezing and possible scrutiny of normally

fleeting and elusive expressions, emotions and actions. Furthermore, comics realise attitudes, emotions, and states of mind in a hyperbolic, exaggerated form by employing the cartoon style to picture-making to simulate and convey human reality in an amplified way. As a result, comics act like a magnifying glass in the study of interactional meanings. Moreover, through their reliance on graphic art and composition, comics may effectively render intensification, which is very important in the study of impoliteness where “the intensity of the message is key” (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 140). In short, comics provide a rich, multimodal fictional context, which often extends to the pre and post impoliteness event, thereby providing a wealth of contextual clues that may help disambiguate pragmatic meaning and allow the observer to make inferences with a higher degree of certainty.

On the other hand, comics have often been perceived as “an escape from rules, from authority” (Heggie, 2012, p. 265). The comic’s subversive nature is best portrayed in Gravett and Dunning (2014, p. 12) who underline their potentially annoying, antagonising nature, their propensity for humour that may “lurch over the boundaries of acceptability,” and their historical knack for outraging “the establishment, moral guardians and other vested interests.” In fact, it is this deliberately offensive aspect of comics, in which not surprisingly both comic creators and readers seem to bask, which partly prompted the present study of impoliteness in comics.

1.2 Research Questions and Aims

This study examines impoliteness in the British and Lebanese periodical comic anthologies of the early 21st century. It specifically seeks to address the following research questions:

1. What forms does impoliteness take in British and Lebanese comic anthologies?
2. What functions does impoliteness serve in British and Lebanese comic anthologies?
3. To what extent does Culpeper’s impoliteness model (2011a/2015b) account for impoliteness in British and Lebanese comics?

In other words, this dissertation explores impoliteness behaviours in their forms, functions and contexts in the comic anthologies of Lebanon and Britain, my home

country and my country of study. This is done through a mixed-methods approach, which, in line with integrative pragmatics, is empirically based. Though the overall analysis is qualitative in orientation, quantitative explorations of the observed impoliteness forms and patterns in comics mainly serve to address the first research question and complement and enrich the entire study. In addition, they provide the bases for comparison within and across the two countries' datasets.

The second research question about the functions of impoliteness is mainly addressed through the qualitative analyses of selected impoliteness events from British and Lebanese comic anthologies. These probe potentially interesting impoliteness phenomena flagged for further investigation in the quantitative part of the study and/or in the impoliteness literature.

Lastly, the third research question is about the extent of the applicability of Culpeper's (2011a/2015b) impoliteness model to the multimodal comic genre as well as to impoliteness data from a different culture, that of Lebanon. This research question is actually more procedural in nature and largely a function of the outcome of the first two questions.

1.3 Thesis Contributions

Impoliteness transcends the verbal in its nature. It has been conceived of as a behaviour (Culpeper, 2005, p. 38; Kienpointner, 1997 & 2008; Locher & Bousfield, 2008, p. 3), a pragmatic act -- a face threatening one to be precise -- (Beebe, 1995, p. 159; Bousfield, 2008, p. 72; Brown & Levinson, 1978/87), communicative strategies (Culpeper et al., 2003, p. 1546), and an attitude (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 23; Spencer-Oatey, 2005b, p. 97). All necessarily involve verbal as well as non-verbal communication acting in tandem. But while Culpeper (2011a, p. 151) does underline the importance of the non-verbal aspect of communication, he admits that "it is still an area that receives relatively little attention in communication and pragmatics studies. . . (and that) non-verbal visual cues, even more than oral/aural cues, are neglected in politeness and impoliteness research." Some attempts have been made to study certain non-verbal aspects of impoliteness, mainly prosody (Culpeper, 2005, 2009, 2011a; Culpeper & Holmes, 2013; Culpeper et al., 2003), gestures and prosody (McKinnon & Prieto, 2014; Nadeu & Prieto,

2011), and facial expressions and head movements (Haugh & Bousfield, 2012). However, attempts to study the impoliteness event as a cohesive multimodal ensemble have been scarcer. The present study, which studies multimodal realisations of impoliteness in comics, is an attempt in that direction. It therefore directly addresses the “growing interest among pragmaticians in multimodal data and the analysis of multimodal aspects of (im)politeness” (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, p. 775). More specifically, it sets out to unveil the linguistic and non-linguistic forms deployed in the realisation of impoliteness in comics.

Contributions to impoliteness theory also extend to the examination of aspects of impoliteness that have been identified in the literature as areas deserving further exploration. These include an in-depth study of a number of implicational impoliteness events, particularly context-driven and form-driven ones. They also encompass the analysis of impoliteness through mimicry and of particular impoliteness patterns such as sequencing and layering. Moreover, special attention is given to the multi-layered and overlapping functions of impoliteness as they unfurl in context. More particularly, the role of impoliteness as power wielding and socially disruptive, and as achieving dramatic entertainment and contributing to identity construction is explored in context. In addition, the creative realisation of impoliteness – particularly in the multimodal and multilingual contexts examined – is explored in detail.

In fact, as a medium which prides itself on being a vehicle for the anarchic, irreverent, and anti-establishment (section 2.3), comics are expected to abound in the socially disruptive, “antagonistic or confrontational communication” that is the material of impoliteness (Culpeper, 1996, p. 350). However, in the same way that the rich multimodal and reportedly irreverent nature of comics is expected to provide a rich medium for a study of impoliteness, a better understanding of the realisation of impoliteness in comics is also expected to benefit comic studies. Indeed, as will be explained in sections 2.5 and 2.6, impoliteness may be important for the comic narrative in its potential to generate conflict and contribute to character and plot development (Culpeper, 2005, p.46). It may also be a source of dramatic entertainment (*ibid.*) and of dramatic tension and humour (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, p. 759). This is highly important for comics, which are notorious for their entertaining function. Similarly,

impoliteness can also feed a streak of antagonism that often accompanies humour in comics (Gravett & Dunning, 2014, p. 12).

A further expectation from this study is a contribution to the growing body of cross-cultural insights into impoliteness. This may be particularly interesting in the British-Lebanese case, which to my knowledge, has not been approached yet. Examining the similarities and differences in the forms, functions, and contexts of impoliteness across the proverbial East-West divide is particularly interesting. In addition, in exploring impoliteness in fiction written in a language other than English, this investigation will contribute to moving impoliteness studies away from a pure Anglo-centric focus (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2016, p. 780). On the other hand, from the Lebanese side, this study is expected to provide further insight into the realisation and role of impoliteness in multilingual contexts. More importantly, though, it is expected to lay the blocks for the pragmatic view of Lebanese impoliteness. Indeed, while this research is strongly grounded in the data obtained from the fictional participants' use of impoliteness in what is often seen as a folk, popular culture literary genre (Chute, 2008; Gardner, 2012; Kukkonen, 2013), it also attempts to broaden the Lebanese academic perception of impoliteness beyond its current reductive yet prevalent understanding as "moral and spiritual qualities" (Thomas, 1983, p. 106). It therefore tries to also take it into the realms of second order (section 2.1) analysis of the socio-culturally situated multimodal as well as "linguistic encoding of certain attitudes and values" (ibid., p. 106).

In addition to the contributions to theory discussed in this section, another potential interest of this study may be in the mixed-methods approach adopted in the examination of impoliteness. While having the potential to reveal the impoliteness profile characteristic of the comic genre in its typical distribution and frequency, such an approach also enables the scrutiny of variations, and more broadly, of the subtleties of impoliteness phenomena.

1.4 Thesis Structure

The topic under investigation is multifaceted since, in addition to delving into the heart of impoliteness theory and comic studies, it also needs to take account of the relevant theories in multimodality, embodied emotion, language ideology, social identity,

translanguaging, and the cross-cultural dimension. However, given the limited scope of this dissertation, the literature review is by necessity limited to the aspects of the study important for the understanding and analysis of the impoliteness behaviours tackled.

The dissertation is organised in eight chapters. The first chapter introduces the research topic and the rationale behind its choice. It then outlines the study's aims, contributions and structure. The second chapter discusses (im)politeness theories as they evolved, then goes into the detail of the integrative approach to impoliteness adopted in the research. It further examines key impoliteness aspects, forms, and functions, before looking more closely at impoliteness in fiction, the object of the present research. The discussion around impoliteness ends with a focus on the different perceptions of impoliteness in general first and then more particularly in the two cultures that are the larger context of the study, Britain and Lebanon. Since this discussion is necessarily grounded in the socio-cultural contexts of these two cultures, these contexts are discussed in that section too.

Chapter two revolves around comic studies and focuses on the phenomenon of closure that is of substantial import to this study. It then discusses the approach adopted in the study of impoliteness in comics and explores the multimodal language of comics in its meaning potentials. It proceeds with an overview of British and Lebanese comics, and includes some insights obtained from Lebanese comic writers in an attempt to bridge the gap in the literature around Lebanese comics. Chapter three discusses the methodology the study is built upon. It first explains the rationale for data selection and presents the dataset that is analysed. It also explains the importance of opting for a mixed-methods approach in addressing the research aims and explains the procedure that is followed in the data collection and analysis phase. Importantly too, it discusses the analytical framework adopted and describes the data collection instrument. Lastly, it ends with an explanation of the translation policy followed and a look at the aspects in the researcher's background that may be relevant to the study.

Chapter five presents and discusses the outcome of the quantitative analysis of the data. In the first phase, the frequency, distribution and variation of impoliteness behaviours in the comics are examined to get a sense of the potential general profile of impoliteness in comic anthologies. In the second phase, the emerging impoliteness profile

is analysed and compared across the two countries' datasets, and departures from the established norm are examined, while possible interpretations for the divergences are suggested. Distinctive usage patterns are also probed. In the third phase of Chapter five, comic-specific aspects of impoliteness representation are considered, namely impoliteness-related onomatopoeia and pragmatic noises and the non-verbal aspects of impoliteness. These aspects, both the visual and compositional, are examined in detail in terms of density and meaning potential in the context of impoliteness behaviours. Comparisons are then made between these non-verbal aspects of impoliteness in the British and Lebanese comics, and interpretations are suggested.

Chapters six and seven have similar objectives and follow a parallel structure in the handling of the data from the two countries. A central aim of these chapters is to qualitatively probe the workings of impoliteness in context. The focus is on the more subtle and sophisticated forms of impoliteness, and the aspects of impoliteness that can only be unveiled and analysed through an in-depth qualitative exploration. Another important aim of these two chapters is the exploration of the functions of impoliteness in the data examined. Consequently, first, selected impoliteness events from each anthology are thoroughly examined. Then a broader perspective is taken with regard to the role of impoliteness in the comic anthologies of Britain and Lebanon, with a special focus on the distinctiveness in the creative realisation of impoliteness in the two countries' comics.

Finally, Chapter 8 concludes the study by revisiting the research questions and summarising the main findings and achievements with regard to the study of impoliteness in British and Lebanese comic anthologies. It also discusses the study's limitations and proposes some leads for future research.

1.5 Thesis Conventions

The thesis conventions adopted are mainly related to transcriptions, the use of abbreviations, and the translation procedure adopted. To make transcribed comic excerpts easily distinguishable from the main text, they have been set in uppercase Arial Unicode MS ten point. Abbreviations have been largely avoided, with the exception of the use of CIF for Conventionalised Impoliteness Formulae (section 2.4.1 onwards). Lastly, the translation policy adopted was outlined in section 4.5 of the Data and Method chapter.

Chapter 2 Impoliteness

(Im)politeness studies have lately garnered a substantial appeal within pragmatics as well as across various disciplines. They have been the object of a wide-ranging and multidisciplinary “proliferation of models, approaches, and applications” (Culpeper, Haugh, & Kádár, 2017, p. 6). Given its limited scope, this literature review cannot offer a comprehensive review of the study of (im)politeness over the years and across disciplines. It rather attempts to set the scene by giving a brief overview of the main approaches adopted in the study of (im)politeness over the years along with their focal points. It then tackles in detail the approach adopted in the present study, the integrative approach (see section 2.2), along with the (im)politeness aspects that have a direct bearing on the analytical framework used.

2.1 Key Approaches to (Im)politeness Research

There are two broad approaches to the study of (im)politeness, the social-norm view and the pragmatic view of (im)politeness (Culpeper, 2009b). Of these two, Fraser (1990, p. 221) argues that it is the social-norm view that has traditionally encapsulated lay people’s common-sense understanding of politeness in English-speaking cultures, and through its close association with good manners, provided material for etiquette manuals. There is evidence that is also the case in the Lebanese culture (section 2.7.2). The social-norm view of (im)politeness is mainly about judgements of (non-) compliance with a society’s “particular set of social norms consisting of more or less explicit rules that prescribe a certain behaviour, a state of affairs, or a way of thinking in a context” (ibid., p. 220). This view picked up some momentum with the proponents of the discursive approach (discussed below) in the 2000s. It is also currently further invigorated by middle ground approaches and a recent interest spike in impoliteness and morality (e.g. Bicchieri, 2014; Caffi, 2015; Culpeper, 2008, 2010; Kádár, 2016; Kádár & Haugh, 2013; Spencer-Oatey, 2005).

The second of the two broad approaches to politeness, pragmatic (im)politeness, also known as “the classic” view of (im)politeness, is tightly associated with the first of the three main waves of (im)politeness research identified by Culpeper (e.g. 2011b). This

traditional view is mainly concerned with the use of communicative strategies in achieving social harmony (Culpeper, 2011b, p. 392). Building on the classic pragmatic theories of Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1969) Speech Act Theory and Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, this first wave branches into two broad directions, a maxim-based view and a face-based one (ibid., p.407). Whereas Lakoff (1973) and Leech (1977, 1983) advocate a maxim-based politeness principle, Brown and Levinson's (1978/1987) foundational work, along with the subsequent frameworks it inspired, endorse a face-based view of (im)politeness, encompassing notions of face, face threatening acts, and facework (ibid., pp. 395-6). This classic pragmatic view of (im)politeness is mainly driven by the observer-researcher's scientific perspective rather than the user's. It therefore constitutes second-order impoliteness, a concept advanced by Watts (2003, p. 4) to make the distinction between first-order, or "'folk' interpretations of (im)politeness," and second-order, or "(im)politeness as a concept in a sociological theory." The classic view also generally adopts a macro scope with a claim at a well-delineated theory of politeness purportedly with a universal reach, as is clear from the title of Brown and Levinson's 1978 original work, "Universals in Language Usage: Politeness Phenomena," republished as a book in 1987, *Politeness. Some Universals in Language Use*. The focus of this classic view is mainly the speaker's intended meaning, believed to be encapsulated in rather stable, uncontested linguistic forms of (im)politeness (Culpeper & Hardaker, 2017, p. 207).

The second wave of (im)politeness, the discursive or postmodern approach, is mainly associated with the works of Eelen (2001), Mills (2003) and Watts (2003) (Culpeper & Hardaker, 2017, p. 207). It came in the wake of increasing criticism and dissatisfaction with the Brown and Levinson (1978/1987) politeness model for its reductive take on Goffman's concept of face, its disregard of users' common-sense understanding of politeness, its unverified claim to universality, its speaker-oriented bias, and its failure to adequately take on board context and effectively account for impoliteness phenomena (Culpeper, 2011b, p. 406). This second wave approach leans towards the socio-cultural view and is concerned with social norms as understood and/or constructed by the participants in a given context (ibid., p. 393). It is therefore a first-order perspective, a lay person's understanding of (im)politeness rather than the

analyst's. It posits that "the very concept of impoliteness itself and its definition is subject to discursive struggle" (Culpeper & Hardaker, 2017, p. 207) and focuses on situated and emerging evaluations of (im)politeness rather than on pre-defined concepts (Culpeper, 2011b, p. 410). Indeed, Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch and Sifianou (2017, p. 230) point out that within the discursive approach, a crucial argument is that "a more adequate approach to (im)politeness is constructionist rather rationalist." They therefore describe it as a bottom-up approach as opposed to the top-down approach of the classic approach to impoliteness (*ibid.*, p. 227). In its focus on the users' (im)politeness understanding, the discursive approach rather leans towards the hearer and so does not view intentionality as central to an evaluation of (im)politeness (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 19; Haugh, 2013, p. 53).

However, the discursive pendulum may have swung too far in reaction to the first wave approach, occasioning some analytical impasses. The constraints of the constructionist discursive epistemology that clearly favours micro-level qualitative analyses and steers clear of a predictive theory of (im)politeness (Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch, 2010, p. 538) have been criticised by many (im)politeness scholars (e.g. Bousfield, 2010b; Culpeper, 2011b; Haugh, 2007; Mullany, 2008; Terkourafi, 2005). Indeed, these inevitably lead to a self-imposed impasse that prevents any potential extrapolation of claims beyond the confines of the micro-contexts examined. Besides, some purist assumptions associated with a first-order discursive view, such as the claim that only lay participants can make (im)politeness judgments on the exchanges they engage in (e.g. Mills, 2003), are "ultimately as self-defeating as a purely second-order approach" (Bousfield, 2010a, p. 115).

Consequently, more moderate positions have lately emerged, even among staunch discursive scholars (e.g. Mills, 2017). Criticising the exclusivity of a participant's (im)politeness interpretation, Mullany (2008) argues that researchers and analysts with a full, in-depth understanding of the context of an interaction are also fully capable of making informed (im)politeness evaluations related to that interaction. Bousfield (2010a, pp. 115-6) goes even further, arguing that an informed analyst's reading is not only possible and justifiable, but also essential. To do this, he builds on Holmes and Schnurr's (2005) argument that folk participants may not be equipped with the proper terminology to explain interactional phenomena and further suggests that they may also be lacking the

necessary conceptual understanding for that interpretive task.

The rejection of the rigidity of a purist approach, be it a purely first-order discursive approach or a classic pragmatic one, gave way to a middle ground approach, which is precisely what the third wave of (im)politeness research is about (Culpeper & Hardaker, 2017, p. 208). This view is rapidly gaining ground and is endorsed by eminent (im)politeness scholars like Bousfield (2008, 2010), Cashman (2008), Culpeper (e.g. 2015a, 2011a), Locher and Bousfield (2008), and Mullany (2008). Third-wave approaches also encompass the relational approach, the frame-based approach, and the interactional approach. As a matter of fact, some of the insights of the relational approach will be drawn upon in this study as part of the integrative approach adopted (section 2.2), and so they are briefly outlined in the following paragraphs.

Though the relational approach is tackled from different angles by its main advocates Holmes and Schnurr (2005), Locher and Watts (2005), and Spencer-Oatey (2000 onwards), it is nonetheless essentially focused on interpersonal relations. Within this approach, “relational work is defined as the work people invest in negotiating their relationships in interaction” (Locher & Watts, 2005, p. 11 cited in Culpeper, 2011b, p. 22). Locher (2004, p. 51) uses the term ‘relational work’ interchangeably with ‘face-work’, but clearly opts for ‘relational work’ for its more apt reflection of the interactional aspect (Culpeper, 2011b, p. 22). What this briefly debated stance actually reveals is that relational work also revolves around the notion of face, albeit a broad face concept as originally conceived by Goffman (1967) and one that is situated and discursively constructed (*ibid.*, p. 22). It also encompasses notions of appropriateness and markedness or salience as key notions for (im)politeness (*ibid.*, pp. 22-3).

Within the broader relational approach, Spencer-Oatey’s rapport management framework (2000/2008, p. 13) conceptualising face and rapport in “the management of harmony-disharmony among people” is encompassing in its dual face and sociality rights orientations. Different aspects of this framework will be discussed in the related sections of this chapter. Broadly speaking, however, Spencer-Oatey’s (*ibid.*) rapport management framework involves the management of three interrelated elements, face, sociality rights, and interactional goals. She clarifies these as follows:

Face management, as the term indicates, involves the management of face

sensitivities (...). The management of sociality rights and obligations, on the other hand, involves the management of social expectancies, which I define as 'fundamental social *entitlements* that a person effectively claims for him/herself in his/ her interactions with others'. . . Interactional goals refer to the specific task and/or relational goals that people may have when they interact with each other (Spencer-Oatey, 2000/2008, pp. 13-4).

The interplay of these interconnected elements can actually steer the rapport management in interpersonal relations along four different orientations: enhancement, maintenance, neglect, or challenge (Spencer-Oatey, 2000/2008, pp. 13-4).

In contrast to older approaches to (im)politeness, third-wave approaches have an encompassing sweep and take account of both speaker and hearer, the context of the interaction, and the relative stability of meaning of certain linguistic forms (Culpeper & Hardaker, 2017, p. 208). Additionally, third-wave researchers demonstrate an awareness that “the second-order theories are necessarily informed by first-order notions” (Locher & Bousfield, 2008, p. 5) and that both are essential for informed judgments about (im)politeness.

2.2 An “Integrative” Approach to Impoliteness

The integrative pragmatics adopted in this study subscribes to the third-wave middle ground approaches just discussed. It is ‘integrative’ in its combination of aspects from both traditional and discursive approaches; consequently, the integrative pragmatics approach yields insights that are not captured by any one theoretical stance on its own. For instance, while recognizing that meanings do emerge in interaction (a first order approach stance), integrative pragmatics also acknowledges the key role of “relatively stable, conventional meanings” (a second order approach stance) that are at the basis of the construction of these meanings (Culpeper, 2015a, p. 244). Indeed, as Spencer-Oatey (2005, p. 342) suggests, “the strategic use of language depends on both regularity and variability; variability often only takes on strategic meaning against the backdrop of regularity.”

The integrative slant has clearly gained ground lately. Locher (2015, p. 8) explicitly argues in favour of the creative combination of different methods and theories, even across disciplines, when a particular research pursuit lends to it. Culpeper (2015a, p. 246) sees his own work on impoliteness, particularly his seminal 2011 monograph, as an

example of such an integrative, middle ground approach. Nevertheless, the label “integrative pragmatics” was only recently coined by Culpeper and Haugh (2014) to refer to an approach roughly encapsulated in the following schematic overview (Figure 1).

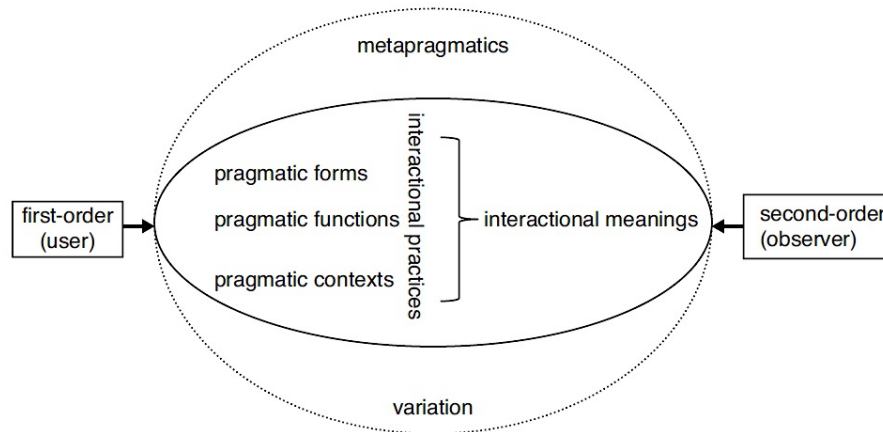


Figure 1. Overview of Integrative Pragmatics (Culpeper & Haugh, 2014, p. 267)

As can be seen from Figure 1, striving to bridge the perspectives of both users and analysts, integrative pragmatics takes interaction as its analytical focus (Culpeper, 2015a, p. 244). In Culpeper and Haugh’s (2014, p. 267) approach, however, interactional meaning is rather taken broadly and “refers to what is taken to be meaningful by participants in particular occasions of sequentially situated talk and conduct.” These include pragmatic meanings and acts and “the interpersonal relations, attitudes and evaluations they are (taken to be) instantiating” (ibid., p. 267).

Additionally, integrative pragmatics is characterized by the fact that it is “strongly empirical; it informs and is informed by engagement with the data” (ibid., p. 11). It therefore involves the close examination of the interactions that spur an understanding of impoliteness among either participants (i.e. comic characters) or the reader-analyst. All the elements of these interactional practices, pragmatic forms, functions, and contexts (Figure 1), are studied to examine how they interrelate in the production of interactional meanings that constitute instances of “impolite” language use. Then the role these interactions play in instantiating and shaping the dynamics that underlie impoliteness are studied.

Lastly, it can be posited that the combination of aspects from both traditional and discursive approaches gives the integrative (pragmatics) approach a socio-cognitive thrust (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 23). An integrative pragmatics approach would then assume a dual cognitive and interactional orientation. In fact, the cognitive element underlies all the phases of the interactional process and largely determines the choice of all the pragmatic sign-vehicles and their combinations. Not only does it contribute to producing pragmatic meaning, but it also plays a major role in interpreting it.

2.3 Aspects of Impoliteness

This section tackles some of the closely interconnected aspects that underlie social interactions that are believed to play a key role in bringing about an evaluation of impoliteness. These are face and identity; social conventions, norms and rules of conduct; affiliation, ideologies and social power; emotions; and inherent (im)politeness, context, and conventionalisation. Though these will be discussed in separate sections, they are clearly overlapping, tightly interconnected aspects as they all feed into one another and contribute to either upholding or disrupting the existing social organization.

2.3.1 Face and identity. Back in 1967, Goffman (pp. 12, 19, 44) argued that face is “the main principle of the ritual order” and that “maintenance of face is a condition of interaction.” He also extensively discussed how a threat or damage to one’s face disrupts the social ritual equilibrium, which then requires an amount of face-work – actions taken to counteract perceived face-threats – to restore it. The underlying assumption here seems to be that people are generally satisfied with the established social organisation and will do everything in their power to behave in a socially appropriate way to maintain its balance. It may follow then that in such a context, the people who are dissatisfied with it could in fact resort to face threat or attack as a means of destabilizing that organisation to ultimately renegotiate and reshape it. So impoliteness brought about by some kind of face-threat could actually be the expression of deliberate non-conformism and defiance with the aim of disrupting the status quo and bringing about some kind of change in the established social organization (see section 2.5).

But what does the notion of face exactly entail? Initially, Goffman (1967, p. 5) described face as “an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes.” It is in all likelihood this delineation that was at the basis of Brown and Levinson’s (1978/1987, pp. 2, 61) notion of ‘face’ as “individuals’ self-esteem” and “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself.” The ensuing Brown and Levinson’s (im)politeness model and the numerous ones their study inspired were faulted for having reduced the notion of face to an “aprioristic attribute, something that people ‘have’” as opposed to a view of face as “emergent within the interactional order” (Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch, 2013, pp. 24-5). This criticism heavily relies on Goffman’s (1967, p. 5) broader description of face as “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact.” This description and Goffman’s (1967, p. 7) subsequent remark that a person’s face “is diffusely located in the flow of events” are taken as evidence by the classic model critics that face was initially rightfully posited to be interactionally constructed, and so they sought to reinstate that overlooked dimension.

Face-to-face encounters or interactions are therefore seen as the site of discursive struggles where face aspects are ratified, challenged, negotiated and constructed. By putting a person’s claimed social attributes and her/his judgment of self-worth to the test, they may lead to face gain, face maintenance, face threat, or face loss. The latter, face loss or damage, is experienced in the case of an interactional clash of expectations challenging or undermining the claimed social attributes (Spencer-Oatey, 2007, p. 644). Additionally, Spencer-Oatey (2005b, p. 106) notes that face is not only an individual construct, but a collective one as well, pertaining to any group an individual may claim some affiliation to. Group face sensitivities are then those “self-aspects of a person’s identity that are derived from membership in a collective or group” (*ibid.*, p. 107). A perceived threat or damage to one’s group face may potentially give rise to an evaluation of impoliteness in the same way that threat or damage to one’s individual face or sociality rights does (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 47; Spencer-Oatey, 2005b, pp. 335-337).

As may have become obvious by now, the discussion of face by (im)politeness scholars invariably slips into a discussion of self, self-esteem, self-image, self-aspects and identity. This can be seen even more clearly in Spencer-Oatey’s (2000/2008, p. 14)

observation that “face is closely related to a person’s identity or self-concept: self as an individual (individual identity), self as a group member (group or collective identity) and self in relationship with others (relational identity).” As a matter of fact, Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch and Sifianou (2017, p. 230) argue that the notions of face, identity and politeness have always been implicitly linked in the (im)politeness literature, and that this connection has simply been made more explicit in the wake of the discursive turn. They cite Locher’s (2008) argument that much is to be gained from equating face with identity (*ibid.*, p. 238) and note that even Goffman ultimately swapped the term face for identity in his work (*ibid.*, p. 229).

Attempts to tease out face from identity have revolved around their debated attributes: social versus individual, relational versus static, durable/enduring versus punctual/fleeting, affective (Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch & Sifianou, 2017). However, based on an extensive literature review, Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch (2013) and Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch and Sifianou (2017) show that the purported distinctions are widely disputed and not as clear-cut as they were initially assumed to be. Consequently, Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch (2013, p. 25) suggests that face and identity may be mutually embedded. Empirical explorations by Joseph (2013) and Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch and Sifianou (2017) lend further weight to this view, namely by positing that identity and face are co-constitutive concepts that are difficult to dissociate both theoretically and in practice (Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch & Sifianou, 2017, pp. 238-240).

In parallel, emerging research applying identity models has substantiated the interconnectedness not just between the notions of face and identity, but also between identity construction and (im)politeness (*ibid.*, pp. 238, 240-1). For instance, using various identity construction models in the analysis of (im)politeness, Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch et al. (2010) and Dobs (2013) argue, “impoliteness and identity are intrinsically related and co-constructed in co-constitutive processes.” Similarly, Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch (2009) and Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch et al. (2013) show that attempts at identity building that are disputed and unverified in interaction result in impoliteness (*ibid.*, p. 240). Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch and Sifianou (2017, p. 248) therefore conclude, “solidarity/deference and verbal aggression, notions broadly related to (im)politeness, can be tied to processes of identity construction, functioning as ideological indirect indexes of

identity construction.” More specifically, they (2017, p. 228) show the importance of (im)politeness and aggression in othering practices, particularly when establishing the out-group. Of course, this research avenue has only recently come to the fore and much remains to be done in that area. Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch and Sifianou (2017, p. 248) advocate its pursuit as they strongly believe that insights from identity construction models can greatly benefit the study of (im)politeness, especially in its role in the construction of individual and social identity.

2.3.2 Social conventions, norms and rules of conduct. Social conventions, norms and rules of conduct are intertwined concepts that are intimately associated with obligations and expectations. Social conventions may be conceptualised as a joint acceptance involving a joint commitment among a group of people, which may “inform their thoughts, talk, actions, and interactions” (Gilbert, 2008, p. 15). Once established, conventions engender expectations (Searle, 2006, p. 30). These expectations are then carried on to the operational social norms of the group, described by Anderson (2000, p. 17) as a “standard of behaviour shared by a social group, commonly understood by its members as authoritative or obligatory for them” (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3239). Social norms also give participants a right to expectations from others, who are seen as having an obligation to comply with the shared standards of behaviours (Bicchieri, 2014, p. 211). Indeed, as Goffman (1967, p. 49) says, “what is one man’s obligation will often be another’s expectation.” These obligations, which may be associated with behavioural expectations, are viewed by Spencer-Oatey (2007, p. 652) as forming a person’s sociality rights.

Social norms in turn give rise to rules of conduct (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3239), which Goffman (1967, p. 48) defines as “a guide for action”. These are then arranged into codes governing fundamental social acts and interactions related to laws, morality and ethics, as well as ceremonial behaviour related to etiquette (*ibid.*, p. 55). Naturally, these codes and rules of conduct generate certain obligations and expectations as argued by Goffman (*ibid.*, p. 49). In fact, these obligations and expectations generate social requirements that denounce behaviours regarded as impolite in rules of conduct; these “are a kind of metadiscourse articulated and imposed by institutions (e.g. schools, the

workplace, public service entities, government agencies) on various others, by adults on children, teachers on pupils, and so on. Such rules are part of our social morality” (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3239). Culpeper (ibid.) further argues that not only does the metadiscourse associated with rules proscribing purportedly impolite behaviours reflect a given group’s understandings of impoliteness, but that it also structures, nurtures, and elicits those understandings.

It is important to note that expectations about social appropriateness are not necessarily limited to the moral constraints of social norms; they can also stem from an individual’s past experiences in similar situations, which, though undoubtedly driven by those social norms, may still retain some degree of idiosyncrasy. Culpeper (2008, p. 23) thus argues that in addition to social norms, “experiential norms” also have the power to trigger expectations about appropriateness, though with diverging behavioural judgments. As opposed to social norms that emanate from social structures, Culpeper (2008, pp. 29, 41) suggests that experiential norms are frequency-based, emanate from a person’s total experiences, and therefore may vary from one individual to another. Experiential norms seem to develop in the same way social norms emerge as described by Southwood and Eriksson (2011, p. 212), that is, by acquiring “normative significance in people’s mind through familiarity and simple habituation.” Both social and experiential norms inform the rules of conduct and the interactants’ obligations and expectations in a given interaction, which, when not met may result in an evaluation of impoliteness.

2.3.3 Affiliation, ideologies and social power. Citing Gilbert (1989), Culpeper (2010, p. 3239) argues that a claim of affiliation or membership to a given group is a matter of identity and necessarily involves adherence to its jointly adopted social conventions or “group fiat” and acceptance of its norms. This is why “nonconforming behaviour, as indeed impoliteness often is, provokes strong reactions because it raises questions of relationships to others and also what kind of behaviour is appropriate given those relationships” (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3239). These reactions may then prove a good opportunity for other loyal community members to reaffirm their belonging to the group and the norms that constitute it through metalinguistic comments that aim to defend and support the community rules and denounce the impoliteness act (ibid.).

Group membership and one's positioning within a given community with its operational norms may also raise questions about ideologies, that is, "socially shared representations of groups" that "are the foundations of group attitudes and other beliefs" (van Dijk, 2006, p. 138). One such cluster of evaluative attitudes may be said to form impoliteness ideologies that contribute to defining and delimiting impolite behaviours; the resulting impoliteness metadiscourse is then both a reflection of the group's ideologies as well as a tool in the hands of the powerful members of the social group for sustaining those ideologies (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3240).

The issue of dominant ideologies is necessarily one related to social power. Culpeper, (2010, p. 3239) warns about the inequality between individuals within social groups as well as between different social groups in determining the operational social norms that constitute the group. He specifically argues that "impoliteness rules and punitive sanctions are unidirectional: they are imposed by the more powerful on the less" (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3239). Which is why acts of impoliteness are often rebellious, non-conformist behaviours meant to challenge and disrupt these normalized social conventions within a group, and in doing so defy the power hierarchies that impose and sustain them. Impoliteness in that sense becomes a tool to exercise power (section 2.5).

Indeed, adopting Wartenberg's (1990) action-environment constraint/restriction as a defining criterion of social power, Locher and Bousfield (2008, p. 8) argue that "impoliteness is an exercise of power as it has arguably always in some way an effect on one's addressees in that it alters the future action-environment of one's interlocutors." Concurring with this view, Culpeper (2008, p. 42) nevertheless cautions that this understanding of power is not static and one-sided, and that power is fluid and bound to shift sides and develop in the course of the interaction, which makes it necessary to study the whole impoliteness events. More importantly, "we need to consider whether power is acceded or challenged (with the possible consequence of a power struggle) or otherwise managed in interaction" (ibid., pp. 37-8).

2.3.4 Emotions. As discussed in the previous sections, impoliteness involves threats to one's individual or group face or identity and/or violations of the operational social norms. Naturally, such acts that run counter to expectations about social

appropriateness and considerateness inevitably trigger emotional responses among participants (e.g. Culpeper, 2011, 2013, 2015; Langlotz and Locher, 2013, 2017; Spencer-Oatey, 2005, 2007). Closely associated with affective sensitivity are issues of identity construction (Langlotz & Locher, 2017, p. 315) and the particularly vulnerable notion of face, since offences threatening someone's face tend to elicit strong emotional reactions and are particularly vulnerable (Spencer-Oatey, 2007, p. 644). Face-threatening impoliteness generally leads to a reaction leaning towards hurt while "rights-related" impoliteness, brought about by violations of social norms or rights, frequently leads to an angry reaction (Culpeper, 2011, p. 29; Culpeper, 2013, p. 6). Other negative emotions usually associated with offence besides anger and hurt include humiliation and outrage (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 436).

In fact, emotional reactions are so tightly associated with impoliteness events in general that these emotions function as indicators that offence has been taken (Culpeper, 2011, p. 255). This view supports and broadens the scope of Goffman's (1967, p. 23) observation in his discussion of the cycles of response to face-threats, namely that emotions such as anxiety and anger are an essential component of these response cycles, so much so that they "function as moves, and fit so precisely into the logic of the ritual game that it would seem difficult to understand them without it." Moreover, emotions are seen as a basic element in the cognitive evaluation that leads to the perception of (in)appropriateness (Langlotz & Locher, 2017, p. 315). They are also among the bases of Spencer-Oatey's (2005, p. 116) dynamic perceptions of rapport, particularly joy, surprise, anger, and sadness, along with their derivatives that include irritation, disapproval, frustration, disgust, shame, guilt, embarrassment and humiliation.

Lastly, emotions may also serve a more epistemological function in the middle-ground approach adopted. Indeed, similarly to metapragmatic comments, they may be seen as first-order input in their capacity as one way of "hear[ing] the voice of the participants" and gauging their reaction(s) (Spencer-Oatey, 2011, p. 3566). As such, they may provide a window to "emic judgments on relational work" (Langlotz & Locher, 2017, p. 315).

2.3.5 Context and conventionalisation. Broadly speaking, the process of allocating meaning is active and dynamic rather than predetermined (Thomas, 1995, p. 203) and pragmatic meanings are contextually generated and derived rather than inherent (Culpeper, 2009b). (Im)politeness is no exception as numerous scholars like Fraser and Nolen (1981), Fraser (1990), Locher (2006), Locher and Watts (2008) and Culpeper (2009b) state.

Culpeper (2011b, p. 21) credits the discursive (im)politeness turn with sparking the debate around the fact that a judgment of (im)politeness resides in the interactants' interpretation of the use of certain linguistic expressions in a given context rather than in the expressions themselves. However, he (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3232) also warns, "the current tendency to emphasize the context rather than linguistic form risks throwing the baby out with the bath-water." Indeed, while the view that meaning is organically constructed in the context of the interaction is an undisputable premise to a large number of linguists, so is the notion that language has a minimum degree of semantic stability since "it is difficult to see how communication could proceed without some shared conventions of meaning" (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 123). This position is shared by many prominent linguists such as Leech (1983), Fraser (1990), Culpeper (2009b, 2011, 2013), as well as Holtgraves (2005, p. 89) who posits, "people possess a schematic knowledge regarding language and its social implications, knowledge that exists independent of any occasion of use" (cited in Culpeper, 2011a, p. 125).

In fact, the view that, irrespective of the context of use, impoliteness may be more encoded in certain expressions than in others seems prevalent among ordinary people (Bousfield, 2010b, p. 55; Culpeper, 2010, p. 3236). A fair practical illustration of this point is the widely used and understood scale of offensiveness in language use in movie ratings. This may imply that "the pragmatics of these expressions must be semantically encoded in some way" (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3236). In fact, Leech (2007, p. 195) argues that the values of politeness may be linguistically encoded, not just semantically, but also morphologically and syntactically such as in honorifics, hedges, modal verbs, and orders within what he refers to as the pragmalinguistic plane of politeness. In fact, Leech (2007, p. 174) suggests that politeness could be approached from two scalar angles, an out-of-

context semantic angle, and a context-sensitive pragmatic angle. This position is adopted by Culpeper (2010, p. 3236), as he considers,

semantic (im)politeness and pragmatic (im)politeness as inter-dependent opposites on a scale. (Im)politeness can be more inherent in a linguistic expression or can be more determined by context, but neither the expression nor the context guarantees an interpretation of (im)politeness.

To illustrate his point, he (*ibid.*, p. 3237) gives the example of the word ‘cunt’, typically among impoliteness formulae “which are relatively semantically encoded in terms of their impoliteness effects across a range of contexts”, but which in one particular diary report was used as a friendly, in-group solidarity marker. To some extent, this justifies “why it is more appropriate to view impoliteness, and politeness, formulae as conventionalised rather than fully conventional or semantic” (*ibid.*). This scalar perspective is in accordance with Terkourafi and Kádár’s (2017, p. 187) assertion that “conventionalisation is a matter of degree.”

In fact, the process of conventionalisation, or pragmaticalisation, as Leech (2007, pp. 14, 142, 241) technically refers to it, “takes place through frequent usage in association with a given generic context” (*ibid.*, p. 75). In that sense, “to be conventionalised does not mean to be devoid of context. Rather, aspects of the context co-occur with such frequency that they become semanticized” (Culpeper, 2015c, p. 271). In other words, because certain expressions are recurrently used in specific contexts to achieve impoliteness, little by little, these expressions become closely associated with those particular contexts and effects, and so their subsequent use triggers these impoliteness associations, irrespective of the context.

Whereas conventionalisation in politeness formulae involves evidence of lexicalisation and frequency of occurrence in a given context (Copestake & Terkourafi, 2006, p. 2), conventionalisation in impoliteness formulae also involves other indicators such as retrospective and/or metapragmatic comments. This is because as Culpeper (2010, p. 3238) observes, “people acquire a knowledge of impoliteness formulae that far exceeds their own direct experience of usage of formulae associated with impolite effects in such contexts.” This is mainly achieved through exposure to rather than use of those formulae, namely through impoliteness metadiscourse (*ibid.*). This is an important point given that, compared to politeness formulae, the use of impoliteness formulae is less

frequent but much more conspicuous, therefore attracting more debates, comments, judgments, and reporting (ibid., pp. 3238-9). Terkourafi and Kádár (2017, p. 183) readily adopt Culpeper's take on the conventionalisation of impoliteness formulae, adding that such a take would also capture the important evaluative dimension of (im)politeness conventionalisation (ibid., pp. 183-4).

2.4 Forms of Impoliteness

This section discusses the forms impoliteness may take, linguistic and non-linguistic, along with the way these are typically structured. Additionally, the three types of genuine, accidental and mock impoliteness are discussed.

2.4.1 Impoliteness triggers. Most existing impoliteness frameworks and models generally subscribe to either the first order or the second order approach, respectively adopting a folk participant perspective¹ or a more scientific one². An impoliteness model that takes into account both perspectives, and is systematic and comprehensive as well as broadly integrative in the spirit of the theoretical approach adopted in the study is the one proposed by Culpeper (2011a; 2015b). Comprising both conventionalised impoliteness formulae and implicational impoliteness (explained below), this impoliteness model accounts for both context-tied and context-spanning impoliteness strategies. In other words, it takes on board the whole semantic-pragmatic spectrum of impoliteness. At the same time, it has the advantage of being paired with a bottom-up framework of impoliteness triggers (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 441) amenable to both quantitative and qualitative scrutiny.

Culpeper's (2011, 2015b, p. 441) impoliteness triggers are reproduced in Figure 2. The original diagram includes only the entries in bold; the additional explanations have been added for more clarity. The diagram is followed by a brief discussion of each of the two overarching categories, conventionalised impoliteness formulae and implicational impoliteness. Additionally, examples from the collected data are given to illustrate each of the implicational impoliteness categories.

¹ Such as Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch, 2013; Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch & Sifianou, 2017; Locher & Watts, 2005; and Mills, 2017

² Such as Brown & Levinson, 1978/1987; Culpeper, 1996, 2005; and Leech, 1983, 2006

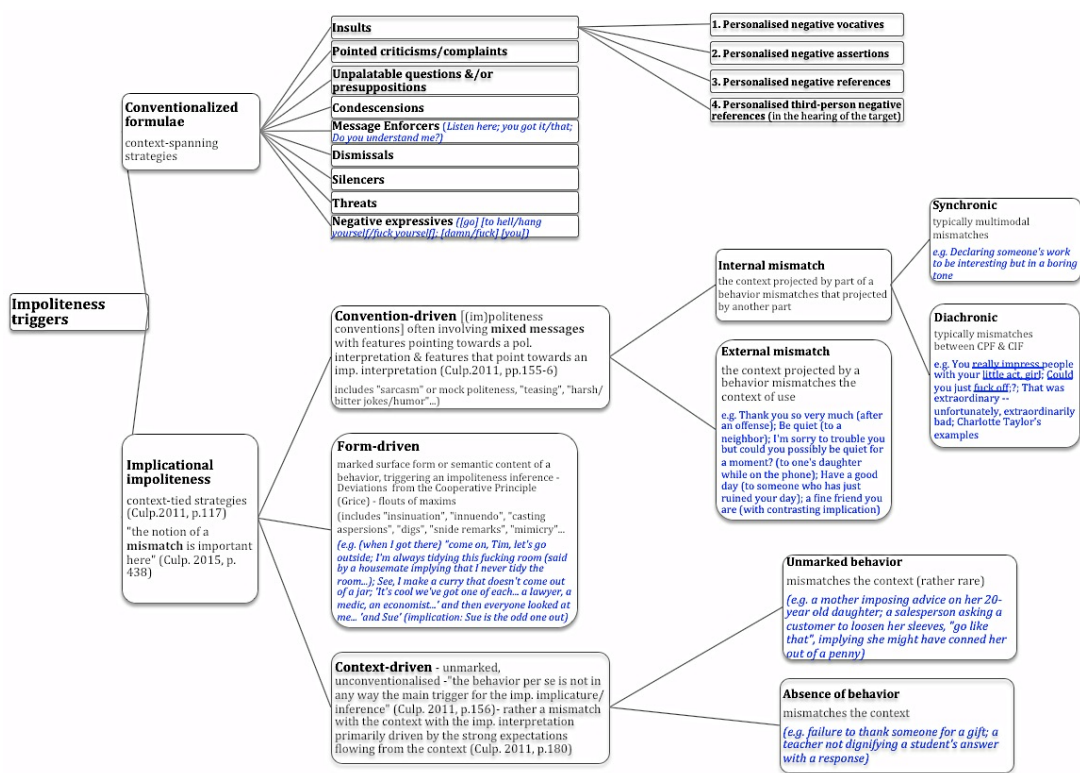


Figure 2. A Detailed Diagram of Culpeper's (2015b, p. 441) Model of Impoliteness Triggers (Based on His Own Summary in that Chapter)

Conventionalised impoliteness formulae (CIF). CIF mainly consist of “a form of language in which context-specific impoliteness effects are conventionalised” (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3243). They are typically challenged and largely abound in insults (Culpeper, 2011b, p. 420). In fact, using conventionalised expressions to achieve (im)politeness is rather expected and constitutes “the most expedient way of achieving (im)politeness” (Terkourafi, 2015, pp. 13, 17). Moreover, conventionalised formulae are clear and disambiguating “interpretive shortcuts” that help secure an impoliteness uptake (Copestake & Terkourafi, 2010, p. 128). They are also an index of the user’s intimate knowledge of the right operational norms in a given context, “a token of the speaker’s familiarity with the norms governing the current exchange” (ibid.).

However, Culpeper (2013, pp. 8-9) again warns, “It is not the case that impoliteness is inherent in the semantic meaning of these linguistic formulae. But there is a case for saying that these formulae are conventionally associated with specific impoliteness contexts, and thus are in a sense contextually tagged for impoliteness.” This implies the need to cautiously check the formulae’s use in context to verify the potential realisation of the expected impoliteness effects. Indeed, not all CIF are inevitably used to achieve impoliteness no matter the context (Culpeper 2015b, p. 436); some are sometimes used in banter (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 12), an impoliteness type that will be discussed in section 2.4.4.

To investigate CIF, Culpeper (2010, p. 3244) examined frequently repeated expressions in “contexts associated with impoliteness events.” He used six different datasets, tapped phone calls in the public domain, fly-on-the-wall documentaries and pseudo-documentaries, exploitative TV shows, graffiti dialogues, and diary reports. The bulk of the data was collected primarily from the UK and North America, from people of varying age, gender, and social class (ibid., p. 3241). To gauge whether the identified expressions were used to express impoliteness, Culpeper (2011a, p. 11) used four sources of evidence: (1) co-text, (2) retrospective comments (“made after the event in question”), (3) certain non-verbal reactions, and (4) use of conventional politeness formulae (ibid.). The selected impoliteness formulae were then grouped based on certain structural similarities in their patterns. The resulting list of CIF, where slashes signal alternatives and square brackets structural characteristics, can be seen in Figure 3.

<p>Insults</p> <p>1. Personalized negative vocatives - (you) (fucking rotten dirty fat little) (moron fuck plonker dickhead berk pig shit bastard loser liar minx brat slut squirr sod bugger) (you)</p> <p>2. Personalized negative assertions - (you) (are) (so such a) (shit stink thick stupid bitchy bitch hypocrite disappointment gay nuts nuttier than a fruit cake hopeless pathetic fussy terrible fat ugly) - (you) (can't do) (anything right basic arithmetic) - (you) (disgust me make me) (sick)</p> <p>3. Personalized negative references - (your) (stinking little) (mouth act arse body corpse hands guts trap breath)</p> <p>4. Personalized third-person negative references (in the hearing of the target) - (the) (daft) (bimbo) - (she) ('s) (nutzo)</p> <p>Pointed criticisms/complaints - (that this it) (is was) (absolutely extraordinarily unspeakably) (bad rubbish crap horrible terrible)</p> <p>Unpalatable questions and/or presuppositions - why do you make my life impossible? - which lie are you telling me? - what's gone wrong now? - you want to argue with me or you want to go to jail? - I am not going to exploit for political purposes my opponent's youth and inexperience.</p> <p>Condescensions (see also the use of "little" in Insults) - (that) ('s is being) (babyish childish)</p> <p>Message enforcers - listen here (preface) - you got (it that)? (tag) - do you understand (me)? (tag)</p> <p>Dismissals - (go) (away) - (get) (lost out) - (fuck piss shove) (off)</p> <p>Silencers - (shut) (it) (your) (stinking fucking) (mouth face trap) - shut (the fuck) up</p> <p>Threats - (I'll I'm we're) (gonna) (smash your face in beat the shit out of you box your ears bust your fucking head off straighten you out) (if you don't) (X) - (You'd better be ready Friday the 20th to meet with me do it) (or) (else) (I'll) (X) - (X) (before I) (hit you strangle you)</p> <p>Negative expressives (e.g. curses, ill-wishes) - (go) (to hell hang yourself fuck yourself) - (damn fuck) (you)</p>
--

Figure 3. Conventionalised Impoliteness Formulae (Culpeper, 2011a, pp. 135-6)

In addition to Culpeper's (2011) CIF, Taylor (2011) identifies two 'polite' phraseological discursive markers with a conventionalised impoliteness effect; 'polite' indicating that the politeness and respectful aspect are only surface realisations that have become conventionally used to front face threats (ibid. p. 222). The first conventionalised discursive marker is "with (*) respect" (e.g. *with respect, with all due respect, with the greatest respect*) (ibid., p. 221). It is illustrated in Taylor's clarifying example from *Yes, Minister*, a 1980s British political sitcom:

*Humphries: Minister, with the greatest possible respect –
Hacker: Oh, are you going to insult me again?*

The second conventionalised marker entails the use of a vocative, especially repetitively and in contexts that do not really warrant its use (e.g. to greet, hail, or beckon someone's attention) (ibid., p. 224). Both of these conventionalised phraseologies are in fact used as "a means of achieving interactional power" while avoiding punitive action by abiding by the required polite conventions, even if only superficially (ibid., p. 222).

Implicational impoliteness. Implicational impoliteness refers to "an impoliteness understanding that does not match the surface form or semantics of the utterance or the symbolic meaning of the behaviour." In Culpeper's (2011a, p. 155) diary report data, this form of impoliteness proved even more frequent than CIF, occurring 59% of the times. While CIF are rather context-spanning, implicational impoliteness triggers are more context-tied (ibid., p. 117). The mere fact that implicational impoliteness represents a departure from the expected, more expedient CIF may be perceived as increased impoliteness (Terkourafi, 2015, p. 11).

The idea of mismatch is central to implicational impoliteness (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 438), as will be seen in the brief description of the triggers that occasion an impoliteness attribution. While for conventionalized formulaic impoliteness, the triggers are "the symbolic linguistic means for conveying impoliteness" (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 117), that is CIF, for implicational impoliteness, these triggers are behaviours. Culpeper, (ibid., p. 155) delineates behaviours as multimodal communicative entities that serve a given pragmatic strategy and typically range from single words or gestures to a full conversational turn. He (ibid., pp. 155-183) identifies three different types of such

triggers for implicational impoliteness: (1) form-driven, (2) convention-driven, and (3) context-driven.

(1) *Form-driven*. Form-driven implicational impoliteness is characterized by a marked surface form or semantic content (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 439). Markedness here is taken to mean “deviations from pragmatic principles governing the exchange of information between participants,” mainly though not exclusively through flouts of Grice’s Cooperative Principle (1975) (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 156). The generated implicatures lead to an impoliteness attribution. This category includes insinuations, innuendoes, aspersions, digs, snide remarks, and mimicry (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 439). The latter, mimicry, is a special case of the form-driven category, where the derived implicational impoliteness is mainly based on Sperber and Wilson’s (1995) theory of echoic irony. In fact, mimicry occurs a number of times in my data, and so it is the object of a detailed discussion and qualitative analysis in sections 6.3 and 7.3.

By way of illustration of form-driven implicational impoliteness, an example from the data (Figure 4) is briefly discussed.

	<p>ORIGINAL UTTERANCE IN FRENCH: TU ES UNE PSYCHOPATHE AU VOLANT. ILS VONT RENTRER EN FRANCE <u>AU GALLOP.</u></p> <p>LITERAL TRANSLATION: YOU'RE A PSYCHOPATH BEHIND THE WHEEL. THEY WILL GO BACK TO FRANCE <u>AT A GALLOP.</u></p> <p>COMMUNICATIVE TRANSLATION³: YOU'RE A PSYCHOPATH ON WHEELS. THEY'RE GOING BACK TO FRANCE AS FAST AS THEY CAME.</p>
<p>Macaron (2015). <i>Samandal 17</i>, p.92</p>	

Figure 4. Example of Form-Driven Implicational Impoliteness (with its transcription and translation)

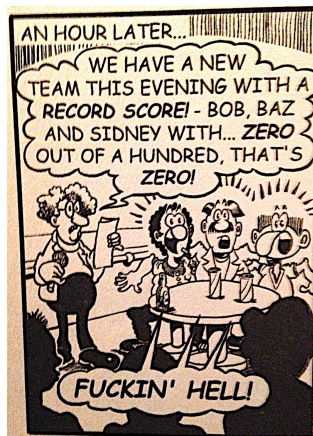
In Figure 4, a couple have just picked up visitors from the airport, and the man is openly criticizing the woman’s way of driving, saying the French equivalent of ‘You’re a psychopath behind the wheel. They will go back to France at a gallop.’ The part of the utterance “AU GALLOP” (‘AT A GALLOP’) is underlined and rendered in a slightly larger font in the panel. In the wake of the aggressive personalised negative assertion “*YOU'RE A PSYCHOPATH BEHIND THE WHEEL,*” the assertion that the visitors will go back to France at a

³ From *Samandal 17* (2015), p.99

gallop is very likely a case of form-driven implicational impoliteness brought about by a Gricean flout. The use of the conventionalised metaphor “at a gallop” to convey the rush the people would be in to escape the driving of the addressed woman, may be seen as a flout of the maxim of quality involving “categorical falsity” (Grice, 1975, p. 53), as it is impossible to go from Lebanon to France on horseback at a gallop. It may also be seen as a flout of the maxim of relation since the expression is not rude in itself, but in this context, is clearly an impolite comment on the woman’s driving. In both cases, the flout generates a case of form-driven implicational impoliteness that implicates that the woman drives badly and reinforces the attack on her quality face, particularly with regard to her sanity (“YOU’RE A PSYCHOPATH BEHIND THE WHEEL”) and driving competence attributes.

(2) *Convention-driven*. This category, which includes sarcasm, mock politeness, teasing, and harsh humour, generally involves (im)politeness conventions comprised of mixed messages with some characteristics triggering a polite attribution and others triggering an impolite one (Culpeper, 2011a, pp. 165-6). Convention-driven triggers may involve an external mismatch related to the context the behaviour has occurred in or an internal mismatch within the behaviour itself (*ibid.*, p. 168). Internal mismatches may be synchronic, that is, often involving multimodal mismatches as in for instance between a polite semantic content and an impolite prosodic delivery; they may also be diachronic, often involving mismatching conventionalized politeness formulae and CIF (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 438).

It may be hypothesised that convention-driven implicational impoliteness is particularly pertinent in a study of impoliteness in comics, especially the synchronic type, as “synchronic examples typically rely on multimodal mismatches” (*ibid.*, p. 238). Since the present study is itself multimodal in scope, potential mismatches in behaviour and prosody, as well as in language, may be better captured than in a linguistic medium only. The examples in Figures 5 & 6 illustrate the multimodal mismatch that drives the impoliteness uptake in such cases.



Sid the Sexist. Viz: *The Bag of Slugs* (2002), p.6

Figure 5. Diachronic Convention-Driven Implicational Impoliteness

The panel in Figure 5 contains an example of convention-driven diachronic internal mismatch of implicational impoliteness where “the context projected by part of a behaviour mismatches that projected by another part” (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 438). The competition host’s utterance in Sid the Sexist is very similar to the examples Culpeper (2011a, p. 174) cites from Simon Cowell in his exploitative talent shows in that it follows a similar strategy. The utterance is made up of two parts separated by a pause: “WE HAVE A NEW TEAM THIS EVENING WITH A **RECORD SCORE!** BOB, BAZ AND SIDNEY WITH... **ZERO** OUT OF A HUNDRED, THAT’S **ZERO!**”

The two parts of the utterance contrast in the context they project: The first part leads the hearer to expect a positive outcome, “a record score”, while the second deflates that expectation by announcing a literally record score, a nil one. The emphatic, probably unnecessary detail as everyone participating in the competition would be aware of the total score, “**ZERO** OUT OF A HUNDRED,” along with the repetition of “**ZERO**” exacerbates the offensiveness of the utterance. Also the emphatic prosody, signalled by the bold italics typeface for “**RECORD SCORE!**” and “**ZERO!**”, further exacerbates the impoliteness interpretation. Additionally, similarly to the examples cited from Cowell, the example in Sid the Sexist follows a “garden path” pragmatic strategy where the first half of the utterance begins by setting up positive expectations, namely of phenomenal success here. The ensuing pause, clearly signalled here by the three points, further prolongs that positive expectation, supposedly priming the hearer for the announcement of an

impressive score, only to then smash that expectation with the announcement of the anticlimactic zero score in the second half of the utterance.

The next panel in Figure 6 is an example of a synchronic internal mismatch of convention-driven implicational impoliteness.

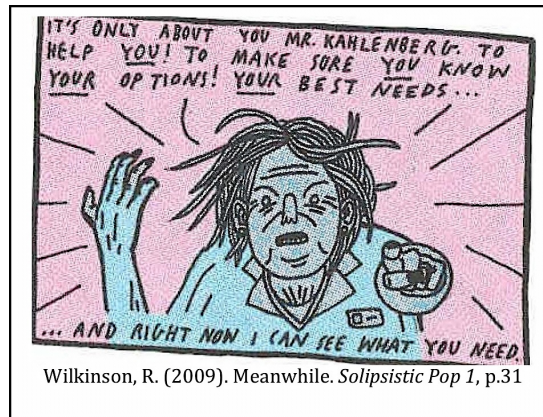


Figure 6. Synchronic Convention-Driven Implicational Impoliteness

In Wilkinson's (2009) "Meanwhile" (Figure 6), a civil servant is questioning a soldier who after returning from serving abroad is apparently getting £62 a week until he finds a job, which he is apparently urged to do. In the ex-soldier's mind, the exchange turns very hostile and violent and the civil servant is physically transformed into an abusive monster. In the first panel, the utterance itself is conventionally polite and makes use of a conventional politeness address form, "Mr.," followed by the person's last name. The linguistic proposition of the utterance itself is innocuous, even helpful, one might say: "IT'S ONLY ABOUT YOU, MR. KAHLENBERG. TO HELP YOU! TO MAKE SURE YOU KNOW YOUR OPTIONS! YOUR BEST NEEDS..." However, it is the way in which it is delivered that creates the multimodal mismatch that yields an interpretation of impoliteness. From the repeatedly underlined "you" and "your", we know that the civil servant is placing clear prosodic emphasis on the second person determiners. The pointing finger also seems to have a reinforcing deictic function in that regard, in addition to a clearly threatening one. The rest of the character's body movement, with the threateningly outstretched raised hand and its pointed black nails, the forward leaning posture, the glaring eyes, contracted brows, and frown lines further convey an impression of threat and anger. This is all complemented and reinforced by the composition of the panel, which, with its close up shot, the rendering of the hair as tentacle-like, and the haloed

spikes around the character, reinforces that impression of angry aggression. The result is a synchronic multimodal mismatch between the propositional content of the utterance and the way it is delivered, which in this context leads to an interpretation of impoliteness. It is important to note that the implicational impoliteness interpretation in the example in Figure 6 is in large part conveyed by the visual and compositional affordances of the comic medium. This illustrates the importance of studying the whole multimodal representation of impoliteness behaviours and events, especially in the case of the convention-driven implicational impoliteness.

(3) *Context-driven.* In context-driven implication impoliteness triggers, the behaviour itself is unmarked (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 156). It rather involves a mismatch with the context with “the impoliteness interpretation primarily driven by the strong expectations flowing from the context (ibid., p. 180). On the one hand, these mismatches may be brought about by behaviours that, though likely acceptable in other contexts, are perceived to run counter the personal and social expectations in a particular situation and so trigger an impoliteness implication. An example would be a mother imposing conditions on her adult daughter’s whereabouts. On the other hand, context-driven mismatches may be simply triggered by absence of behaviour, as in failure to show gratitude for a service rendered (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 440). Further illustrative examples from the study’s data are given in Figure 7.

	
<p>Kazim, S. (2012). Crappy D's The Pie Story, <i>The Comix Reader</i> 4, p.12</p> <p>➤ Illegitimate command/impolite request of a free pie at a restaurant with the aggravator “now”</p>	<p>The Fat Slags. <i>Viz: The Bear Trapper's Hat</i> (2003), p.120</p> <p>➤ “Get on wi’it” to a teacher introducing himself at the beginning of a class</p>

Figure 7. Context-Driven Implicational Impoliteness From the Analysed Data

2.4.2 Verbal and non-verbal impoliteness. The non-verbal part of communication, including body and body parts movements and positioning as well as prosody, is key to the study of impoliteness mainly for four reasons. First, it provides a window to the invisible realm of the mental states and emotions of the interactants and may therefore give an indication about their attitudes, reactions, and feelings, which are key to an evaluation of impoliteness (section 2.3.4). Extensive research exists on the affective interpretation and significance of body language and facial expressions in human interactions (e.g. Ekman, 2003; Ekman & Friesan, 2003; Ekman & Rosenberg, 2005; Eisner, 1985/2008; Goodwin & Goodwin, 2000; LaFrance, 2013). Also recently, Langlotz and Locher (2017, pp. 315-6) examined the multimodal cues that serve as “observables of emotions” specifically in the context of (im)politeness.

Second, some acts and gestures are in themselves conventionalised forms of impoliteness. Indeed, Culpeper (1996, p.351) suggests that a few anti-social acts like nose picking and farting may well be inherently impolite. A number of manuals discuss these phenomena, namely Lefevre’s (2011) *Rude Hand Gestures Around the World*, Bergen’s (2013) chapter, “One Finger is Worth a Thousand Words”, Rondina and Workman’s (2005) *Rudeness: Deal With It If You Please*, and inevitably all other body language manuals like Kendon’s (2004) and Raah’s (2015). The bird gesture, for instance, is a notoriously rude act with different cultural variations. Spitting in front of others is seen as another rude gesture (Rondina & Workman, 2005, p. 4). In fact, the seriousness of the impact of such acts should not be underestimated; only recently, Jamie Carragher, a well-known sports pundit, was widely condemned and suspended over a spitting incident.

Third, the non-verbal part of communication constitutes “an interactional resource that participants can use to boost the impoliteness of a conventionalised impoliteness formula or create impoliteness for an expression where none had been obvious in a particular context” (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 151). As such, non-verbal behaviours may convincingly be seen as “rhetorical strategies for securing an impoliteness effect” (ibid., p. 137). For instance, gestures are generally known to emphasize the message (Calero, 2005, p. 77). Moreover, in certain instances, marked prosody and kinesics play a key role in exacerbating the offensiveness of impoliteness triggers and in generating an impoliteness uptake (Culpeper, 2011a, pp. 153-4). Indeed, “it is sometimes the prosody

that makes an utterance impolite—giving truth to the common view that the offence lay in how something was said rather than what was said” (Culpeper et al., 2003, p. 1576). Intensity is one of the prosodic parameters (intonation, intensity, duration, pause and speech rate) most relevant to a study of impoliteness (Navarro & Nebot, 2014, p. 12). Indeed, it is commonly related to volume (*ibid.*, p. 12), and extreme loudness is typically associated with an offensive potential (Culpeper et al., 2003, p. 1575). Intonation may also constitute a key impoliteness prosodic marker; however, it remains a slippery notion that is hard to pin down with a satisfying degree of accuracy and systematicity (Culpeper et al., 2003, p. 1569; Navarro & Nebot, 2014, p. 16).

A fourth reason the non-verbal aspect is key to an impoliteness evaluation is that, as mentioned in section 2.4.1, impoliteness implicational triggers are behaviours “in their multimodal fullness” (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 55), and convention-driven triggers in particular depend on internal cross-modal mismatches in their verbal, oral, and/or visual components (*ibid.*, p. 169). This is the case for instance in sarcastic messages. Another form of form-driven implicational impoliteness, mimicry, also largely depends on a particular prosody in its makeup.

Lastly, it is important to remember not to read too much into isolated non-verbal cues and heed Culpeper’s (2001a, p. 151) word of caution:

It is a mistake to assume that non-verbal cues are separable from other aspects of the communication (with the exception of a few gestural ‘emblems’, e.g. the thumbs up, the two-fingered gesture). Behaviour is a multimodal stream, with one modality interacting with other modalities to create a whole.

In fact, several scholars like Archer and Akert (1980) and Bavelas and Chovil (2000) observe that this multimodal stream is often characterised by redundancy within its different modes, that is, an overlap between the verbal and non-verbal parts of the communication (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 124). This line of thinking is also consonant with van Leeuwen’s (2005a) theory of multimodal cohesion about how modes integrate to produce meaning. Multimodal redundancy and cohesion ultimately reduce meaning ambiguity and uncertainty (*ibid.*, p. 151). Conversely, their absence, that is inconsistency between the verbal and non-verbal aspects of a behaviour, may be an indicator of non-genuine impoliteness such as banter (*ibid.*, p. 137).

2.4.3 Impoliteness patterns. Impoliteness patterns are here examined along two axes, a horizontal sequential axis that looks at how impoliteness exchanges typically unfold, and a vertical axis that looks at the multiple layers impoliteness can infiltrate in a given utterance.

Since impoliteness is a form of communication that is socially non-cooperative (Austin, 1987; Bousfield, 2008; Kienpointner, 1996), it necessarily triggers a response. Indeed, aggressive behaviour in interactions tends to have a spiralling effect according to Anderson and Pearson (1999, pp. 458-460). Basing their observations on multiple studies, they show how “incivility, as a breach of norms for mutual respect can engender perceptions of interactional injustice” (ibid.). The latter gives rise to negative affect, which is then most often released by reciprocating the incivility and in doing so, somehow righting the injustice (ibid.). The triggered pattern is commonly comprised of a “cognitive, affective, and behavioural response sequence” (ibid., p. 461). That is, an evaluation of impoliteness generates negative emotions, which then typically spur the offended to react. Of course, the offended party may break this sequence and choose not to reciprocate the incivility in kind and/or ignore it altogether (ibid). In sum, impoliteness response patterns may be complex and varied depending on the particular interactional situation (Culpeper et al. 2003, pp. 1562,1568; see also Dobs & Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch, 2013). Broadly put, though, if the target of the impoliteness does not accept the impoliteness and opts to respond to the offence, the responses seem to revolve around two basic patterns, offensive and defensive counter-impoliteness strategies (ibid., p. 1563; Figure 8).

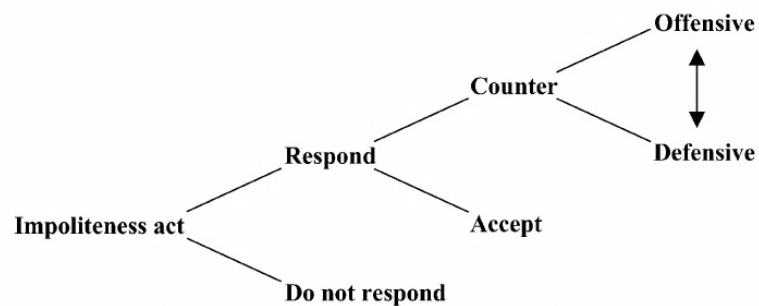


Figure 8. Culpeper et al. (2003, p. 1563) A Summary of Impolite Responses

Furthermore, the reciprocity that spawns tit-for-tat responses in aggressive exchanges seems to be an interactional norm that is well documented in social psychology (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 205). Moreover, the view that face redress is best achieved by reciprocating the offence and counterattacking is also rather widespread (Culpeper et al., 2003, p. 1562).

Alternatively, a single utterance may include multiple impoliteness strategies (Culpeper et al., 2003, p. 1560). These may be juxtaposed in a parallel pattern, or they may be combined, potentially resulting in boosting the impoliteness interpretation (*ibid.*, p. 1561). An example would be the conventionalised threat, "BEAT IT SHRIMP OR I'LL BUST YOUR ASS", which includes two other conventionalised impoliteness formulae, a dismissal ("BEAT IT") and a condescending personalised negative vocative ("SHRIMP"). The various ways impoliteness tactics nest in multiple layers within the same utterance and their cumulative effects need to be further investigated according to Culpeper et al. (2003, p. 1562). In fact, the analysis of impoliteness patterning is one of the focuses of the qualitative analysis in section 6.3.

2.4.4 Genuine and non-genuine impoliteness. Impoliteness is perceived differently by various scholars, and there seems to be no stable consensus around its definition (Culpeper, 2011, pp. 20-1; Locher & Bousfield, 2008, p. 3) or even around the impoliteness label itself (e.g. Archer, 2008; Culpeper, 2010, p. 3232). A common perception is to view impoliteness in the same vein as Fraser (1996), Lakoff (1973), and Leech (1983), that is, as "a non-observance or violation of the constraints of politeness" (Leech, 2007, p. 189). This perception has informed several impoliteness frameworks and models that were largely inspired by existing politeness frameworks (e.g. Bousfield, 2008; Cashman, 2006; Culpeper, 1996; Lorenzo-Dus et al., 2011). However, as Culpeper (2010, pp. 3238-3240 and 2012, pp. 1129-31) observes, this view does not lead to a fully satisfying treatment of impoliteness, which is not exactly the antithesis of politeness, namely with regard to key aspects such as contexts of use, frequency of occurrence, use of potential icons of (im)politeness, emotions, role of metadiscourse in awareness of (im)politeness, and the (im)politeness conventionalisation process.

In his study of (im)politeness in dramatic dialogue, Culpeper (1998, p. 86) describes impoliteness as “a type of aggression.” In actual fact, aggression seems to be “the one, lowest and most common denominator to such phenomena as ‘conflict’ or ‘confrontation’ which underlie impoliteness” (Bousfield, 2010b, p. 75). In a similar vein, Archer (2008) argues that subsuming the notion of impoliteness under verbal aggression may present several advantages. In fact, perceiving impoliteness as a type of aggression that is constructed and generated in interaction has the advantage of capturing the dynamic nature of the impoliteness act itself before shifting the emphasis to the evaluative attitude or judgments it elicits, which is where some of the more recent authoritative definitions of impoliteness seem to place the emphasis. For instance, Spencer-Oatey (2005b, p. 97) proposes, “(im)politeness is an evaluative label that people attach to behaviour, as a result of their subjective judgments about social appropriateness”; Culpeper (2011a, p. 23) defines impoliteness as “a negative attitude towards specific behaviours occurring in specific contexts;” and Culpeper and Haugh (2014, p. 197) view impoliteness as an interactionally mediated, value-laden, emotionally charged attitude. While these and similar definitions have at their heart the contentious behaviours and are certainly enlightening with regard to the underlying dynamics of impoliteness, they probably capture the post-event evaluations and impoliteness metadiscourse better than they do the impoliteness event itself.

Yet, it may be argued that the whole impoliteness phenomenon mainly owes its significance to the importance of the perlocutionary effects it elicits, whether it is at the level of interpersonal relations, power negotiation, face and/or identity construction, or social organisation. For this reason, and in an attempt to capture as many of the discussed underlying dynamics and facets of impoliteness as possible, the definition of impoliteness adopted in this study is Culpeper’s (2011a, p. 23), undoubtedly the most comprehensive and nuanced in the impoliteness literature:

Impoliteness is a negative attitude towards specific behaviours occurring in specific contexts. It is sustained by expectations, desires and/or beliefs about social organisation, including, in particular, how one person’s or a group’s identities are mediated by others in interaction. Situated behaviours are viewed negatively – considered ‘impolite’ – when they conflict with how one expects them to be, how one wants them to be and/or how one thinks they ought to be. Such behaviours always have or

are presumed to have emotional consequences for at least one participant, that is, they cause or are presumed to cause offence (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 23)

The above is a delineation of genuine impoliteness; impoliteness, though, is not always genuine as there can be cases of non-genuine impoliteness, namely incidental, accidental and mock impoliteness. According to Goffman (1967, p. 14), accidental face threats may be those acts commonly referred to as “faux pas, gaffes, boners, or bricks,” which involve a seemingly innocent act, where the “offence seems to be unintended and unwitting.” And though incidental impoliteness is also believed to be unintentional and non-malicious, its offensiveness can be deemed foreseeable (ibid.). An example of accidental impoliteness from the data is reproduced in Figure 9.

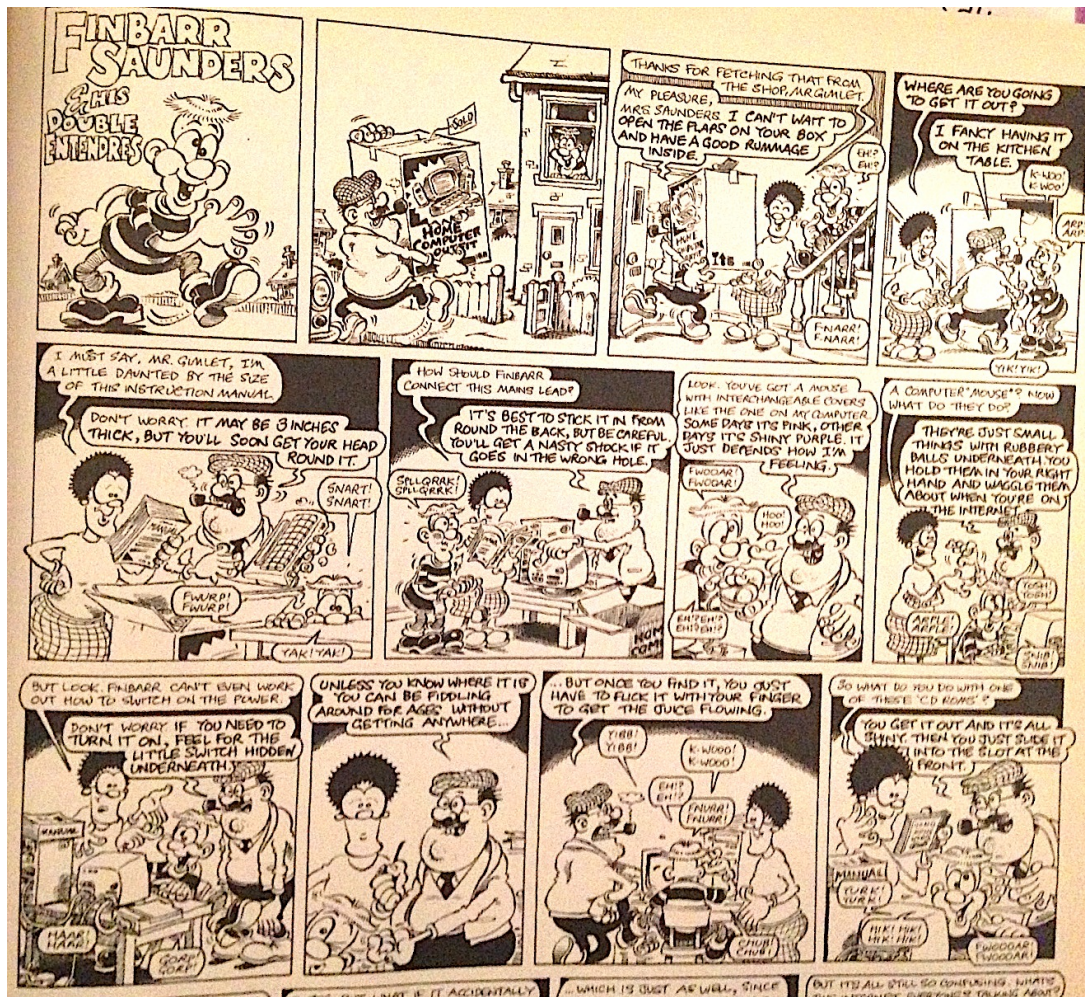


Figure 9. Finbarr Saunders. *Viz*. The Bag of Slugs (2002), p. 81

While Finbarr Saunders's panels (Figure 9) are filled with sexual innuendoes, there seems to be no offence aimed or taken. Only the boy seems to understand "the very contorted innuendoes that he perceives everywhere," (Tait, 2007, p. 88), but he seems amused rather than offended by their potentially offensive and taboo interpretation. These innuendoes can then be seen as possibly accidental impoliteness in the character world.

The third type of non-genuine impoliteness mentioned, "mock impoliteness" as referred to by Leech (1983, p. 144), is "the type of verbal behaviour known as 'banter' [which] is an offensive way of being friendly." Mock impoliteness or banter is not really considered offensive; it is merely "offensive on the surface, but at a deeper level is intended to maintain comity" and "is a way of reinforcing in-group solidarity" (Leech, 2007, p. 191). However, because mock impoliteness mainly depends on the context cancelling out the effect of the impoliteness form (Culpeper, 2011b, p. 30), misinterpretations may arise. Pragmatic misfires can result in failed banter, where offence rather than the intended comity and social bond and friendliness strengthening is perceived (Haugh & Bousfield, 2012, p. 1112). This is where multimodality may play a key, disambiguating role, as quite often, "banter is associated with a friendly demeanour, laughter, prosodic markedness, etc." (Leech, 2007, p. 191). McKinnon and Prieto (2014) also add the importance of gestural signals in disambiguating the intended interpretation of mock impoliteness utterances. Multimodality is therefore an important resource in the interpretation of mock impoliteness, "essentially a sensitive pragmatic phenomenon that is always prone to be potentially understood as impolite behaviour" (ibid, p. 213).

2.5 Functions of Impoliteness

Scholars across disciplines have explored the various functions of impoliteness-related phenomena such as rudeness, bad language, cursing, swearing, and profanity. Though these phenomena do not exactly match the understanding of impoliteness this research revolves around, they may, in the right context, be subsumed under it. However, what is of interest to us here is that these related studies often manage to capture important functional aspects of the impoliteness phenomenon. These include the affective, power yielding, socially disruptive, and entertaining functions. Before going over each of these functional aspects, it is important to note two points. First, all the

functional aspects discussed are taken to be interlocking and overlapping rather than discrete functions. Second, they largely depend on the context, the interactants, and the existing cultural attitudes (Bergen, 2016, p. 220; Culpeper, 2015b, p. 443).

2.5.1 Affective. The affective function of impoliteness is well documented, not least in studies around swearing, profanity or bad language. The link between swearing and affect was documented early on by Patrick (1901, pp. 118, 126) and includes the venting of emotions, relief, and a pacifying and cathartic effect. Bergen (2016, pp. 15-16) more recently argues:

Profane words uniquely allow you to express pain or cause it in others. They peerlessly demonstrate frustration, anger, or emphasis . . . Profanity can increase sexual arousal. It can increase your ability to withstand pain.

Similar arguments are advanced by Byrne (2018), who also maintains that bad language is a global phenomenon that transcends time and space, precisely because of its benefits. These include help in enduring and alleviating physical and social pain, in improving stamina, in contributing to social bonding, and in reducing the incidence of physical aggression (Byrne, 2018).

Other studies that tackle the broader impoliteness spectrum and study its affective function include Beebe (1995), Culpeper's (2011), and Kienpointner (1997, 2008). Beebe (1995) echoes previous studies on the functions of swearing when he mentions the use of impoliteness to vent negative feelings. Kientpointner (2008, p. 245) is more nuanced when he observes that impoliteness engenders a feeling of irreverence and hostility. Discussing the affective function among the main three functions of impoliteness (along with coercive and entertaining), Culpeper (2011a, p. 223) defines it as "the targeted display of heightened emotion, typically anger, with the implication that the target is to blame for producing that negative emotional state." He (*ibid.*, p. 225) also notes that it is a pervasive function of impoliteness that inescapably seeps into the other functions.

2.5.2 Power wielding. In addition to its affective function, impoliteness may also have a power wielding function, be it to exert, abuse, negotiate, or create power. In conjunction with the affective function, Beebe (1995) identifies getting or exercising power as a main function of impoliteness (Culpeper, 2008, p. 38). However, Culpeper

(2011a, p. 181) cautions that the exercise of power in a context where it is socially ratified by the existing power differential or institutional context is not generally perceived as impolite. It is rather the perception of an abuse of power that may trigger an impoliteness evaluation and potentially be seen as patronising (ibid.).

On the other hand, Tedeschi and Felson (1994, p. 171) argue that impolite behaviours may result in social harm, which, in addition to damaging a person's social identity, diminishes her/his power or status (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 4). Within dominant ideologies, the more powerful individuals tend to exercise impoliteness more, particularly making use of insults related to social identities and face (e.g. racist or sexist insults) to control others and exert their dominance (ibid.). Indeed bad language is seen as denigrating and disempowering (Bergen, 2016, p. 15). In that sense, "situations characterised by asymmetric social structures are predisposed to coercive impoliteness, and, more specifically, unidirectional impoliteness produced by the more powerful targeting the less" (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 228). Coercive impoliteness is therefore understood as "impoliteness that seeks a realignment of values between the producer and the target such that the producer benefits or has their current benefits reinforced or protected" (ibid., p. 252).

However, impoliteness may also be possible in the other direction, with the less powerful attempting to gain power or status by "challenging somebody with markedly more social institutional power using techniques such as impoliteness" (ibid., p. 245). Consequently, the less powerful stratum of society may also use impoliteness, particularly insults, to poke fun at the dominant, powerful group, with undertones of mockery for authority, power, and the socially appropriate practices. Possible examples of such insults may include *prick*, *constipated*, and deliberate flouts of grammar rules (e.g. *It don't*, *We was*). By doing this, individuals with a lower status in the group power hierarchy could be said to "exercise power through impoliteness" (Locher & Bousfield, 2008, p. 9), undermining "the social conventions that serve power hierarchies" in dominant ideologies (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3239).

Additionally, coercive impoliteness may also be deployed in relatively symmetrical relationships to plan a social power gain (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 228). A common example may include bullying between children or adolescents. In the same

vein, impolite language is said to potentially engender a sense of defiance and power, probably because of its being taboo and proscribed (Kneidel, 2009, p. 3). It is this association between established power hierarchies, defiance, and the moral order in place in a community that brings us to the next function, which is tightly linked to the power wielding function.

2.5.3 Socially disruptive. Although Culpeper (2011) does not explicitly list social disruption among the three main impoliteness functions he discusses, he practically cites it in many of his definitions of impoliteness and what it does. Some examples include the following (my emphasis):

- ... impoliteness, the use of strategies that are *designed to have the opposite effect* - that of *social disruption* (Culpeper, 1996, p.350)
- ... impoliteness, communicative strategies *designed to attack face*, and thereby *cause social conflict and disharmony* (Culpeper et al, 2003, p. 1546)
- ... impoliteness behaviours *rupture social norms* (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3243)
- ... the opposite of politeness, namely the *disruption of social harmony* through the expression of negative evaluations of the target and/or through doing what is not accepted, expected or wanted (Culpeper & Holmes, 2013, p. 171)

The socially disruptive aspect of impoliteness is clear in the citations above, mainly through the description of impoliteness as communicative strategies intended to cause social conflict, disruption, and disharmony. Impoliteness is therefore perceived to contest or disrupt a certain established order in social organization, mainly through challenging or countering expectations of social appropriateness. In fact, this is partly what makes impoliteness so marked and shocking (Culpeper, 2012, p. 1129). This is mainly so because “nonconforming behaviour, as indeed impoliteness often is, provokes strong reactions because it raises questions of relationships to others and also what kind of behaviour is appropriate given those relationships” (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3239). One may further suggest that when expectations about social appropriateness are repeatedly challenged, they gradually erode and fade away or morph into something else, practically ceasing to be expectations. This is perhaps when the socially disruptive effect of impoliteness may trigger the renegotiation and potential reshaping of social organisation as part of the “reverberations for the broader community” Culpeper (2010, p. 3239) mentioned.

2.5.4 Entertaining. The link between impoliteness and humour and entertainment is powerful as well as intriguing and several attempts have been made to explore it. In fact, given that “humour is typically preceded by a violation, or some kind of threat to a person’s wellbeing, identity, or normative belief structure” (Warren & McGraw, 2015, p. 7105), it seems logical that “humour often involves impoliteness” (Culpeper, 2005, p. 46).

The connection between entertainment and exploitative (im)politeness that may often be abusive and/or aggressive is clarified in Culpeper (2011a, p. 252):

Entertaining impoliteness involves entertainment at the expense of the target of the impoliteness, and is thus always exploitative to a degree. As all genuine impoliteness, it involves a victim or at least a potential victim

The citation above clearly establishes a close link between aggression and entertainment. In fact, Culpeper (1996, p. 364) remarks that aggression has provided fodder for entertainment for millennia while Bergen (2016, p. 15) notes, “countless comedians stake their professional lives on the impact of ‘working blue’.” Impoliteness being one type of aggression is of course no exception to the rule, and it is fairly frequent in drama and exploitative TV shows.

As a matter of fact, in his essay on face-work, Goffman (1967, p. 24) titles the section on aggressive face-work “Making Points—The Aggressive Use of Face-Work”. Through the use of the term ‘making points’, one clearly gets the feel of a scoring contest where aggression wins one points. Goffman (*ibid.*, p. 24) further develops that line of thought by likening an interaction where face threats and the ensuing attempts at face-work are anticipated to “an arena in which a contest or match is held,” where the purpose of the “game” is to score as many points as possible, and where “an audience to the struggle is almost a necessity.” In these aggressive interchanges, the dynamic, relational and contestable nature of social power can mostly be witnessed in what Goffman (*ibid.*, p. 25) refers to as successful comebacks or ripostes, also referred to as squelches or toppers. The focus is on how well the interactants can handle themselves in the tit-for-tat contest rather than on the content of the interchange. The fluidity of the power struggle between the interactants is palpable as footwork, or “the active and adroit manoeuvring to achieve an end” (“Footwork,” n.d.), seems to be of the essence, and skill, power, and the ensuing face-gain and victory are attributed to the interactant who proves better at it till

the very end of the match (ibid., pp. 25-6). From Goffman's (ibid., pp. 25-6) description of the contest-like power struggle involved in aggressive face-work, one can get a clear feeling of why and how the power struggles involved in impoliteness can be entertaining.

In fact, entertaining impoliteness might involve five sources of pleasure identified by Culpeper (2011a, pp. 234-5). There is emotional pleasure brought about by the excitement at the mere potential for aggression (ibid., p. 234). There is also voyeuristic pleasure that involves the thrill of watching highly sensitive and private aspects of people's lives exposed publically (ibid.) and of witnessing a power struggle (Goffman 1967, p. 24). Then there is the pleasure of feeling superior that stems from a certain "spirit of schadenfreude" (Lorenzo-Dus et al., 2013, p. 211) and the realisation that we are in a better position (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 235). There is also the pleasure of feeling secure or safe; in fact, Warren and McGraw (2015, p.7106) assert "that humour arises from simultaneous perceptions that something is threatening or wrong (violation) and harmless or okay (benign)." Finally, there is aesthetic pleasure that involves the creative aspect of impoliteness. Verbal creativity in impoliteness has definite entertainment potential, as was demonstrated by Culpeper (2005, p. 46) and Lorenzo-Dus et al. (2013, p. 210). The creatively entertaining aspect is actually a main focus in the qualitative analyses in this study. It might be useful to also note that there is more potential for creativity in implicational impoliteness, which might require more elaborate and creative inferencing (Culpeper & Holmes, 2013, p. 193).

2.6 Impoliteness in Fiction

The study of (im)politeness in comics has not yet been attempted to my knowledge. However there have been numerous attempts at studying (im)politeness in other genres of fictional discourse, including plays, telecinematic discourse, and to a much lesser extent, prose fiction. McIntyre and Bousfield (2017, p. 759) argue that the analysis of (im)politeness in fictional discourse may be a mutually beneficial enterprise that can profit stylistics as well as pragmatics. The benefit for stylistics mainly resides in the possibility of applying (im)politeness analytical frameworks for the interpretation of inter-character interactions (ibid.). Conversely, fictional works may be valuable for the study of (im)politeness because many of their stylistic effects ("e.g. conflict, dramatic

tension, plot development, humour, etc.”) are frequently built on the interactional violations that make up impoliteness (*ibid.*). Indeed, conflict and decidedly the impoliteness it often entails are “a means of furthering the plot and characterization, and creating dramatic entertainment” (Culpeper, 2005, p. 46). Moreover, fictional works constitute complete, affordable, accessible, and available datasets (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, pp. 759-762). In fact, an added advantage in the study of (im)politeness in fiction is often the interpretively valuable access into a character’s thoughts (including her/his intentions, motivations, responses and judgements) whether directly or indirectly through the narration (*ibid.*, pp. 763, 766).

A predictable objection to the study of (im)politeness in fictional discourse would probably be about the validity of applying pragmatic principles to fictional data, and then also about the worth and reliability of insights into (im)politeness gained from the study of constructed, fictional discourse. Though definitely founded, these qualms can nevertheless be addressed through a number of arguments. First, as Searle (2006, pp. 28-9) posits, representation is not at all divorced from reality; “the language doesn’t just describe; it creates, and partly constitutes what it describes . . . In human languages . . . we have the capacity to create a new reality by representing that reality as existing.” Additionally, in their inter-character dialogues, Herman (1995, p. 6) notes that fiction writers and dramatists in particular employ “underlying speech conventions, principles and ‘rules’ of use, operative in speech exchanges in the many sorts, conditions and contexts of society which members are assumed to share and use in their interactions in day-to-day exchanges” (cited in McIntyre, 2016, p. 431).

Moreover, impoliteness in fiction is a conscious authorial choice (Culpeper, 1998, p. 87). Therefore, it may be argued that “the generally high degree of consciousness (involved) in the making of linguistic choices” in fiction is an aspect of “reflexive or metapragmatic awareness”, the study of which gives key insights into verbal behaviour (Verschueren, 2011, p. 206). In that sense, and to the extent that it is the product of “degrees of awareness, distilled by writers, of a community’s speech modes”, “each character in a play or voice in a novel or poem can thus be considered a kind of sociolinguistic informant” (Wetson & Gardner-Cloros, 2015, p. 195).

2.7 Local Contexts and Perceptions of Impoliteness

This section gives a brief overview of the British and Lebanese contexts and impoliteness perceptions in the early twenty-first century in an attempt to inform the impoliteness analysis of the comics of these two countries and help ground it in the socio-cultural contexts that gave rise to it. Before doing this, though, it lays some basic theoretical foundations in the study of impoliteness across cultures.

Evaluations of impoliteness are firmly grounded in their socio-cultural contexts. Indeed, they heavily rely on notions of appropriateness, which are intimately tied to notions of social acceptability in particular contexts (Spencer-Oatey & Kádár, 2016, p. 2). An encompassing understanding of such cultural contexts, which also accommodates the social judgments that are at the basis of impoliteness, is best expressed by Spencer-Oatey (2008, p. 3): “Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour.” This conceptualisation of culture clearly both reflects and shapes a particular way of being and behaving within a community or nation. In that sense, it is also intimately tied to shared attitudes and therefore cultural ideologies, which necessarily involve impoliteness ideologies (section 2.3.3).

However, far from being monolithic and homogeneous, cultures necessarily include subcultures with internal diversities (Culpeper, 2011a, pp. 22, 142; Sifianou & Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch, 2017, p. 572; Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 3; Žegarac, 2008, p. 51). In fact, Storey (2010, p. 23) labels the concept of monoculture ‘a fantasy’ that fuels discourses of power and resistance. His view is echoed by Mills (2009, pp. 1058-9), who argues, “In a sense, cultural norms are mythical; the nation, whatever we take that to mean, cannot speak with one voice, according to one view of what is appropriate or inappropriate.” However, on the one hand it would be almost impossible to tackle all the subcultures within a given culture. On the other, it would be self-defeating to discuss the practices, norms, attitudes, and potentially cultural variations associated with a given country and its people without referring to them using their national label. Still, it should

be remembered that though seemingly necessary, this practice is not at all meant to gloss over the internal diversity within each culture.

Having said that, cultural variation is a highly nuanced concept in the study of impoliteness. Indeed, while undoubtedly sharing the notion of face and its regulative function in human interactions, cultures may vary in their instantiations of face, which are culture-specific, and therefore a function of the value system in place in a given community (Holtgraves, 2009, pp. 203-4; O’Driscoll, 1996, p. 14). Similarly, it is highly plausible that societies share many of the pragmatic and behavioural foundations at the basis of (im)politeness, along with the factors that make these up; however, they may differ in how they operationalize and interpret these values and in the valence they attribute to the socio-pragmatic factors that make them up (Leech, 2007, p.200). Accordingly, Leech (2007, p. 201) argues that (im)politeness is scalar. Consequently, he sees no grounds for an absolute East-West divide because any differences and variations, such as the Eastern collectivist bent and the individualist Western one, can be simply expressed as positions on a scale. In fact, Leech (1983, p. 231) suggests that it is the prerogative of socio-pragmatics to study those scalar differences since “the transfer of the norms of one community to another community may well lead to ‘pragmatic failure’, and to the judgment that the speaker is in some way being impolite, uncooperative, etc.”

2.7.1 The British context and perceptions of impoliteness.

The British context. Twenty-first century Britain is vibrant and ethnically diverse (Storey, 2010, p.23)—largely the result of recent immigration trends. However, some of the staples of ‘Britishness’⁴ that characterise it are still pervasive. First, there seems to be a lingering sense of social class associated with Britishness (Higgins et al., 2010, p. 2; Savage et al., 2015). The notion of “knowing your place” (Gravett & Stanbury, 2006, pp. 16, 21) within a certain class consciousness seems to be fundamental to British people. British anthropologist, Fox (2004, p. 30), clearly concurs, by saying that class-consciousness is still unsettlingly acute among the British. Some, however, report a shift

⁴ My use of the word ‘Britishness’ is a practical research-friendly term meant to encompass the national identity of all the people who are part of the UK, not at all meant to mask regional and internal particularities or to oversimplify a decidedly geographically, ethnically, and socio-linguistically composite mix.

in how class is now conceived of, with wealth and fame having substituted birth in determining social standing (Truss, 2005/2009, p. 12), and a blurring of boundaries between the middle classes yet a major class divide between the privileged elite and the deprived precariat (Savage et al., 2015).

In addition to social class, a sense of timelessness and self-confidence are also reportedly typically an enduring part of the British national identity (Storey, 2010, p. 22). But, for all their reported self-confidence, the British are also renowned for being a people who do not take themselves too seriously. “The importance of not being earnest” is one of the important rules in the English culture according to Fox (2004, p. 23), wherein seriousness and sincerity are acceptable, but solemnity and taking oneself too seriously are totally frowned upon. Instead, the British give great importance to humour, and to the subtle form of irony in particular. Fox (2004, p. 24) highlights this importance, saying, “Most English conversations will involve at least some degree of banter, teasing, irony, understatement, humorous self-deprecation, mockery or just silliness.” This largely seems to tie in with Haugh and Bousfield’s (2012, p. 1112) observation that the British propensity for mock impoliteness has its source in a national ethos that attaches great importance to not taking oneself too seriously.

British perceptions of impoliteness. A lot of the tenets of impoliteness in this thesis reflect Anglo cultures, mostly the British (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 11). Therefore, most of the discussion around impoliteness, particularly the impoliteness strategies discussed in section 2.4, largely reflects British perceptions of (im)politeness. Additionally, Culpeper (2011a) has explored some of the common themes that seem to shape British lay perceptions of impoliteness. The resulting attitude clusters mainly centre around six themes listed in order of decreasing frequency: patronising, inconsiderate, rude/aggressive, inappropriate, hurtful, joking/childish, taboo and other (ibid., p. 94). The first category, patronising, particularly stands out by topping the impoliteness evaluations, suggesting that behaviour perceived as condescending, belittling, ridiculing and demeaning seems a highly conventional impoliteness strategy in British culture.

In addition to explicit British impoliteness strategies, certain British values and traits discussed in the literature like modesty, fair play and stoicism (i.e. the famed British

stiff upper lip) may also have some bearing on British (im)politeness attitudes. A further British trait that might affect impoliteness evaluations is the tendency to be reserved and to highly value privacy. Fox (2004, p. 54) further argues that this reserve is tightly linked to the famed British courtesy: “In fact, at one level, our reserve is a form of courtesy – the kind of courtesy that the sociolinguists Brown and Levinson call ‘negative politeness’, meaning that it is concerned with other people’s need not to be intruded or imposed upon.”

Nevertheless, there has recently been a concern about a perceived decline in British reticence and restraint and a parallel increase in rudeness (Gorji, 2007, p. 1 and further discussion in section 6.4). However, besides being empirically contested (Culpeper, 2011a and Culpeper & Archer, 2008), this view of increased rudeness and verbal incivility is also more broadly disputed. The main argument is that current attitudes actually reflect a natural shift in perceptions of offensiveness rather than a veritable increase in impoliteness (Tait, 2007, p. 90). Indeed, across the centuries, different types of offensiveness have held sway, from religious swearing in the 19th century to sexual swearing in the second half of the 20th century, to the relative absence of offence at swear words of this age, unless they happen to “cast offence in a particular direction” as in *nigger* and *Paki* (ibid.). These shifts are largely the result of the constant change in attitudes and ideologies (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 257). Whereas the individualistic values of privacy and self-respect gained ground in 19th century Britain, there now seems to be a new shift as those traditional Victorian values are contested, and new ideologies and attitudes are surfacing (ibid.). This, Cameron (2007, pp. 131-2) argues, is mainly owing to a surge in therapy culture and the cultivation of corporate communication skills; the ‘traditionally British’ social interaction norms of reticence, self-effacement, emotional restraint, and social decorum are now competing against the rather “un-British” norms of articulate self-expression, assertiveness, emotional literacy (“the ability to recognise and verbalise (‘share’) one’s feelings”), and directness.

2.7.2 The Lebanese context and perceptions of impoliteness.

The Lebanese context. The Lebanese society is a complex and composite society with a rich and diverse culture, and a multitude of unresolved issues. Such a short section

can barely scratch the surface of its complexity and do justice to its diversity. By necessity, I only limit myself to the issues that are pertinent to the analysis of impoliteness in my data, namely the Lebanese sectarian makeup and the prevailing language attitudes.

Lebanon has a rich history of providing refuge to threatened or persecuted minorities. It has also been the site of successive occupations and colonisations. These historical factors, added to Lebanon's geography straddling Mediterranean Europe and the Arab continent, have resulted in a cultural hybridity largely noticeable at the religious/sectarian, linguistic, and ideological levels.

In fact, multi-confessional diversity is a constitutive trait of the Lebanese society that groups eighteen officially recognized religious communities (Yousfi, 2008, p. 2). This sectarian diversity is a rich source of cultural diversity but also a major source of ideological and political tension. The inter-communal relationships between Christian Maronites and Muslim Sunni and Shi'a, the three largest communities, are often characterised by "high levels of distrust, misperception, suspicion and fear" (Haddad, 2002, p. 304). These, along with different socio-cultural histories and outlooks, often lead to inter-communal ideological conflicts, particularly in relation to national identity assertions.

The resulting conflicting identity claims are directly linked to language identity and use in Lebanon. This is not surprising given that "language is traditionally thought of as an ingredient, marker or attribute of national identity" (Suleiman, 2003, p. 209), and so is "a significant site for ideological contestation and identity assertion" (Suleiman, 1996, in Zakharia, 2009, p. 216). In fact, language is a site of heated ideological debate in Lebanon particularly between Muslims and Maronite Christians. The assertion of the Arabness of Lebanon and the corollary adoption of standard Arabic as a national language is a view generally aligned with pan-Arab nationalism, mainly (though not exclusively) among Muslims (Albirini, 2011, p. 556; Suleiman, 2003, p. 205). In parallel, a view of Lebanese national identity as transcending the Arab culture and partaking of Western or non-Islamic Mediterranean cultures is generally attributed to Lebanese nationalist movements, mainly – but not exclusively – among the Christian Maronites (Albirini, 2011, p. 556; Suleiman, 2003, p. 205). With some notable exceptions, Lebanese

nationalists generally express their support for French and linguistic hybridity or multilingualism, and advocate the adoption of the *sui generis* vernacular Lebanese as a national language (Salameh, 2010, p. 53; Suleiman, 2003, p. 205). More details about the languages used in Lebanon are given in Appendix A.

Translanguaging. With four to five languages at their disposal – vernacular Lebanese, French, English, standard Arabic, and Armenian⁵ – most Lebanese naturally alternate and mix languages and language features in their everyday discourse and writing. Given the linguistic hybrid identity of the Lebanese and the high degree of ideological and cultural embeddedness of the multiple languages that make up their linguistic repertoire, the concept of translanguaging seems more fitting than that of code-switching to describe and analyse the language practices of the Lebanese.

Translanguaging is defined as “the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system” (Canagarajah, 2011, p. 401). Indeed, while from a code-switching perspective, the languages used are conceived of as separate, autonomous systems, from a translanguaging perspective, they constitute one integrated linguistic depository that affords a highly flexible and permeable strategic use of the meaning-making features within it (Alimi and Matiki, 2017, p. 204). Within a translanguaging frame, all available linguistic features become “interactional resources used to create social meaning in many layers” (Moller, 2008 cited in Alimi & Matiki, 2017, p. 204). Perhaps the most compelling reason for the use of translanguaging in the Lebanese context is Wei’s (2011, p. 122) argument that ‘it (translanguaging space) enables the coexistence of different ‘identities, values and practices’ as well as fosters their intermingling to produce new identities, values and practices (cited in Alimi & Matiki, 2017, p. 204).

Nevertheless, because the notion of translanguaging has only quite recently graced the academic scene, studies about its impact on impoliteness and face management are yet non-existent. This is not the case though for code-switching practices and impoliteness (e.g. Albirini, 2011; Cashman, 2005, 2008; Li Wei, 2005). Though as discussed, codeswitching and translanguaging are decidedly not part of the

⁵ Almost exclusively used by the Armenian community in Lebanon

same epistemological sphere, in practice, they are not that easily distinguished (Alimi & Matiki, 2017, p. 204). In fact, in his multilingual perspective on translanguaging, McSwan (2017, p. 191) suggests, “codeswitching may be seen as an instance of translanguaging.” The association between codeswitching and translanguaging is discussed by a number of other scholars such as Lewis, Jones & Baker (2012) and Wei (2011) (Alimi & Matiki, 2017, p. 204). The suggested connection may be of particular interest in this study because it allows me to draw on the insights gained from the study of impoliteness and codeswitching.

Lebanese perceptions of impoliteness. Research into Lebanese (im)politeness is restricted to two studies. The first, by Bahous (2009), is a case study that examines street impoliteness and rudeness in Beirut and notes an increase in impoliteness in Lebanese streets reportedly attributed to socio-political and economic factors. The second, by Bacha, Bahous, and Diab (2012), about gender and politeness in a foreign language academic context, examines the students’ understanding of polite classroom behaviour and their (im)politeness evaluations of certain classroom situations. This study notes a certain difference between genders with regard to interactional strategies (e.g. turn-taking, collaboration), a lack of consensus among the students on perceptions of politeness (ibid., p. 88), and differences in perceptions and cultural misunderstandings around (im)politeness between teachers and students (ibid., p. 79). As can be seen from the two studies just mentioned, a folk understanding of (im)politeness rather than a second-order one, seems to dominate academic inquiries in Lebanese (im)politeness, whereby instead of being perceived as a complex pragmatic phenomenon, (im)politeness is still rather equated with a “moral or psychological disposition towards being nice towards one’s interlocutor” (Thomas, 1995, p. 178).

In the absence of more research around Lebanese (im)politeness, one needs to turn to the Lebanese values for a better understanding of the perceptions and cultural attitudes and ideologies that may inform judgments of (im)politeness. In terms of value hierarchies, the values of honour and hospitality, which are perceived as Arab emic values, are ranked highest by the Lebanese youth (Harb, 2010, p. 16). The primacy of honour as a value may well point towards the typical Mediterranean/Middle-Eastern

‘culture of honour’ discussed by Vandello and Cohen’s (2003) (cited in Culpeper, 2011a, p. 199).

In addition to characteristic values, perceptions of social identities may also play a central role in Lebanese perceptions of (im)politeness. Harb’s (2010) findings about social identities in Lebanon reveal that family and national identification top the endorsed social identity self-categorisation, followed by religious (/sectarian) identification. In contrast, individual self-identification ranks very low and takes the penultimate position among eleven factors (ibid.). This does seem to tie in with the stereotypical view that Eastern cultures are more collectivistic than individualistic, compared to the Western ones (e.g. Leech, 2007, p. 170; Spencer-Oatey & Kádár, 2016, p. 3). Additionally, as Harb (2010, p. 15) observes, “these identity patterns reflect the wider culture in which family dynamics and inter-communal relations dominate the identification process, with little space for individual differentiation or political affiliations.”

2.8 Summary

The (im)politeness field is complex, multidisciplinary and rife with divergent definitions, theories and approaches. The recent Culpeper et al.’s (2017) 824 page *The Palgrave Handbook of Linguistic (Im)politeness* (note the further “linguistic” delimitation) suggests that entire books are needed to span the field’s breadth and attempt to do it justice—as can also be seen in the several impoliteness monographs (e.g. Bousfield, 2008; Culpeper, 2011). However, this chapter of the literature review is necessarily selective, and so some (im)politeness approaches and aspects have been inevitably left out. Nevertheless, I have tried to give an overview of the main impoliteness approaches and aspects that have a direct bearing on my research. I have particularly focused on the aspects of impoliteness that my research questions revolve around, namely the aspects, forms and functions of impoliteness and the country-specific (im)politeness cultural perceptions that might inform any similarities and differences in them. This chapter therefore had the purpose of setting the scene for the integrative approach adopted, giving a brief overview of the major debates in (im)politeness research that preceded it and those that animate it. To this effect, the relevant tenets of the traditional and discursive approaches to (im)politeness and central notions underlying

(im)politeness such as face and identity, social conventions and norms, affiliation, ideologies, social power, emotions, and identity construction have been discussed. Additionally, the issues of context and conventionalisation, along with the interdependent scalar pragmatic and semantic aspects of (im)politeness have been considered.

The types and forms of impoliteness documented in the literature, the linguistic as well as the non-linguistic, have also been also reviewed, along with typical impoliteness triggers and patterns. The discussed impoliteness types and forms were then illustrated using examples from the comic data obtained, with the added objective of providing a sense of how the discussed impoliteness aspects generally inform the data collection and analysis. Furthermore, the main functions of impoliteness, the affective, power wielding, socially disruptive and entertaining have been examined, with a special focus on the role of impoliteness in fiction, the medium of the data examined in the present study. In addition, the broader context of the data, that is the socio-cultural makeup of the countries the comics were produced in – Britain and Lebanon – has been carefully looked into, along with the related local perceptions of (im)politeness. This was done to enable an informed interpretation of the impoliteness events in the comics, themselves necessarily embedded in the socio-cultural contexts that gave rise to them. The next chapter further contributes to laying the foundation for the data collection and analysis by examining in detail the medium impoliteness is studied in, comics.

Chapter 3 Comics

Negative perceptions surrounding comics, including the once prevalent view that comics were a type of unrefined reading aimed at the less educated, consisting of “crude, poorly-drawn, semiliterate, cheap, disposable kiddie fare” (McCloud, 1994, p. 4), have been irrevocably challenged. Indeed, the second half of the 20th century saw the establishment of comics as the ninth art⁶, the growing scholarly attention directed towards their study, and the increasing recognition of comics and graphic novels in literary and other scholarly circles. The 21st century further saw the emergence of peer reviewed comic journals such as the *International Journal of Comic Art* (1999-), *The Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* (2010-), *The Comics Grid: Journal of Comics Scholarship* (2011-), and the *Journal of Comics and Culture* (2016-). Of course, comics vary greatly, and “not every comic will sustain the weight of literary analysis, but then not every novel, poem, or play will either” (Kukkonen, 2013b, p. 150). For the purpose of this study, comics are a valuable source of culture-sensitive fictional interactions represented across multiple modes. This section will explore the concept of comics, how they operate, the multimodal approach to their study adopted in this thesis, and the meaning potential of the modes that make them up. Lastly, a brief overview of British and Lebanese comics will be given.

3.1 The Comic Genre

The nature of comics is arguably debatable; they have been referred to as a genre, a language in its own right, an art form, a form of communication, and a medium in itself. This broad inventory of descriptive terms reflects the complex yet versatile nature of comics apparent in Gravett’s (2012, p. 8) reference to comics as “a form of narrative of disconcerting simplicity but also of incredible complexity.” Though highly diverse in terms of content and functions, comics may be classed as a genre in as far as “the term ‘genre’ refers to ‘a type of text’” with observable features which are shared by other texts identified as belonging to the same genre (van Leeuwen, 2005a, p. 122). These observable features are mainly to do with the combination of pictures and speech

⁶ After dance, music, painting, sculpture, literature and poetry, photography, films, and architecture

balloons within panels organized in sequence. In fact, the sequential arrangement of hybrid pictorial and linguistic units in comics is distinctive to the comic genre.

Additionally, apart from the textual narration they share with other literary genres, comics are also characterised by a visual narration, mainly identifiable through the angle of the panels. This latter points towards the narrator whose perspective we see things through. The two-layered narration adds to the intricacies of the comic genre since the resulting “mobility of narrative techniques available to comics,” namely that of narrative voice and visual perspective, gives the reader a multiplicity of perspectives where s/he could be “situated both within and without the story” (Round, 2007, pp. 327-8). This versatility undoubtedly adds to the rich complexity and nuance of the comic narrative.

The comic narrative genre is made even more intricate because of ‘closure’, a phenomenon that is at the very heart of comic composition. McCloud (1993, p. 63) refers to closure as the “phenomenon of observing the parts but perceiving the whole.” This is because the comic panels are selective by nature as they allow the framing of particular key moments only. “The artist capture(s) or “freeze(s)” one segment in what is in reality an uninterrupted flow of action” (Eisner, 2008a, p. 39). Hence, closure would basically refer to the reader stepping in to fill the details and events not depicted within the panels. In that sense, the gutter, the space between the panels, is the place in comics where closure is allowed free rein. McCloud (1993, pp. 66) illustrates this beautifully in comic form as he presents the following two panels:



Figure 10. McCloud (1993, p.66)

He (McCloud, 1993, pp. 66) then illustrates the closure phenomenon and the contribution of the reader using those same panels (Figure 11).



Figure 11. McCloud (1993, p. 68)

Three points are notably clear in this example. First, “the gutter is often the site of major events” (Round, 2007, p. 317). Second, comics indeed seem to be constructed around “an open half-narrative” which requires the reader’s interpretation and additional input for its completion (ibid., p. 323). Third, though closure can only logically proceed along certain lines, it still allows room for personalised readings, particularly in terms of the how things happened in the gutter (ibid.).

Essentially then, closure enables the reader to mentally connect disconnected panels and “construct a continuous, unified reality” (McCloud, 1993, p. 67). This is why Duncan and Smith (2009, p. 133) posit,

Comics are reductive in creation and additive in reading. That is, creators reduce the story to moments on a page by encapsulation, and readers expand the isolated moments into a story by a process called closure.

This encapsulation necessarily follows a principle of economy regulating the use and combination of both word and image to allow the reader to perceive a unified universe, a continuity beyond the fragmentation of images (Standjofski, 1983, p. 36). The gutter in its diegetic function plays a particularly important role in contributing towards that economy principle (ibid., p. 37). Similarly, conventionalised formulaic expressions are seen as particularly advantageous too (ibid., p. 32).

Though the phenomenon of closure is necessarily present in all narrative genres, it is particularly prominent in comics given their constituting sequential narrative panels

that are naturally more selective than uninterrupted prose. This heavy reliance on closure and the necessary participation of the reader it entails make comics a particularly powerful “participatory genre” (Gravett & Dunning, 2014, p. 88). In addition to engendering a sense of appropriation potentially unparalleled in other narrative forms, this characteristic centrality of the reader’s personal input in comics further warrants the use of the integrative approach to impoliteness adopted in this study (section 2.2).

3.2 Approaches to Multimodality in Comic Research

A definition of multimodality that may fit the interactional fictional genre of comics is Jewitt’s (2009, p. 14) who proposes, “Multimodality describes approaches that understand communication and representation to be more than about language, and which attend to the full range of communicational forms people use – image, gesture, gaze, posture, and so on – and the relationships between them.” Clear and encompassing, Jewitt’s definition also cleverly circumvents the use of ‘mode’, a concept that is notoriously tricky to define (e.g. Forceville, 2006, 2009; Gibbons, 2012; Jewitt, 2009; Page, 2010). But though undoubtedly challenging, delimiting what constitutes a mode is central to a study in multimodality.

A minimalist one-to-one correspondence between separate modes and the five senses may lead to a “crude categorization” that cannot possibly account for nuances and variations in perceptions, processes and uses, among other things (Forceville, 2009, p. 22). Indeed, Kress and van Leeuwen (2001, p. 66) argue that modes are not exactly equivalent to the physiological experiences they are based upon (Page, 2010, p. 7). A delineation of mode that effectively anchors the concept of mode to a particular medium and context of use is the one provided by Page (2010, p. 6 my emphasis):

What might count as a mode is an open-ended set, ranging across a number of systems including but not limited to language, image, colour, typography, music, voice quality, dress, gesture, spatial resources, perfume, and cuisine. **The status of a mode is relative and may vary according to its instantiation within a given community.** For example, the potential of particular scents to carry meaning may be high for perfume creators but less so for other individuals who are not trained to differentiate between them. (...) **Semiotic modes are realized materially through particular media.**

Based on the above, the modes selected for scrutiny are necessarily bound to be open

categories across a variety of systems, ones that are particularly pertinent to “a given community” and “a particular medium” -- in our particular instance, the research community with an interest in the realisation of impoliteness phenomena in comics. This reasoning is the one that informs the selection of the mode categories that make up the analytical framework of this study (section 4.4.2).

As opposed to the age-old practice of multimodality, the corresponding academic field is still in its early stages (Gibbons, 2012, p. 8). Nevertheless, Nørgaard (2014, p. 471) suggests that it has already forked in two different directions, a cognitive and a social semiotic one. The social semiotic approaches, including Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2001), have generally been dominant; they largely build on Systemic Functional Linguistics and generally tend to “privileg(e) the surface structure of the text” (Gibbons, 2012, pp. 23-4). Their central focus is largely the unveiling of the ‘grammars’ of the semiotic modes at work in a given application field (Nørgaard, 2014, p. 471). However, these “grammars” are broader social systems, not particularly focussed on dealing with the interpersonal interactions at the heart of this dissertation. In contrast, a cognitive multimodal perspective would ultimately be more oriented towards “processes of meaning-making” in comics and would work “toward a pragmatics rather than toward a system of comics” (Kukkonen, 2013a, p. 7).

Moreover, as discussed in the previous section, the highly selective and participatory nature of the comic medium actively relies on the reader's participation in filling in the space between the panels with the likely actions, reactions, and interactions. The centrality of this inferential process to comics is another important reason the cognitive perspective may be more suitable for the present study. As a matter of fact, “cognitive stylistics combines the kind of explicit, rigorous and detailed linguistic analysis of literary texts that is typical of the stylistics tradition with a systematic and theoretically informed consideration of the cognitive structures and processes that underlie the production and reception of language” (Semino & Culpeper, 2002, p. ix). Accounting for these cognitive processes is crucial for our purpose given that comics do not involve a mere re-presentation of an interaction but rather a presentation of the entire interaction for construction in the reader's mind. Indeed, “to create a comic is not a way of telling a story with illustrations replicating the world it is set in, but a creation of that

fantastic world from scratch” (Round, 2007, p. 318). Furthermore, the cognitive approach is entirely compatible with the integrative pragmatic approach adopted for the study as a whole, as explained in section 2.2.

Lastly, because “the enormity of fully examining the semiotic resources used in narrative (in its broadest sense) falls far beyond a single framework, and must by necessity be diverse, interdisciplinary, and integrative” (Page, 2010, p. 5), the multimodal cognitive stylistics framework adopted in this study draws chiefly upon the body of work already done in cognitive multimodal stylistics, but it is also further enriched with insights from social semiotics and visual communication research. Nevertheless, it takes as its starting point Forceville, El Refaie, and Meesters’s (2014) proposal of a stylistics of comics, which mainly consists of stylistic devices used to achieve narrative salience (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 487). This list includes the following:

- (1) Pages, panel arrangements and the gutter
- (2) Body types, postures, and facial expressions
- (3) Framing and angles in panels
- (4) Speech and thought balloons
- (5) Onomatopoeia and written words in the story world
- (6) Pictograms and pictorial runes

The meaning potential of each of these categories is discussed in the next section (3.3), though not necessarily in Forceville et al.’s (2014) proposed grouping. This is mainly because while Forceville et al.’s (2014) six-category division undoubtedly takes on board the whole array of multimodal communication produced or represented in comics, their grouping is rather focused on the comics stylistics and compositional devices, and is “concentrated on elements of visual style that are typical of the medium of comics” (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 495). A different grouping, which would take all of these categories into account while attending more directly to the requirements of a multimodal pragmatic analysis of interactional impoliteness in comics is believed to better serve the analytical purposes of the present study (section 4.4.2). In fact, Forceville et al. (2014, p. 494) readily accept that different grouping choices of the stylistic elements of comics could be made as long as they are interpretively significant.

3.3 The Language of Comics

The different modes at play in comics enable a rich and sophisticated depiction of interactions and events. What follows is a discussion of the constituting modes that enable this depiction, followed by a brief discussion on cross-cultural variation.

3.3.1 Text/discourse. The textual element in comics has been a concern to comic scholars mainly in how it relates to and combines with the pictures it accompanies (e.g. Cohn, 2007, 2013; McCloud, 1993). However, Keegan (2013) focused more on the different categories of text in comics. He developed a four-category taxonomy, which I have grouped along with its variants in Table 1.

Table 1

Keegan’s Taxonomy Based on His Textual Description (2013, pp. 289-90)

Category	Description	Variants	Description
Neurolinguistic Text	Verbal representations of mental processes	Speech balloons	When words are spoken
		Thought balloons	When words are thought
Sound effects	Verbal representations of non-verbal sounds	Motivated	Onomatopoeic sound effects
		Unmotivated	Words that do not sound like the noise they represent
Narrative Text	A “voice” which crosses diegetic boundaries to directly address a reader, real or imagined	Intradiegetic	Narrated by something within the story
		Extradiegetic	Narrated by something outside the story
Printed Text	Legible textual data that are part of the setting of the scene depicted in a frame	Consequential	Text important to the story, e.g. a letter (legible to the reader) a character is reading
		Incidental	Text that is a minor part of the scenery, e.g. the signs on the buildings in the backgrounds of scenes

Reflecting on these categories, Keegan (2013) notes how the representation of speech, thought, narration, and sound in comics do not have tangible analogues in real life, and so he mainly sees these as a sign of narratorial presence which intrudes on what could have been a transparent narrative. Though accounted for under Keegan’s taxonomy, the sound effects category is discussed separately in this section.

3.3.2 Facial expressions, postures and gestures. An important asset of comics and most probably a major source of their appeal is the expressiveness of character drawings, strongly conveyed through the depiction of the characters' body posture and facial expressions (Kindborg & McGee, 2007, p. 104). In fact, comics often employ the cartoon style to picture-making to simulate and convey human reality in an amplified way since "cartooning is a form of amplification through simplification" (ibid., pp. 30-1). Also by choosing to keep certain details over others, the comic artist is indirectly directing the reader's attention to those particular meaning-carrying features (ibid.). These generally consist of the emotional signals in the characters' bodies, namely facial, postural and gestural cues.

The role of the face is paramount in the display of emotions and is best expressed in Eisner's (2008b, p. 112) metaphorical scenario where "eyebrows, lips, jaws, eyelids, and cheeks are responding to muscular movements triggered by an emotional switchboard in the brain." Likewise, Ekman and Friesen (2003, p. 19) observe, "the face is a primary, clear, and precise signal system for the expression of specific emotions." More importantly, they provide research-based evidence that testifies to the accuracy of the interpretation of emotions based on those particular facial signals (ibid., p. 11).

Postures and gestures can also convey feelings and emotions, though arguably not as precisely as the face (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 18). They are often studied together, as in Eisner's (2008b, p. 105) suggested repertoire of gestures and postures as "external evidence of internal feelings," namely anger, fear, joy, surprise, deviousness, threat, power, etc. According to Matsumoto, Hwang, and Frank (2016, p. 387), however, while the face and voice convey specific emotions, postures are more indicative of attitudes and general dispositions such as positive/negative or attentive. In parallel, the role of gestures in the embodied representation of emotions was recognised as early as 1872 by Darwin in his description of the gestures that accompany the expression of emotions in *The Expression of the Emotions*.

On the other hand, there is evidence that gestures may be used for emphasis or to drive a message home (section 2.4.2). Fein and Kasher (1996, pp. 807-8) show that "in figurative art a gesture that accompanies a speech act is related to the force rather than to the propositional content of the speech act." Additionally, some gestures like the "OK"

sign or the “thumbs up/down” gesture for good and bad respectively can be said to be emblems (McNeill, 2014, pp. 76-7). A gestural emblem is “like a word of spoken language in that it is *repeatable*, *listable*, and *reportable*”; it is also “culturally defined and maintained” (McNeill, 2014, p.77, italics as in original). Examples include rude gestures, which have different realisations around the world, explored among others by LeFevre (2011). Gestural emblems are believed to be highly revealing of the normative practices in place in a given community, thereby providing “a window onto value” (ibid., p. 93).

3.3.3 Onomatopoeia, pragmatic noises, and prosodic cues. Sound is an important expressive communication channel that represents a gateway to a character’s emotions. Sound, or rather the evocation of sound, is realised in comics through two main devices, speech balloons that encase spoken discourse -- meant to be “heard” rather than read (Matthews, 2006) -- and sound effects. Sound effects can be further divided into onomatopoeia, pragmatic noises, and prosodic cues.

Onomatopoeia is “the lexical process of creating words which actually sound like their referent, e.g. *bang*; *crash*; *cuckoo*; *sizzle*; *zoom*” (Wales, 2011, p. 296). Onomatopoeic words are therefore mimetic and motivated (ibid.). They can be classed into lexical onomatopoeia (e.g. *thud*, *crack*, *slurp*, *buzz*) and nonlexical onomatopoeia (e.g. *vroom vroom*, *brrrrm brrrrm*) (Attridge, 2004 in Simpson, 2004, p. 69). According to Forceville et al. (2014, p. 491), “onomatopoeia is comics’ device par excellence to suggest sound.”

Pragmatic noises may in fact include Forceville et al.’s (2010, p. 9) non-speech vocalizations, i.e., “involuntary utterances produced rather than said by characters (e.g. ‘Pfouah!’ ‘Hic!’ ‘Snif!’)” but they are much broader. Culpeper and Kytö (2010, p. 285) define pragmatic noise as follows:

Pragmatic noise is just that: it is noise in the sense that the items have developed from natural noises, and consequently, do not have homonyms in other word classes or always typical phonological structures; it is pragmatic in the sense that the items convey interpersonal and discursal meanings.

Indeed, pragmatic noises reflect or disclose the mental and emotional reactions of a participant during an interaction (ibid., p. 200). Examples of pragmatic noise include ah,

ha, hah, o, oh, ho, um, hum (ibid., p.199). Unlike Forceville's (2010, p. 9) "involuntary" non-speech vocalisations, while certain pragmatic noises are uttered as natural, non-verbal reflexes, others – more or less conventionalized – can be very much planned and intentional (ibid., p. 285).

The third type of sound effect realisation in comics, prosodic cues may play a particularly important role in the disambiguation of pragmatic meaning. Indeed, "prosody typically creates impressions, conveys information about emotions or attitudes, or alters the salience of linguistically possible interpretations rather than expressing full propositions or concepts in its own right" (Wharton, 2009, pp. 140-1). Prosodic cues in comics are generally realized through marked typography and graphological deviations; for instance capital letters, large-sized, and/or bold typeface may suggest loudness, shouting, and/or anger (Forceville, 2012). Special prosody may also be cued through deviant balloonic (discussed further below). An example would be a serrated or jagged balloon contour, or a bursting balloon that signal angry shouting.

3.3.4 Panels. To start with, panel size, angle, design, and composition are essential to the crafting of the narrative in comics. First, the comic is a medium where size matters as "it is the medium where time equals space" (Gravett, 2013, p. 56). Time is therefore perceived spatially, and since quite often, temporal expansion is narratively significant, the shape and size of panels may be used to extend time and enhance emotion (e.g. through an unusually large panel or a frameless one). Forceville et al. (2014, p. 488) further note, "the reader's perception of temporality may also be influenced by the arrangement, size, directionality and shape of panels on a page and by the space between panels, or by reiteration, overlap, and changes in perspective" (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 488).

Along with panel size, panel angles may also be significant. Standjofski (1983, p. 28) notes that a high angle perspective or bird's eye view tends to shrink characters, crushing them, and so it is used when the protagonist is in a position of weakness. Conversely, a low angle perspective or worm's eye view tends to make characters look imposing, in either a threatening or comforting way, depending on the situation. She

however warns that such interpretations are relative and may vary in the presence of other elements on the comic page.

Next to panel size and angle, framing might carry meaning potential, especially when the typical frame outline or contour is somehow violated (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 487). For instance, “the illusion of power and threat is displayed by allowing the actor to burst out of the confines of the panel. Since the panel border is assumed to be inviolate in a comic page, this adds to the sense of unleashed action” (Eisner 2008a, p. 48). Similarly, a jagged panel outline may signify “an emotionally explosive action,” therefore indicating “a state of tension” (ibid., p. 48). Additionally, panel composition may prove narratively significant too, especially in the positioning of the characters relative to one another wherein parameters like elevation, distance, and imbalance may prove quite telling in relation to issues of inter-relational power and dominance, social distance and intimacy, and equilibrium (McCloud, 2006, p. 111).

3.3.5 Balloonics. Balloonics, as Forceville, Veale, and Feyaerts (2009) refer to balloon visuals, are the most iconic stylistic feature of comics. Variables of interest in balloons include “form, colour, tail-use, occurrence of deviant fonts, and inclusion of non-verbal material” (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 490). Through their contour, size, colour, location, tail orientation, content, and typography, balloons can communicate meaning (e.g. a red balloon with large-sized bold-face font and a jagged tail may indicate strong emotions). Prototypical balloon parameters follow a set of standard conventions (Forceville et al., 2010, p. 15), and any deviation from these standards is usually salient and may therefore be particularly meaningful (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 490). Deviant or atypical shapes and features can be used to convey the states of mind and emotions of the interacting characters. Generally speaking, and “other things being equal, angularity and asymmetry have more negative connotations than roundness and symmetry” (Forceville et al., 2010, p. 17). Just like with panels, yet much more commonly, the shape and size of balloons may be used to extend time and enhance emotion. For instance, a spiky balloon contour with a sharp zigzag tail generally denotes anger (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 491). Similarly, “a balloon (which) ‘bursts’ and extrudes beyond the panels in which it belongs

(...) when combined with other visual features such as non-standard balloon form or bold face, tends to suggest excessive emotion” (Forceville et al., 2010, p. 12).

3.3.6 Pictograms and pictorial runes. Pictograms are “visual representations with a fixed, context-independent meaning, e.g. \$ 🎵 ☹️” (Forceville et al., 2010, p. 9). They feature relatively conventionalised symbolic stylistic devices that represent actual experiences and disclose the characters’ mental states (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 492). They also disclose affective and cognitive states.

Pictorial runes are defined by Forceville et al. (2014, p. 492 based on Kennedy, 1982) as “non-mimetic graphic elements that contribute narratively salient information” and “help(s) comic artists visualise states and events that, in real life, would be inferred from other sources of information.” Examples of pictorial runes include speed lines, movement lines, and “emotion-enhancing flourishes” (Forceville, 2011, p. 875) such as droplets, spikes, spiral, twirl, and the popped-up vein. Besides evoking movement in comics, pictorial runes may also reveal a protagonist’s emotions and frame of mind, especially when they are drawn around the interactant’s head (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 493). Distinctive variations are the haloed droplets that cue emotional intensity, and the haloed spirals that are tightly linked to emotional negativity, especially anger (Forceville, 2011, p. 889). Forceville (2012) also notes that certain pictorial runes like the spiral, the popped up vein, and typical anger pictograms like skulls, stars, Chinese characters, and lightning usually combine to cue anger. In addition to pictograms and pictorial runes, stand-alone punctuation marks, mostly question marks and exclamation marks, may similarly convey a character’s emotions of shock, confusion, incredulity, etc.

3.3.7 Typography. Typography too has pragmatic value in comic art. Font type, direction, colour, and size are all semiotic choices that carry meaning and reflect the emotion of the speech. For instance, angular rather than curved letter contours might signal aggressiveness or an excessive emotional state, and large-sized bold face letters might evoke loss of control and/or loudness. This, according to van Leeuwen (2005b, p. 139), is mainly thanks to the connotation and metaphor principles, which confer on typography a “meaning-potential” that may become active and interpretively meaningful

in specific situated contexts. The connotative aspect of typography can be illustrated in the *circuit* typeface (e.g. **A B C D E F G H I**) wherein aspects of electrical circuitry have been “imported” to suggest technicality (van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 146). The metaphoricity of lettering may be illustrated in the Century Gothic font, for instance, wherein in contrast to the angularity of Agency FB, the roundness of the font “readily lends itself as a metaphor for ‘organicness’, ‘natural-ness’, ‘femininity’ and other related concepts” (van Leeuwen, 2005b, p. 140). This narratively significant metaphoric aspect of typography is also corroborated by Forceville et al. (2010, p. 17) who note “the ‘rule’ that angularity and asymmetry evoke negative connotation appears to be borne out in letters, pictograms, and runes as well (in addition to balloons).”

The features of typography that may particularly carry meaning potential are weight, expansion (i.e., condensed, narrow, expanded, wide), slope, curvature, connectivity, orientation and regularity (van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 139). For instance, increased weight usually signifies increased salience, and a bold typeface may mean ‘daring’, ‘assertive’, ‘solid’, ‘substantial’ or ‘domineering’, ‘overbearing’ – with the reverse potentially signifying ‘timid’, ‘insubstantial’ (ibid., p. 148). Generally speaking, deviations from the established norm in a given comic usually tend to cue important prosodic variations and carry affective meaning, which is why they should always invite analysis.

The stylistic comic features discussed above are in no way exhaustive. Other compositional features such as colour, graphic realisation, and salience may also have meaning potential in the comic narrative. The selected graphic and compositional devices are generally not context-spanning indicators either, but rather rely on the particular context they appear in, as well as on the other accompanying features on the comic page, to achieve their full meaning potential.

3.3.8 A note on cross-cultural variation. When studying multimodality cross-culturally, it seems necessary to take into account cultural variations in the use and representation of the adopted modalities (Jewitt’s, 2009, p. 5), particularly in the aspects pertaining to embodied communication and emotions. Numerous studies have recognised a certain degree of cultural variation in “facial gestures, head movements, gaze, arm and

hand movements, distance, spatial orientation, as well as touch” (Wachsmuth, Lenzen, and Knoblich, 2008, p. 5). For instance, studying gestures, Matsumoto and Hwang (2016, p. 90) note a difference between Latin American and Middle Eastern cultures, which they refer to as expressive cultures, and what they refer to as “much more reserved” cultures like the British and East Asian ones. While the former favour accompanying their speech with expansive animated gesticulation, the latter discourage and rather disapprove of large gestures (*ibid.*).

In relation to emotions, Ekman’s (2003, p. 64) extensive research, also corroborated by the findings of several of his colleagues, reveals that certain “primary” emotions and their physiological manifestations are indeed universal: “Seven emotions each have a distinct, universal, facial expression: sadness, anger, surprise, fear, disgust, contempt, and happiness.” In addition to the universality of certain basic emotions and their facial expression, research by Ekman’s fellow researcher, Klaus Scherer, has shown that vocal signs of emotion are also universal (*ibid.*, p. 65). The main cultural variations are shown to be more related to the particular occurrences that prompt these emotions (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 22) and to the way their display or expression is managed (Ekman, 2003, p. 9).

3.4 British Comics

The history of British comics is long and illustrious; however, this is not what this section is about. Instead, it is an attempt to tease out the potential distinctiveness of British comics. As a matter of fact, the literature around British comics reveals a number of prominent or recurrent features. These seem to include a streak of anti-establishment and anti-authority rebelliousness, a rejection of conformity and popularity in form and content, a witty sense of humour and satire, a rather heightened sense of realism, and a certain thematic depth and psychological complexity.

The roots of the British kind of non-conformism and anti-establishment realistic satire in comics seem to go back all the way to the British painter William Hogarth (1697-1764), whom Lacassin (1971, p. 49) admiringly cites as one of the precursors of the comic genre, namely thanks to his graphic style and themes. In contrast to his contemporaries who mainly depicted cosy, pious, edifying, and noble scenes, Hogarth

was interested in denouncing the crude, hurtful reality of everyday life and the street spectacles fraught with accidents, embarrassments, cruelty, and debauchery, which he depicted using the grotesque (pp. 49-51). In fact, Hogarth seems to have set an early precedent for what seems like an enduring British tradition in comics. Indeed, the quintessentially British *The Dandy* (1937-2013) and *The Beano* (1938-) are “resolutely, gloriously, anti-establishment” (Roach, 2004, p. 9), with a funny, subversive streak rooted in the everyday which “gives children a chance to cock a harmless snook at authority” (Heggie, 2012, p. 8).

In the same anti-establishment satirical vein, *2000 AD* and *Warrior* have undeniably shaped the comic scene in Britain with their realism, subversive wit, and psychological complexity. They also introduced the world to the likes of Grant Morrison, Dave Gibbons, Ian Gibson, Alan Moore and David Lloyd, whose work earned comics respectability, critical acclaim, and a reputation for quality worldwide (Chapman, 2011, p. 242). When most of these British talents were lured to the US in what came to be known as the talent drain, this had a profound effect on an increasingly shrinking comics British landscape, but it also made way for a new generation of British comics creators (Roach, 2004, p. 25).

On the other hand, the British comics’ inclination for realism as well as thematic depth and psychological complexity may be reflected in what Gravett and Dunning (2014, p. 157) refer to as “the British tradition of the anti-hero” which forgoes naive representations of heroism and opts instead for more down-to-earth realism or weird eccentricity. Indeed, the superhero concept so popular in the American culture was very slow to take root in British comics because “British comic readers preferred their supermen as flawed characters with a degree of ambiguity and menace” (Chapman, 2011, pp. 172, 182). To illustrate, when “the intrinsically British” *Warrior* comic was published, a reader commented that it reflected “a national character by its overt lack of superheroic exaggeration” (ibid., p. 227). British superheroes like *Captain Britain* and *Marvelman* only really took off in the 1980s when they were reinvented by British artists like Alan Moore and Garry Leach, who injected in them greater thematic depth, “a strong sense of psychological realism and a highly self-reflexive form of story-telling” (ibid., p. 190)

3.5 Lebanese Comics

Though relatively quite young, the Lebanese comic landscape is hybrid, complex, and creative. In this section, I explore the rather meagre literature around the newly emerged Lebanese adult comics and then discuss some insights gained from the semi-structured interviews (Appendix B) I conducted with five Lebanese comic writers and one Lebanese comic collector and historian.

3.5.1 Lebanese comics in the literature. Comics as a real means of expression can be said to have emerged in Lebanon with Jad's *Carnaval* in 1980 (Standjofski, 1981), the first Lebanese adult comic, a fascinating portrayal of a mind caught in the grips of the carnival of a terrifying reality. From then on, Lebanese comics have caught on rather quickly and been the object of growing local and international interest. Initially, they invariably revolved around the topic of war, the 1975-1990 civil war and the 2006 war with Israel, but they have increasingly become more thematically diverse.

The Lebanese comics are distinctive in their diversity, hybridity -- a marked cultural duality reminiscent of the French mandate -- and ambiguity in artistic style (Standjofski & Khoury, 1985, pp. 16-8). The dual blend of Eastern and Western influences is apparent in the Lebanese comics' general concept, choice of themes, artistic rendering, and mostly language (ibid., p. 5). Indeed, they may be written in French, English, Lebanese, or in the "Franlibanais" dialect, a curious blend of Lebanese and French words in the same sentence (pp.16-9). Also like their British counterparts, Lebanese comics are characterised by an anarchic, rebellious, anti-rules streak (ibid., p. 3).

A determining factor in the prospering of the comics landscape in Lebanon, according to Khoury (2007), is the use of spoken language. Written or standard literary Arabic, 'fusha', is very different from the spoken Lebanese dialect and is considerably divorced from the local Lebanese culture in its "popular terms and proverbs and local twisted meanings" (ibid.). Spoken language is therefore much livelier and more expressive. Khoury (2007) adds, "only the spoken language could integrate smoothly into the nature of comics as a living and dynamic form of Art" (ibid.). He also duly notes that this is a problem the West does not have to contend with. Indeed, "in the West, comics

are normally written in a fairly, often conversational, form of the standard national language” (Douglas and Malt-Douglas, 1994, p. 4).

3.5.2 Lebanese comics from the perspective of Lebanese comics creators.

The interviews conducted were meant to generate a better understanding of the Lebanese comic scene. I also tried to gauge the respondents’ professional opinion around the potential of comics to (re)present interactional dynamics and impoliteness in particular. Over the course of three years (2014-2016), I interviewed five Lebanese comic writers, George Khoury (aka Jad), Michele Standjofski, Mazen Kerbai, Lena Merhej, and Rima Barrack, as well as Henry Matthews, author of *The Encyclopedia of Lebanese Comic Books* (2010). I have grouped below some of the obtained insights that might contribute to a better understanding of the Lebanese comics.

On the use of the spoken Lebanese dialect in comics, both Khoury (personal communication, March 6, 2015) and Standjofski (personal communication, July, 28, 2014) believe that the dialectical spoken language is better suited to comics than formal literary Arabic. Khoury (2015) further explained that not only is this language issue a genre-specific restriction, but that it is also necessarily a matter of identity. In that same vein, he sees that the words in Lebanese comics should be handwritten rather than typed, as this better reflects the spontaneity of spoken language as opposed to the formality of literary Arabic. However, he readily acknowledges the difficulties associated with the use of the spoken dialect, principally the fact that there are no agreed upon conventions so far as to how to write the spoken language (Appendix A).

As for the distinctively creative and experimental aspect of the Lebanese comics, Khoury (2015) attributes it partly to a hybridity reflective of the multiplicity of cultural influences that make up the Lebanese society (section 2.7.2). He also sees that it is partly the result of the fact that the visual culture is new to this part of the world whose traditional cultural repertoire leans more towards songs, poems, motifs, geometrical patterns, and a bit of photography (though photographs for remembrance rather than as artistic expression). Indeed, it was not before the end of the nineteenth century that the Middle East started acquiring a visual memorial culture (Heideman, 2013, p. 58). Standjofski (2014) concurs with Khoury (2015) about the distinctive hybrid nature of

Lebanese comics. Moreover, she sees that there are currently some quality fiction and social satire Lebanese comics that are quite complex in terms of art and content, but she expresses scepticism about excessive experimentalism that does not build on technical mastery. Kerbaj (2014) contests this view, however, claiming that there was practically nothing substantial to continue or build on in the first place.

On the other hand, Standjofski (2015) notes that comic publications are bound to remain non-lucrative in Lebanon given the small market and lack of editorial structure. This is why valuable local talents now reside and are published in Europe and some in the USA. The comic creators who have remained in Lebanon occasionally publish in fanzines, newspapers, magazines, etc. In fact, it is this latter category that will make up the Lebanese dataset.

Lastly, with regard to the potential of the comic genre in the realisation of interactional dynamics related to impoliteness, Kerbaj (personal communication, August 8, 2014) argues that comics may well constitute an optimum medium for this realisation. He notes that the comics' inevitable use of the spoken language, along with their high level of reader engagement and character appropriation, the directness of their illustrations, and their ability to (re)produce sound effects, "call" for more friendliness and familiarity with the reader, and consequently more impoliteness. In contrast, Rima (personal communication, February 16, 2016) and Standjofski (2014) see that this is an issue that is not tied to the literary medium. Standjofski (2014) believes that the "familiarity/impoliteness" reportedly observed in comics reflects a certain evolution in the social norms of society of this era more generally, and is not really a function of the comic genre. When probed about some examples of impoliteness I had taken from her own comics, she saw these as examples of "impertinence" (the interview was in French) rather than impoliteness. Impertinence is an interesting feature of comics definitely worth exploring, in her opinion, because it is positive and may bring about change. Her casting of "impertinence" in a positive light, along with the implicit contrast with a rather 'negative' view of impoliteness, clearly reflects a lay understanding of impoliteness tied to notions of moral judgements. However, the French definition of "impertinence" in the *Larousse* dictionary is "Attitude de quelqu'un qui cherche à choquer par la liberté, le caractère déplacé, l'insolence de ses manières, de ses paroles; caractère de ses actes" (/the

attitude of someone who is seeking to shock by the freedom, the inappropriateness, and the impertinence of her/his manners, words, and actions) (“Impertinence,” n.d.). Interestingly, this definition places Standjofski’s notion of “impertinence” within comics at the heart of the broader definition of impoliteness adopted in this study (section 2.4.4).

3.6 Summary

This chapter on comics has attempted to give a broad sweep of the field, particularly focusing on the aspects that are believed to be of some consequence for a study of impoliteness in comics. In that sense, genre-specific aspects relevant to a study of interactional dynamics were given some centrality, along with the cognitive phenomenon of closure at the heart of comics and the related cognitive-based multimodal approach. The multimodal language of comics was then thoroughly discussed, along with the meaning affordances of each of the modes constituting comics.

In fact, this chapter mainly aimed at a better understanding of the nature of the comic genre and of the intricate affordances of the different modes that are used in the realisation of comic narratives, which is essential for the identification and interpretation of the impoliteness behaviours and events in them and the unveiling of the interactional dynamics that underlie these. Moreover, it provided an overview of the characteristics potentially relevant in comic impoliteness data that are important for devising the analytical framework for this study that is discussed in the next chapter. Lastly, a discussion of British and Lebanese comics aimed to highlight the potentially distinctive history and features of the comic genre in these two countries. In the next chapter, the specific comic anthologies selected for the study and the procedure used to collect and analyse impoliteness phenomena in them will be discussed.

Chapter 4 Data and Method

This dissertation sets out to explore how pragmatic forms, functions and contexts interact in achieving impoliteness. More particularly, it investigates the forms and functions of impoliteness in the context of British and Lebanese comics. In addition, it also seeks to investigate the extent to which Culpeper's impoliteness model (2011a/2015b) can account for impoliteness in a multimodal fictional medium in two different countries. In order to do this, a number of comics were carefully selected and paired for study from each of the British and Lebanese comic scenes. The rationale informing this selection is described in detail before an overview of the anthologies selected is given. The analytical procedure used to collect and analyse impoliteness in these anthologies is also detailed. Lastly, potential methodological concerns in relation to the adopted translation policy and researcher's background are addressed.

4.1 Rationale for Data Selection

Since the comic genre encompasses quite a broad range of publications with a wide variety of formats, subgenres, themes, and readerships, it is important to delimit the scope of the present study. First, the concept of comic adopted is that of "a publication in booklet, tabloid, magazine or book form that includes as a major feature the presence of one or more strips," the comic strips being "narrative(s) in the form of a sequence of pictures – usually, but not always, with text" (Sabin, 2003, p. 5). This definition naturally excludes freestanding comic strips in dailies and weeklies as well as editorial and political cartoons, which are debatably a separate genre. While strips and cartoons undeniably use the same communication tools as comics, a mix of words and images, Sabin (2003, p. 2) rightly argues that they subscribe to different traditions and therefore obey different conventions from comics, not least amongst them the binding constraints of topicality and political comment for cartoons, and of brevity of narrative scope and speed narration for strips.

Certain comic subgenres are similarly excluded from consideration for various reasons. A notable comic subgenre that is excluded from this study is the silent comic, which is left out because the verbal part, quite essential for the present study's pragma-

stylistic analysis, is non-existent in it. For the same reason, comics that are generally focused on illustration at the expense of the verbal part are not included in the study's dataset; one notable example of such comics is the *Nobrow Magazine*. A third popular British comic subcategory, science fiction action weeklies, such as the highly acclaimed *2000 AD* (with among its pages *Judge Dredd*) and *CLiNT*, is discounted from the study's dataset simply because there is no equivalent Lebanese sci-fi comic. Finally, TV shows, movies, video games, and game tie-ins such as *Dr Who Weekly* and *Toxic Magazine* are also excluded from the scope of the present study because the comic is examined here as a genre in its own right rather than a "stepping stone[s] to other media" (Humberstone, 2009b).

The data selection process is also restricted by certain data limitations related to the two cultures chosen. Since British comics are much more abundant and diverse in subgenres and formats than the Lebanese ones, the available Lebanese data are taken as the basis for data selection. Nevertheless, the issue of selecting careful comic matches on the British side, where I cannot claim insider knowledge, was decidedly delicate and challenging. So after reading extensively and coming up with an initial list of matching pairs of comics, I sought the expert advice of Paul Gravett, the British comic historian, critic, curator and writer, who also does regular reviews of the British and international comics scenes. He generously reviewed the proposed paired sets of comics, gave his opinion on each, and even suggested some possible alternative British choices.

After defining the boundaries of this study, the principles of data selection that may have the potential to serve its focus are set. The central aim being to compare the forms and functions of impoliteness in the Lebanese and British comics of a given period, the variables believed to be relevant for the selection of the comics that form the study's dataset are publication format, publication date range, target audience, and representativeness.

(1) Publication format. Periodical comic anthologies have been selected rather than single narrative comic books (also sometimes referred to as graphic novels) mainly for their breadth, wider variety, and larger number of comic entries. This latter attribute is particularly important for the quantitative aspect of the study. A periodical comic anthology is taken to be a collection of comics in a magazine, newspaper, or paperback

format published at regular intervals. Additional distinctions, mainly related to the publication format and type of contributions included are further taken into consideration to divide the selected anthologies into three paired categories: (a) magazine anthologies with regular contributors and serialized characters, (b) fanzine/newspaper anthologies, and (c) paperback anthologies. Both (b) and (c) occasionally have some regular contributors but also and more frequently new ones, where the stories and characters are generally not serialized.

(2) Publication date range. Although editorial cartoons and newspaper strips are fairly widespread in Lebanon, it was not until the year 2000 that the first serious attempt at an adult comic periodical saw the light with *Zerooo*. The year 2000 is therefore taken as a starting date for the works selected and 2015 as a cut-off date, hence the study can be said to investigate impoliteness in the British and Lebanese adult comic periodical anthologies of the early 21st century.

(3) Target audience. As impoliteness is the main focus of the present study, it seems more logical to focus on comics written for adults where the degree of censorship generally differs from the one often required or expected in works addressed to children. This is of course not always the case, and some children's British comics like *The Dandy* and *The Beano* do have a certain reputation for irreverence. Generally speaking, though, impoliteness is expected to be rather sparse in children's comics, especially in the Lebanese children's comics which are mainly part of religious and educational publications, hence the dissertation's focus on adult comics. Though a clear-cut delineation of adult comics may not be realistic or always possible, the term 'adult comics' is here used in the general sense posited by Sabin (2003, p. 3) referring to "a comic with a mature bent," generally addressed to a 16+ readership.

(4) Representativeness. To be able to consider a given British periodical comic anthology representative of the comic format selected, the first criterion adopted is that the work selected has to be both created by UK authors and published in the UK. This is an important criterion for British comics because an impressive number of widely acclaimed comics have been created by the British comic writers of what came to be known as the British Invasion. However, these have been generally commissioned and published by American publishing houses like DC comics, Vertigo, and Marvel and may

therefore be perceived as having been written for the American public. As a result, the degree of their representativeness of British comics may well be contestable. A second selection criterion believed to be important for the representativeness of a given comic is the level of recognition or critical acclaim it has received, which may contribute towards ensuring that the work selected is of fairly good quality and thus likely to endure. So each of the selected British comic anthologies has to have had positive authoritative reviews or to have been nominated for or received a recognized literary or comic award.

Representativeness in Lebanese comics is perceived along similar lines, that is, comics selected have to be created by Lebanese authors and published in Lebanon. However, though the anthologies chosen have been the object of critical acclaim, it cannot truly be claimed that this critical acclaim has also been used as a selection criterion simply because the Lebanese anthologies chosen are the only Lebanese adult comic anthologies published in the early 21st century.

4.2 Dataset Selected

After careful consideration of Lebanese and British comic anthologies based on the rationale outlined in the previous section, three carefully matched pairings are chosen as the study’s dataset (Table 2).

Table 2

Dataset Selected

Comic format	British anthology	Lebanese anthology
Magazine anthology	<i>Viz</i> The 2000–2001 <i>Viz</i> annuals: - <i>The Bag of Slugs, A Coma Inducing Round of Below the Belters</i> [from Issues 100-105] - <i>The Bear Trapper’s Hat: A Grizzly Selection of Flea-Bitten Old Pelt</i> [from Issues 106 to 111]	<i>Zeroo</i> (2000–2001)
Newspaper/fanzine anthology	<i>The Comix Reader</i> (2011–present)	<i>La Furie des Glandeurs</i> (2011–2013)
Paperback anthology	<i>Solipsistic Pop</i> (2009–present)	<i>Samandal</i> (2008–present)

The selected dataset (Table 2) includes 6 periodical comic anthologies, 3 British and 3 Lebanese ones. The British anthologies total 10 issues and 2 annuals that include selections from 12 issues. The Lebanese anthologies include 28 issues in total. Five of the 6 selected anthologies are reasonably manageable with regard to bulk and text density within the panels. However, this is clearly not the case for the *Viz* annuals which contain 158 comics and which, as is obvious, even without any quantitative analysis, are relatively long and include a lot of text in the panels by comparison to the other comics. This is without counting the expected high density in impoliteness in the *Viz* comic, whose potential for offensiveness has been notoriously documented in the literature. Indeed, *Viz* has been described as “Newcastle’s rude, crude, punk-inspired rag” (Gravett & Stanbury, 2006, p. 21) with “a combination of toilet humour and bawdy satire” (Chapman, 2011, p. 216), “vulgar language, toilet and surreal humour, black comedy and sexual or violent storylines” (Robinson, 2015). It has also been described as “anarchic” (Cook, 2004), “scatological” (Burrell, 2014), “outrageous” (Chapman, 2011, p. 221), “hilariously bawdy” (Sabin, 2003, p. 116), “hilariously puerile” (White, 2014), as well as “brutal, street credible, and foul-mouthed” (Sabin, 2003, p. 117). A systematic selection was therefore deemed necessary from within the *Viz* anthologies to bring down the number of examined comics within the two *Viz* annuals to a reasonable number.

To do this, I examined the literature around *Viz*—notably in Gravett and Stanbury (2006), Chapman (2011), Sabin (2003), Donald (2005), and Tait (2007)—and devised a selection rationale detailed in Appendix C. Briefly put, I have proposed to select the comics at the intersection between popularity as documented in the literature and character representativeness, that is, spanning the three identified category types in *Viz*. I have therefore considered for data collection all the comics in the two annuals that correspond to the two most iconic *Viz* comic titles from each of the three character categories discussed. This selection rationale resulted in the following comics:

- Category A: Sid the Sexist (x4) and The Fat Slags (x7)
- Category B: Buster Gonad (x1) and Johnny Fartpants (x1)
- Category C: Roger Mellie the Man on the Telly (x5) and Finbarr Saunders and His Double Entendres (x1)

The figures between parentheses correspond to the number of titles of the chosen comic strip in the two selected annuals. In total then, 19 comics from *Viz* are examined. With these, the total number of comics examined in the dataset becomes 501 comics, 212 British and 289 Lebanese ones. Below is a brief description of each of the anthologies selected in the dataset.

4.2.1 Magazine anthologies.

Viz (UK; 1979–). The *Viz* comic magazine started as a 150-copy fanzine in 1979 and became the biggest-selling comic of the late '80s and early '90s with more than a million copies sold for each issue (Tait, 2007, p. 82). It somehow lost its appeal shortly thereafter, and now seems to have made some sort of a quiet and steady comeback with sales stabilizing around the 60,000 copies mark (White, 2014). *Viz* is a “mixture of *Beano*-inspired artwork, irreverent tone and frankly rude humour” with iconic characters such as ‘Roger Melly, the Man on the Telly’, ‘The Pathetic Sharks’, and ‘The Fat Slags’ often described as “national institutions” (Roach, 2004, p. 27). The “Geordie comic” as William Cook (2004) refers to it, “became a British institution” and attracted critical notoriety with its “strange mix of X-rated spoofs of children’s comics, satirical news stories (long before *The Onion*), funny letters, and other things” (White, 2014). Strangely enough, despite its puerile character and school playground subject matter of “cartoons dealing with flatulence and fornication, bowel movements and balls,” *Viz* labels itself as an adult comic and the average *Viz* reader is 38 (Burrell, 2014). The magazine even carries the warning “not for sale to children” on its back cover.

For the present study, *Viz – The Bag of Slugs* and *Viz (Issues #100-105) – The Bear Trapper’s Hat (Issues #106-111)*, the *Viz* annuals which publish selections from the February 2000 to January 2002 issues and are co-edited by Simon Thorp and Graham Dury are examined. Annuals are chosen for *Viz* because they are easier to find than single past issues and are normally compilations of the best in each of the six yearly issues. The 2000-2002 publication span is chosen because it corresponds to the publication years of the paired Lebanese comic periodical, *Zerooo*, the only matching Lebanese periodical. It might be important to mention that the 2000-2002 period which is picked for a sturdier cross-cultural comparison is not exactly the heyday of *Viz*. However, popularity is not a

variable which is expected to be relevant to the present study, so the fact that the date range picked falls outside the peak days of *Viz* should not be a great cause for concern.

Zerooo (Lebanon; 2000–2001). The very first and only Lebanese comic magazine for adults aged 18-78 (as stated on its cover), *Zerooo* is a trilingual (Lebanese, French, and English) coloured comic magazine. It groups a number of regular contributors and features some serialized characters. Aiming to tackle “all matters in (our) society that deserve a zero” in comic form, as declared in the 2000 issue 0 editorial, *Zerooo* is a magazine “with heavy social satire and exaggerated stereotypical characters” (Matthews, 2010, p. 225). Feghali, (2014, p. 52) notes that the comics in *Zerooo* are gags and social or political parodies, rendered in an exaggerated form that magnifies society’s flaws or shortcomings and sometimes borders on the vulgar (ibid., pp. 53,55). Largely because the diminutive Lebanese market is not structured in a way to make comic endeavours economically viable (section 3.6.2), *Zerooo* folded in 2001 after five issues. These included an additional complimentary special issue in 2003, dedicated to contributor Edgar Aho who had just died, but it mostly had republished material that was not counted.

4.2.2 Newspaper/fanzine anthologies.

The Comix Reader (UK; 2011–). A London-based, independent alternative comic newsprint anthology, *The Comix Reader* “attempts to reignite the free spirit of the underground press” (*The Comix Reader*, n.d.). There have been 6 issues of *The Comix Reader* published so far, and in 2015, it has made the Selection for best Alternative Comic at the Festival de la Bande Dessinée d'Angoulême. Entries in *The Comix Reader* do not follow a specific theme and rarely exceed one page in scope. *The Comix Reader* contributors are a mix of established and new talents, “a rogues gallery of the UK’s funniest, edgiest and weirdest cartoonists” (Cowdry, 2015 cited in Medaglia, 2015). Some of them are regular contributors while others are occasional or one-off contributors.

This results in an anthology set where “each comic is refreshingly different from the next – there is no house style here – but each shares a common taste for the subversive, the experimental, or the angst-ridden that is so often the hallmark of

alternative comics” (Lander, 2012). With its cheap, disposable newsprint format that is reminiscent of the 60s underground scene, *The Comix Reader* has “a not wholly polished vibe to it,” yet is highly dynamic and direct (Brown, 2013).

La Furie des Glandeurs (Lebanon; 2011–2013). A reportedly multilingual (in effect mainly trilingual) fanzine with six issues so far, this Lebanese fanzine publishes both professional and amateur comic creators in 1-2 page strips, illustrations, and some relatively short prose pieces. *La Furie des Glandeurs*, or ‘the fury of the layabouts’ in English, features themes that revolve around the Lebanese society as the fanzine is mainly addressed to a Lebanese audience (Bassil & Eid, 2011). It characteristically excludes work related to politics and religion reportedly because these topics are too sensitive to be tackled in the multiconfessional Lebanese context without the necessary hindsight (ibid.).

4.2.3 Paperback anthologies.

Solipsistic Pop (UK; 2009–). *Solipsistic Pop* was originally meant as a bi-annual anthology, but seems to have been published at irregular intervals as there have only been four issues published so far. It is an independently published paperback comic anthology edited by Tom Humberstone, and it has a rather polished feel to it; “*Solipsistic Pop* looks, feels, reads something more like a high end arts/design magazine than some small press anthology of old” (Bruton, 2010). It publishes the work of UK based comic artists (for the most part British), and is “designed to spotlight the best in alternative comic art from the UK”, that is, “beautiful, fresh, inventive comics from UK artists in original and surprising formats” (“*Solipsistic Pop*”, n.d.). The contributions generally subscribe to a given theme and are rather short. *Solipsistic Pop* is intended as a novel paradigm for “a new wave of comics” (Humberstone, 2009b) that are intended for a wider audience than the usual comics readers (ibid.). Bruton (2010) describes *Solipsistic Pop* as “something of a “game changer” for small press/self published works (ibid.).

Samandal—Picture stories from here and there (Lebanon; 2008–). *Samandal* has a broad scope and a diverse approach that encompasses abstract comics with a rather

pronounced aesthetic and artistic concern beyond the merely communicative one (Feghali, 2013, p. 55). *Samandal* is in fact the Arabic word for the 'salamander' amphibian, and “much like the dual habitats of amphibious creatures, the *Samandal* paperback anthology thrives between two worlds; the image and the word, entertainment and substance, the low brow and raised brow, the experimental and the traditional” (Imam, 2008). Founded and edited by a Lebanese team of writers and illustrators, *Samandal* has been essentially trilingual until a recent shift to a broader multilingualism, with the addition of a couple of entries in German and Spanish (with generally a booklet containing translations of the foreign strips). *Samandal* publishes local, regional, and international contributions. Its entries are black and white, vary in length, and are often one-off comics, with a few serialized stories. Most contributions can generally be said to be attempts at inventive, original comic art.

4.3 Research Design: A Mixed-Methods Approach

A mixed methods approach is adopted in the present study for a more comprehensive, in-depth understanding of both the nature and distribution of impoliteness in British and Lebanese comic anthologies. Quantifiable impoliteness-related features believed to be of some import to the study of impoliteness forms in comics are the object of a quantitative analysis, while noteworthy usage patterns and selected impoliteness events are the object of a qualitative exploration that examines them in context (through a cultural lens) and probes their functions. In this manner, regular patterns are established quantitatively and form the backdrop against which specific variations take on special meaning, which is examined qualitatively. In addition to enabling me to draw on different critical perspectives, combining both the qualitative and quantitative approaches has the advantages of helping to “corroborate (provide convergence in findings), elaborate (provide richness and detail), or initiate (offer new interpretations) findings from the other method” (Rossman & Wilson, 1985, p. 627 in Dörnyei, 2007, p. 30). Moreover, the qualitative and quantitative phases of the present research do not follow a strict linear pattern, but rather intermingle regularly so that each is used to inform and refine the effectiveness of the other to better address the study’s objectives.

4.4 Analytical Framework and Data Collection

This section starts by discussing the first step in this study of impoliteness in comics, the strategy used for identifying impoliteness behaviours. It then describes the analytical framework and corresponding data collection instrument devised to analyse and record the uncovered instances of impoliteness. Lastly, this section outlines the procedure followed in the analysis of the identified impoliteness behaviours.

4.4.1 Identifying impoliteness in comics: selection criteria. Since the main aim of the present study is to examine impoliteness in the British and Lebanese comics of the early 21st century, my immediate purpose is to “study those specific contexts in which participants display an understanding that something impolite was expressed” (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3240). The participants in this case are the characters in the comics studied. It is important to note here that though there are decidedly multiple layers of discourse in fiction (e.g. Jucker, 2016; Leech & Short, 1981; Short, 1996), this study is primarily concerned with impoliteness cases at the inter-character level. This is mainly for more rigor and focus because an author-reader level would require a different analytical framework and method, more geared towards a reader-response investigation.

How will an understanding of impoliteness between characters in a given comic manifest itself? What will count as evidence that such an understanding has indeed taken place? In this section, I propose that impoliteness can be effectively cued by the presence of an impoliteness trigger such as an insult or context-driven implicational impoliteness (section 2.4.1), accompanied by evidence that impoliteness has indeed been perceived by either one of the participants/users or observers/analysts. Though impoliteness triggers necessarily carry the brunt in flagging the potential for impoliteness, this impoliteness selection strategy accounts for the centrality of the role of appraisal in evaluations of impoliteness (Culpeper’s, 2011a, p. 57 and section 2.3.5) and consequently Culpeper’s (2015b, p. 435) recommendation that “one must be sure to count both the appearance of the strategy plus an interpretation that it was taken as impolite in its context.” The types of evidence examined to corroborate an evaluation of impoliteness include challenging responses such as the typical counter impoliteness response patterns (section 2.4.3), metapragmatic comments (sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3), and indicators of emotions

symptomatic of offence such as anger, humiliation, hurt, and outrage (sections 2.3.4 and 3.3) (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 436).

Nevertheless, an important caveat to keep in mind in the present study is that the co-textual and contextual evidence that normally corroborate an evaluation of impoliteness might not always be available in comics. This is a limitation of the comic medium itself and an important reason behind the adoption of a cognitive multimodal stylistic perspective. The way the comic genre is constructed (section 3.1) does not always enable the representation of evidence of an evaluation of impoliteness among characters. Indeed, comics are created by framing and encapsulating only a select number of the moves that make up a given event, and a meaningful comic reading is largely dependent on the reader actively filling in the space between the panels, the gutters, with the likely actions, reactions, and interactions. The result is that quite often, the impact of an act or utterance deemed impolite, or the response to it from the involved fictional participants, is not always presented within the panels.

I would suggest that in such cases, the reader and analyst has to draw on the participatory nature of comics (section 3.1) not just in the reading but also in the analysis of the comic. As Round (2007, p. 317) puts it, the reader-analyst would be working “alongside the creators as a kind of contributory author, both by interpreting the panel content, and by filling in the gaps.” Consequently, when in the studied comics there is a behaviour expected to elicit a judgement of impoliteness, that is, an impoliteness trigger, but no accompanying confirmation of an impoliteness evaluation from the other fictional participants within the panels, I will draw on the other sources of evidence suggested in this section and in the analytical framework adopted (section 4.4.2).

It is important to note that there are no claims that the adopted impoliteness selection criteria either exclusively or infallibly cue impoliteness events. However, this procedure, which is largely dictated by the nature of the narrative in the medium studied, is unequivocally in tune with the kind of linguistic interpretative moves that are common in stylistic analyses. Furthermore, it is consistent with the theoretical framework adopted in this study, integrative pragmatics, which takes on board both the user-participant and observer-analyst perspectives.

4.4.2 Analytical framework adopted. To develop an analytical framework that enables the systematic collection and analysis of impoliteness behaviours in comics, I draw upon the various multidisciplinary insights discussed in the literature review section. I also follow Forceville et al.'s (2014, p. 494) suggestion that, rather than particular fixed groupings, it is ultimately the combination of elements from within different framework categories that might be interpretively significant for a given purpose. This reasoning, combined with the analytical focus of this dissertation -- i.e., the inter-character interactions in comics that potentially involve impoliteness – largely informs the rationale behind the elaboration of the adopted analytical framework.

The proposed framework (Figure 12) follows the three levels of observation in comics identified by Kukkonen (2013a, p. 112), characters' discourse, characters' bodies, and composition. These in turn account for the impoliteness selection criteria adopted (section 4.4.1) and encompass the comic stylistic devices identified in Forceville et al. (2014) that are expected to be most pertinent to a study of impoliteness (sections 3.2 and 3.3).

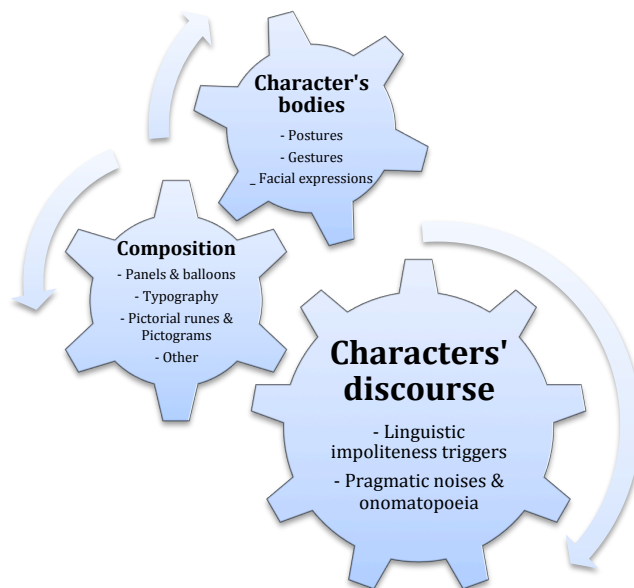


Figure 12. Analytical Framework for the Study of Impoliteness Behaviours in Comics

Figure 12 illustrates how within the proposed framework all the aspects of the interaction, the linguistic and non-linguistic, interact and contribute to the overall interactional

meanings. As reflected by its positioning at the base of the diagram and its size, the “characters’ discourse” category carries the main analytical focus of the study as I am looking primarily at the linguistic aspects of impoliteness. Nevertheless, comics being a multimodal medium, the depiction of the characters’ bodies and panel composition are an integral part of the impoliteness behaviours’ pragmatic contexts, and so they are closely and systematically examined too.

In fact, each of the elements under the three categories of the framework may be thought of as a mode in its own right based on the discussion in section 3.2. Each of these modes has a ‘meaning potential’ (van Leeuwen’s term) or ‘affordance’ (Kress’s term) that explains what it can express and represent (Bezemer & Jewitt, 2010, p. 184). This meaning potential “is shaped by how a mode has been used, what it has been repeatedly used to mean and do, and the social conventions that inform its use in context” (Jewitt, 2009, p. 24). Below is a (brief) description of the communicational and representational potential of each of the selected mode-categories in a study of impoliteness.

Character’s discourse: linguistic impoliteness triggers, onomatopoeia and pragmatic noises. The linguistic impoliteness triggers are principally those that make up Culpeper’s (2015b, p. 441) bottom-up model of impoliteness triggers (section 2.4.1). Though these are behaviours “in their multimodal fullness” (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 55), they all have an essential linguistic component except for one arguably non-linguistic impoliteness behaviour, the context-driven implicational impoliteness type which consists of “absence of behaviour.” This behaviour would be exemplified by the failure to reciprocate a greeting or thank someone for a gift. However, though not technically verbal, this type of impoliteness might still potentially be accounted for under the linguistic impoliteness triggers on account of it being a form of offensive linguistic abstinence.

In addition to impoliteness triggers, the characters’ discourse mode type also encompasses the first two types of evidence of offence proposed by Culpeper (2015b, p. 436), that is, impoliteness responses and metapragmatic comments. The third evidence type, emotions indicating offence, may be realised with the help of the other two modes in this textual category, onomatopoeia and pragmatic noises (section 3.3). Indeed, both

onomatopoeia and pragmatic noises are strong emotion indicators, and so may be important signs of whether offense has been perceived.

Character's bodies: postures, gestures and facial expressions. This mode-category may help cue impoliteness in three fundamental ways. First, as explained in section 2.4.2, certain non-verbal behaviours such as the bird gesture or spitting have become conventionalised impoliteness forms in themselves. Second, the non-verbal aspect of communication may disambiguate pragmatic meaning and thereby secure an impoliteness uptake (2.4.2). Third, and more importantly, in the right context this non-verbal aspect may be highly suggestive of the characters' mental states, attitudes and emotions that are crucial to an interpretation of impoliteness (sections 2.3.4 and 3.3).

A reference list of non-verbal predictors or indicators that may trigger an impoliteness-related meaning potential compiled based on my review of the related literature is provided in Appendix D. Nevertheless, by way of illustration, we can say that, for instance, anger may be cued by a number of body cues ranging from furrowed brows to tightened lips, tense muscles, glares, forward leaning postures, or clenched fists. Conversely, resentment could be indicated by an "averted, angry gaze, mouth closed tightly" (McCloud, 2006, p. 90) while shame could be cued either by a forward leaning posture (Frank & Shaw, 2016, p. 51) or by a rigid, upright posture, clenched teeth and fists, and arms hugging the body (Eisner, 2008b, p. 62).

Composition: panels and balloons, typography, pictorial runes and pictograms, and other. The graphic and compositional mode-category contains the largest number of modes characteristic of comics. It encompasses narratively salient features at all levels of composition and graphic rendering, from the largest unit, the arrangement of panels on the page, to the smallest one, i.e. the flourish or pictorial rune. In the right context and in favourable combinations, the graphic and compositional features that make up this category may all contribute towards an impoliteness uptake by carrying emotional meaning and/or reflecting the intensity of an utterance through the encoding of non-verbal auditory clues of prosody. The details about comic-specific compositional cues symptomatic of impoliteness related emotions have been discussed in section 3.3 and in

the list of non-verbal indicators that may trigger an impoliteness-related meaning potential in Appendix D.

It is evident that the multimodal grouping adopted for the purposes of this study does not claim exhaustiveness and indeed involves necessarily open and overlapping categorization. For instance a debatable decision is the treatment of the prosodic aspect of the character's discourse in the composition mode-category rather than in the characters' discourse category. However, this particular decision is based on the fact that while prosody is undeniably part of the characters' discourse, its observable manifestations are rather located in the composition mode-category. Also in reality, multimodal experiences are not fragmented for, as Page (2010, p. 8) remarks, "in actuality, modal elements such as those listed are experienced in synergy rather than separately, and in open-ended configurations." Therefore, while serving the study's larger analytical purpose, the proposed classification also mirrors the reality of the multimodal experience, itself fluid and overlapping.

4.4.3 Data collection and analysis. Using the proposed analytical framework and Culpeper's (2015b, p. 441) impoliteness triggers (Figure 2) for reference, I closely examine the character-character interactions in the selected comics. I then make a principled manual inventory of all the impoliteness behaviours within those interactions that fit the adopted criteria using the quantitative data collection table designed for that purpose (Figure 13).

Quantitative Data Collection Table: Forms of impoliteness												
Subgenre/Country/Comic:												
Impoliteness Behaviour/Event			Linguistic impoliteness forms/features					Salient non-linguistic impoliteness-related forms/features				
			Characters' discourse					Characters' bodies		Composition		Other
#	Page/Panel	Language	Linguistic impoliteness triggers				Pragmatic noises & onomatopoeia	Postures, gestures, facial expressions		Panels & balloons	Typography	
			Conventionalized impoliteness formulae	Implicational impoliteness	Indeterminate	Other		Offender	Offended			

Figure 13. Quantitative Data Collection Table

In fact, the proposed quantitative data collection table (Figure 13) is a tabular version of the analytical framework proposed, which enables the recording of the different linguistic and non-linguistic impoliteness-cueing features across the selected modes in the flagged impoliteness behaviours. There are, however, a few significant differences between them.

First, a column for “language” is added to the table because language choice is assumed to be of particular consequence in the analysis of impoliteness in the Lebanese data. Second, under the linguistic impoliteness triggers, to Culpeper’s (2011a/2015b) overarching categories of conventionalised impoliteness formulae (CIF) and implicational impoliteness, two categories have been added, an “indeterminate” and an “other” category. The indeterminate category is meant to capture instances of impoliteness that cannot be convincingly classed under any of the other identified categories. The “other” category under the linguistic impoliteness features/forms is meant to capture special variations on existing impoliteness triggers.

Accounting for variations on existing impoliteness triggers is very important because impoliteness strategies or triggers are culture-specific to a certain extent, and as Culpeper (2015b, p. 427) points out, “just as routines vary according to different communities of practice so do strategies.” It is this possibility that has been accounted for in the data collection spread sheet under the first “other” column. Consequently, when collecting data, I remain open to the fact that impoliteness in the Lebanese culture may not map very well onto the set of impoliteness strategies/triggers developed by Culpeper (1996, 2011a), and that there may be variations or alternatives that need to be recorded.

Another “other” category is added in the last column of the table in an attempt to capture behaviours, which rather than merely accompanying linguistic impoliteness triggers, are believed to be themselves the main triggers in the offence. In fact, Culpeper (2011a, p. 136; section 2.4.2) does mention behaviours such as spitting, sticking one’s tongue out at somebody, giving someone a one or two fingered gesture or turning one’s back on someone as examples of “conventionalised non-verbal visual impoliteness behaviours in British culture.” He (pp. 136-7) also mentions the possibility of certain vocal behaviours such as “screaming or yelling at someone without recognisable words”

as a potential instance of conventionalised non-verbal impoliteness, but expresses doubt as to whether the behaviour in and by itself can secure an impoliteness interpretation. As discussed in section 2.4.2, he attributes to many of these non-verbal aspects (including gestures such as pointing) a rhetorical function that helps disambiguate a given behaviour and secure an impoliteness reading.

I certainly agree with this rhetorical function for a large number of the non-verbal features observed, and it is largely confirmed in my data as will be clear in Chapter 5. This is why the non-verbal aspects that accompany linguistic impoliteness triggers and are believed to have a rhetorical disambiguating function are accounted for under the columns related to the characters' bodies. In contrast, the physical behaviours that may be seen as conventionalised non-verbal impoliteness acts (e.g. belching, burping, farting, or spitting in front of others; letting the door slam in someone's face; grabbing or pushing; and interrupting when someone is speaking (Rondina & Workman, 2005, pp. 4, 19) are classed under this last "other" column.

A further distinction in the data collection table is the "offender/offended" division under the "character's bodies" category, which was added as a result of the need that emerged during the experimental phase of the data collection procedure. Indeed, it became almost immediately apparent that the physical indicators significantly differed between offender and offended, most notably in brow movement, gestures, and postures.

Once the data were collected, candidates for the qualitative analysis were chosen based on a principled selection procedure. To do this, impoliteness data were examined at two levels, a micro and a macro level, corresponding respectively to impoliteness behaviours and impoliteness events. Impoliteness behaviours were delineated based on Culpeper's (2011a, p. 155; see section 2.4.1) definition. By contrast, an impoliteness event is taken to refer to a cluster of interconnected impolite behaviours, including ripostes or retorts. In other words, they refer to "constellations of behaviours and contextual/contextual features that co-occur in time and space, (and) have particular functions and outcomes" (Culpeper's, 2011a, p. 195). While impoliteness behaviours were taken as the object of the quantitative analysis as the micro units of analysis, a number of systematically selected impoliteness events were selected as candidates for the qualitative analyses. In fact, once the manual inventory of the impoliteness behaviours

identified in the comics selected was completed using the table in Figure 15, clusters of related behaviours became easy to spot based on their proximity to one another and their interconnectedness. These clusters were closely examined to gauge their potential analytical benefit from a qualitative perspective.

For reasons of space, only one impoliteness event from each anthology was selected for consideration for qualitative analysis based on the following criteria. First, it had to qualify as an impoliteness event rather than a mere impoliteness behaviour, thus including two conversational turns at the least. Second, it had to be of noticeable significance within the narrative and somehow play a role in driving plot or character development, rather than being an isolated, background occurrence (section 2.6). Third, its analysis must have the potential to shed light on aspects of impoliteness that are not easily revealed by a mere count, particularly how impoliteness may unfold in particular contexts. Interactional events that are driven by implicational impoliteness are generally deemed particularly interesting for qualitative analyses as these represent a relatively more sophisticated way of achieving impoliteness. Additionally, the events selected for qualitative probing were also chosen because of their potential to shed light on some of the intriguing impoliteness-related phenomena and patterns highlighted in the quantitative analysis and/or in the literature review.

The six impoliteness events selected for the qualitative analysis were the object of a thorough multimodal pragmatic analysis that encompassed the close study of the involved linguistic and non-linguistic impoliteness forms and their particular functions in the related context. On the other hand, the quantitative data were the object of a numeric analysis that unveiled frequency, distribution, and variation of the various impoliteness-related features across the comic anthologies and the selected datasets of the two countries. Interesting usage patterns and themes were again probed qualitatively and interpretations and findings were solidly grounded in the literature and the related socio-cultural context. Useful insights about specific forms, combinations, and patterns across the selected datasets were examined. Finally, based on the outcome of both the qualitative and quantitative analyses, observations were made around the extent to which Culpeper's (2011a/2015b) impoliteness framework could accommodate the kind of data studied in this thesis, that is multimodal fictional data from two different countries.

4.5 Translation Policy

As pointed out in section 3.6, Lebanese comics make use of up to four languages: Lebanese, Arabic, French, and English. To translate the first three in English, I mainly relied on my own trilingual abilities and the various online translations of *Collins Dictionary*, *Cambridge Dictionary*, the *Linguee* bilingual dictionary, *Reverso Dictionary* and the *Britannica English-Arabic Translation*. First, though, I discussed some of the Lebanese expressions with a teacher of Arabic literature for clarifications around their full socio-cultural and historical meanings. I also double-checked the translated versions with a professional translator and some young English-speaking Lebanese people to have their opinion on whether the provided equivalents effectively reproduced the original meaning.

The whole translation process is in fact based on the three major principles of translation proposed by Hatim and Mason (1990, p. 237), i.e., the communicative (“relaying appropriate effects of the communicative transaction”), pragmatic (“preserving equivalence of intended meaning for intended purposes”) and semiotic (“ensuring equivalence of texts as Signs”). Ultimately though, I adopt Newmark’s (1988, p. 26) approach to communicative translation, and therefore concern myself primarily with ‘naturalness,’ or the natural, common usage determined by the setting. This is why I provide only a communicative⁷ translation when the contextual meaning is what matters most. Alternatively, I provide both a literal⁸ and a communicative translation whenever deemed useful, especially when the close examination of a particular expression is involved. I also occasionally resort to clarifying footnotes. Sometimes though, a cultural equivalent⁹ in English is deemed more effective in reproducing the equivalent effect of the original formula in the Source Language. An example would be the translation of the dismissal شو خصك؟, which literally translates as “what’s it to do with you?” to the cultural

⁷ “Communicative translation attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership” (Newmark, 1988, p.47)

⁸ “Literal translation: The SL (Source Language) grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL (Target Language) equivalents but the lexical words are translated singly, out of context” (ibid., p.46)

⁹ An approximate cultural English expression that has “a greater pragmatic impact than culturally neutral terms” (Newmark, 1988, pp.83-4).

equivalents “who pulled your string?/who rattled your cage?” that better reproduce the original pragmatic effect.

4.6 Researcher’s Background

With a notion as subjective and elusive as (im)politeness, I am aware that as a researcher, my own theoretical stance, experience of impoliteness, biases and socio-cultural background may unwittingly affect my own understanding, translation and interpretation of impoliteness. I am a Lebanese native. I speak and write Lebanese, French, and English and read and write Arabic. Since a lot of the interactions in the Lebanese comics involve sectarian conflicts or undercurrents, my religious background is expected to be of some interpretive consequence in this study. I am a Maronite Christian and have always lived in dominantly Christian parts of Lebanon, but I have often worked with Lebanese people from other faiths and denominations.

Nevertheless, to reduce the impact of my own personal background, assumptions and shortcomings with regard to the notion of impoliteness and multimodal embodied interaction in both the British and Lebanese datasets, I thoroughly checked every interactional and compositional aspect of the flagged impoliteness behaviours in the literature. I also carefully researched the contexts of usage and the various possible uses of the impoliteness expressions encountered, even the commonplace ones (e.g. “pig”), in several authoritative dictionaries like *Collins*, *Oxford Dictionary*, and the *Cambridge Dictionary*. Additionally, so as not to miss any connotation or special situated use, I consulted lay users as well as “folk” sources that are more first-order oriented from an impoliteness angle, such as the *Urban Dictionary*, *Brewer’s Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* and Anis Frayha’s (1973/1995) *A Dictionary of Non-Classical Vocables in the Spoken Arabic of Lebanon*.

4.7 Summary

In this chapter, I explained the rationale behind the data selection, described the careful pairing procedure of the selected comic anthologies, and described briefly the study’s dataset. I then outlined the mixed-method procedure followed to address the research questions of this dissertation, highlighting the importance of such a method in

achieving the aims of the present study. This was followed by a detailed discussion of the development of an encompassing yet user-friendly analytical framework that is believed to have the ability to flag and inform the analysis of salient comic-specific features and combinations that may potentially cue impoliteness. The procedure adopted for data collection and analysis was then discussed, followed by the presentation of the corresponding data collection instrument designed to accommodate variations that may arise because of the different cultural and linguistic contexts the data are collected in. Finally, potential pitfalls and the measures taken to avoid them were also noted. In particular, the translation policy adopted when dealing with multiple languages in the Lebanese data was outlined. Additionally, my own personal background as a researcher was briefly described, as it is inevitably bound to have some bearing on the data collection and analysis procedure. Also the measures taken to minimize the effect of personal biases and assumptions were briefly described. The next chapter documents the implementation of the data collection and analysis procedure related to the quantitative aspect of the study.

Chapter 5 Impoliteness in British and Lebanese Comic Anthologies: A Quantitative Look

This chapter attempts to directly address the first research question of this dissertation, that is, to examine the forms of impoliteness in British and Lebanese comic anthologies. By doing so, it necessarily tackles the third research question, which is the capability of Culpeper's (2011a/2015b) impoliteness model to account for impoliteness in a multimodal fictional genre in two different countries. More specifically, this quantitative chapter examines the deployment of verbal as well as non-verbal features in the realisation of impoliteness in comics and looks at the distribution of these features across the different anthologies of the two countries. This distribution is also compared to other distributions discussed in the impoliteness literature to examine similarities and potential distinctiveness. Distinctive usage patterns are probed qualitatively to interpret their significance.

Before getting into the detail of the quantitative analysis, I give a general overview of the data and discuss some of the operational decisions that are made in view of a sound and systematic quantitative analysis. Table 3 gives a summative overview of the data.

Table 3

General Overview of Impoliteness Behaviours in the Comic Data Examined

	Number of issues	Number of comics	Number of comics containing impoliteness	Number of panels with impoliteness behaviours	Total number of impoliteness behaviours
British dataset (<i>Viz, The Comix Reader, Solipsistic Pop</i>)	10 issues & 2 annuals	212	47	137	193
Lebanese dataset (<i>Zeroo, La Furie des Glandeurs, Samandal</i>)	28 issues	289	78	298	388
TOTAL		501	125	435	581

As can be observed, a total of 501 comics were examined, 125 of which were found to contain impoliteness, with 581 impoliteness behaviours overall. Comic entries by non-

British or non-Lebanese authors, mainly the case in *The Comix Reader*, *Solipsistic Pop* and *Samandal*, were not included in the count and subsequent study because they do not match the selection criteria set (section 4.1). The total number of comics also excludes all but two entries from the fourteenth issue of *Samandal* as they are the only two comic-like entries in this special issue dedicated to the Arab Image Foundation, where the contributions are mainly a creative arrangement of photos with captions.

It is important to note that the comics in the selected anthologies greatly differ in length, varying between a fraction of a page to 34 pages each. However, though a comic's length may certainly have a bearing on the number of events it includes, it is not always the case in the data that longer comics include a higher count of impoliteness behaviours. Comic length is therefore not an indicator of impoliteness density. Some of the longer comics, for instance Karen Keyrouz's (2015) thirty-four page comic "Flux et Reflux," have no impoliteness in them; while some one-page comics, like Tony Abou-Jaoude's (2000) "Bodyguard", contain as many as eight impoliteness behaviours. This is why, the number of panels, rather than the number of pages in a comic, is adopted to get a general sense of the density of impoliteness in the examined comic anthologies.

Furthermore, there is no one-to-one correspondence between the number of panels and the number of impoliteness behaviours since a single panel may contain several impoliteness behaviours. This is illustrated in the following example from Sid the Sexist (Figure 14).



Sid the Sexist. Viz: The Bear Trapper's Hat (2003), p.81

- (1) Form-driven implicational impoliteness: Flout of the Maxims of Manner (through lack of clarity) and of Quantity (through the repetition). Implicature: How could you/How dare you?
- (2) Insult: Negative expressive (Fuckin' Hell Sid)
- (3) Unpalatable question. Insinuation: You cannot be that ignorant/naïve.
- (4) Form-driven implicational impoliteness: Flout of the maxim of quantity through repeating info already known. Implicature: Such a behaviour is totally unacceptable, inappropriate, "filthy" (confirmed by the "Aye" of their pal before he issues the insult).
- (5) Insult: Personalised negative vocative
- (6) Form-driven implicational impoliteness: Flout of the maxim of relation
- (7) Context-driven implicational impoliteness: Absence of behaviour – failure to respond -- exclusion

Figure 14. Example of Impoliteness Tagging in Comics

Additionally, the issue of what unit to consider as panel is particularly tricky when panels are not well delineated in a traditional way, that is, not enclosed in a well-delimited panel frame. In such cases, I have based my delineation of panels on the concept of sequential (visual) narrative units, a defining feature of comics according to leading comic experts such as McCloud (1994), Eisner (2008a), and Kukkonen (2013). So when the words and images are composed freely across the page and no clear panels are identifiable, I consider a panel any unit that either encapsulates a distinct physical or mental action in

the narrative sequence or that which includes the characters clearly engaging in a different sequence of interaction, dialogue unit, or conversation turn. Appendix E illustrates how such units are divided into panels.

5.1 Density, Distribution and Variation of Impoliteness Behaviours by Anthology

First, to obtain the density of impoliteness in the comic anthologies studied, the total number of impoliteness behaviours is divided over the total number of panels in the comics examined (Table 4; for a more detailed table, see Appendix F). Though this procedure puts all impoliteness behaviours on a par with one another, irrespective of type, level of complexity or strength and so needs to be treated with caution, it nevertheless gives a sense of how densely impoliteness behaviours occur in each of the three anthologies.

Table 4

Density of Impoliteness Behaviours in the British and Lebanese Comic Anthologies

Comic anthology	British comics			Lebanese comics		
	<i>Viz</i>	<i>The Comix Reader</i>	<i>Solipsistic Pop</i>	<i>Zerooo</i>	<i>La Furie des Glandeurs</i>	<i>Samandal</i>
Density of impoliteness behaviours in each comic anthology	25.48 %	2.94 %	2.69 %	14.95 %	13.18 %	2.67 %

Table 4 shows that *Viz* has the largest density of impoliteness by far. This seems to be largely in keeping with the anthology's notoriety for being offensive (sections 4.1 and 4.2.1). Moreover, 80 of the total 193 impoliteness behaviours in British comics come from the 19 comics selected from the *Viz* annuals, accounting for 41.45% of all examined behaviours. This certainly lends empirical weight to the decision to select from within *Viz* (section 4.1).

After *Viz*, two of the three Lebanese anthologies, *Zerooo* and *La Furie des Glandeurs*, are found to be the densest in impoliteness behaviours. Moreover, the impoliteness density in them (at 14.95 % and 13.18 % respectively) is more than four times that in the remaining comic anthologies (*Samandal*, *The Comix Reader* and

Solipsistic Pop). This disparity in impoliteness density in the Lebanese comics could be explained by the fact that in contrast to *Samandal*, which is explicitly meant to cater to a larger Middle Eastern audience, *Zerooo* and *La Furie des Glandeurs* have a distinctly situated, local flavour (sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.3). Also similar to *Viz*, *Zerooo* and *La Furie des Glandeurs* adopt a socially satirical take on the Lebanese society. From these observations, one might hypothesise that impoliteness in comics may be found more abundantly in situated, culture-specific works with a satirical bent rather than in works destined for a larger, more global readership.

The frequency and distribution of the various impoliteness triggers by comic anthology can be visualised in Figure 15.

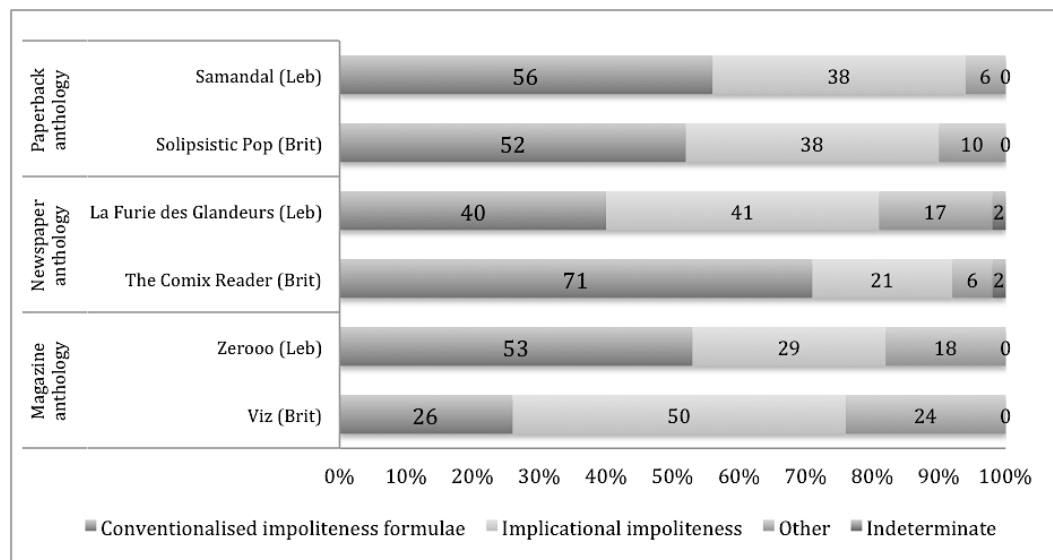


Figure 15. Variation of Impoliteness Triggers Across Comic Anthologies

As can be seen in Figure 15, the dominant pattern in four of the six anthologies is one where CIF occur the most frequently, followed by implicational impoliteness, the ‘other’ category, and then the ‘indeterminate’ one. This dominant pattern is broken only by *Viz* on the British side and just marginally by *La Furie des Glandeurs* on the Lebanese side. In fact, in the British anthologies, the highest incidence of implicational impoliteness can be found in *Viz* (accounting for 50% of the total number of impoliteness behaviours in *Viz*). At first glance, this might be perceived as a surprising finding given that the comic is highly notorious for being “a hilariously puerile magazine” (White, 2014), with a

“behind-the-bike-sheds cheek” (Cook, 2004), the pages of which sport “vulgar language, toilet and surreal humour, black comedy and sexual or violent storylines” (Robinson, 2015). This type of description does certainly not warrant the sophisticated, nuanced complexity of implicational impoliteness. However, there are two reasons that might justify such a finding. First, as Cook (2004) says, despite remaining as anarchic as before in content, “*Viz* is now a mainstream magazine rather than an underground fanzine.” It has also been repeatedly referred to as a “British institution” (White, 2014) that “speaks a vernacular language” (Chapman, 2011, p. 220) and is “street-credible” (Sabin, 2003, p. 117). These comments that testify to the authenticity of the exchanges in *Viz* might in fact be corroborated by the fact that among the three comic anthologies, *Viz* has the closest implicational impoliteness rate (50%) to that of the real life report data collected by Culpeper in 2011 (59%). The second reason that may justify this high density of implicational impoliteness in *Viz* is the comic’s “combination of bawdiness and savvy irony” that is “ironic, parodic and culturally competent” (Tait, 2007, p. 93). Critics seem to agree that beyond the vulgar humour, *Viz* “also provided an insight into social mores and behaviours” (Chapman, 2011, p. 217) and “has an entirely shrewd grasp of popular culture” (p. 221). Also as Burrell (2014) observes of *Viz*’s often dark humour, “the scatological nature might make school boys snigger but the satire and social commentary can be biting and sophisticated.” It is then this sophisticated social satire aspect in *Viz* that may have manifested itself in the generally more complex and refined type of implicational impoliteness that clearly abounds in it.

La Furie des Glandeurs also departs from the dominant impoliteness distribution pattern with a slightly higher density of implicational impoliteness. But while in the British comic anthology *Viz*, the difference is much more pronounced (almost double) with 50% density for implicational impoliteness versus 26% for CIF, in *La Furie des Glandeurs*, the density of both implicational impoliteness and CIF is almost equal (41% versus 40% respectively). One possible interpretation for this slightly distinctive distribution may be the degree of subtlety with which *La Furie des Glandeurs* sets out to tackle its adopted themes. It is after all a fanzine that seems to take “subtlety and intelligence” as an editorial line and ultimately consists of “bubbles filled with subtlety and humour” (Bassil & Eid, 2011).

Among the remaining four anthologies that follow the dominant pattern, *The Comix Reader* seems rather distinctive in that it sports the highest density of CIF, which make up 71% of all impoliteness triggers in it. Two main reasons may explain this high density. First, among the examined anthologies, *The Comix Reader* has the shortest comics, with comics that very rarely exceed one page in length, which decidedly greatly limits the narrative scope of its comics. This in turn most probably drives the need to deliver the comic's message as swiftly and as unambiguously as possible, hence the importance of the using CIF, pre-fabricated impoliteness conventionalised formulae that act as "interpretive shortcuts" (Copestake and Terkourafi, 2010, p. 128). The second reason behind *The Comix Reader*'s high density of CIF may also have to do with the anthology's subgenre and format. *The Comix Reader* is an alternative comic periodical published in the form of an inexpensive (£1-2) fanzine-like newsprint anthology. By its editor's own admission, it takes part of its inspiration from early comic newspapers like *Ally Sloper's Half Holiday* that had "some very coarse rough-and-tumble type of humour" (Cowdry, 2011). It does seem highly plausible then that a comic that partly relies on coarse humour and openly takes it upon itself to revive the underground comic spirit (section 4.2.1) does not need to be nuanced or oblique in its delivery of impoliteness; hence the higher incidence of CIF in it.

The two remaining categories, "other" and "indeterminate" are relatively too small to be discussed by anthology, and so they will be discussed in the next section as part of the whole dataset. The only exception may possibly be *Viz*, where the "other" category accounts for as much as 24% of all impoliteness behaviours. This figure becomes more understandable though when one realises that 14 of the 19 impoliteness behaviours under "other" in *Viz* (that is 73.68%) fall under the behavioural (e.g. pushing, interrupting, kicking). This may in fact be largely in keeping with the type of "violent storylines" (Robinson, 2015) and bawdy and knockabout humour in *Viz*.

5.2 Frequency, Distribution and Variation of Impoliteness Behaviours by Country

Figure 16 gives the general distribution and frequency of impoliteness behaviours in each of the British and Lebanese datasets (Appendix G shows the detailed

distribution). A general reading of this distribution is proposed before going into further detail about the breakdown of each category.

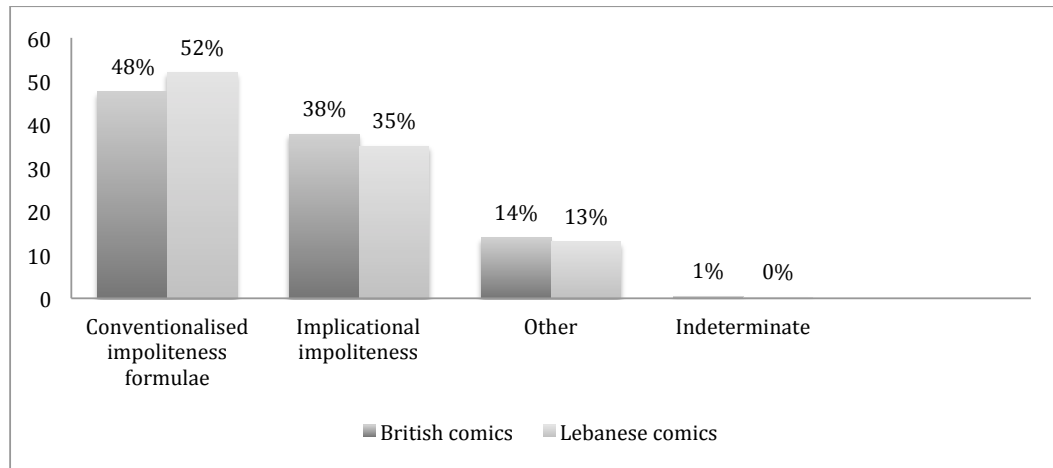


Figure 16. General Distribution and Frequency of Impoliteness Behaviours in the Comic Anthologies Examined

By looking at the overall distribution of impoliteness behaviours in Figure 16, one cannot fail to observe the parallel in the impoliteness distribution of the two countries’ datasets. In both datasets, CIF are the dominant impoliteness category, closely followed by implicational impoliteness, with further behind the “other” category and the practically non-existent “indeterminate” one. This near parallelism in the distribution of impoliteness behaviours in the comics of the two countries may well testify to the sturdiness of the impoliteness model (Culpeper, 2011a/2015b) the analytical framework revolves around. Indeed, not only does it seem to capture an impoliteness composition potentially characteristic of a genre as will be discussed below, but it also does so across two datasets from two different countries and cultures.

The dominance of CIF in comics may be largely due to the reason briefly mentioned in the previous section (5.1). In other words, the comics studied are periodical entries in anthologies, which, for the most part, do not exceed two pages, a fact which clearly limits their narrative scope. Added to this limited scope is the fragmented nature of the comic storyline (section 3.2), which may add ambiguity to the narrative. In such a context, it seems only fitting to favour the more unambiguous and context-spanning CIF

(Culpeper, 2011a, p. 117) – which also happen to be “the most expedient means of achieving impoliteness” (Terkourafi, 2015, p.11) – over the more indirect “thought-full” implicational impoliteness (Culpeper et al., 2017, p. 14). Additionally, the high density of CIF in comics further corroborates the particularly advantageous role of conventionalised formulae in the economy principle at play in comics (section 3.1).

The impoliteness profile (Figure 16) that emerges from these six comic anthologies makes even more sense when compared with the real life report data obtained by Culpeper (2011a), the only study that compares the proportion of CIF versus implicational impoliteness that I am aware of. Of Culpeper’s (2011a, p. 155) one hundred British students’ diary reports of impoliteness events, forty-one fall under CIF and fifty-nine under implicational impoliteness. Compared to 92 CIF occurrences among a total of 193 in British comics (Fisher exact test p -value = 0.58) and 202 among 388 in Lebanese comics (p -value = 0.27), there seems no significant difference in CIF frequency between the comic impoliteness data and Culpeper’s real life data. This is not the case, however, for implicational impoliteness. With 73 occurrences of implicational impoliteness out of a total of 193 in the British data (Fisher exact test p -value = 0.04) and 136 out of 388 in the Lebanese data (p -value = 0.008), the difference in the frequency of implicational impoliteness in the comic impoliteness data and Culpeper’s real life data is quite significant. The disparity seems particularly pronounced in the Lebanese dataset.

It may be posited, once more, that the main reason behind the lower density of implicational impoliteness in comic impoliteness data as opposed to real life data is due to the nature of comics. As a fictional genre generally action-based and meant to entertain, comics also employ a third impoliteness category captured under the classification “other”. This category is comprised of behavioural impoliteness acts such as kicking, pushing and spitting, which amount to 10.4% and 9.3% of the British and Lebanese data respectively (section 5.2.3). Another argument that might further clarify the significantly lower density of implicational impoliteness in the Lebanese data when compared to Culpeper’s (2011a) real life report data (p -value = 0.008) is likely related to language use in the Lebanese comics and the larger Lebanese linguistic landscape (section 2.7.2). The fact that very often, Lebanese comics make use of three (and sometimes more) languages may make the explicit and swift delivery and processing of

unambiguous, punchy retorts even more essential to the success of the interactions and narrative. Since conventionalised impoliteness formulae are more easily processed and readily invite a quicker and stronger association with impoliteness in the brain than implicational impoliteness (section 2.3.5), they can deliver an impoliteness uptake in a quicker, more expedited way, and so seem like the primary choice in this multi-lingual context.

5.2.1 A focus on conventionalised impoliteness formulae. CIF constitute about half the cases of all impoliteness behaviours in both datasets, 48% in the British comics and 52% in the Lebanese comics. The internal variation within the CIF category is further broken down as shown in Figure 17.

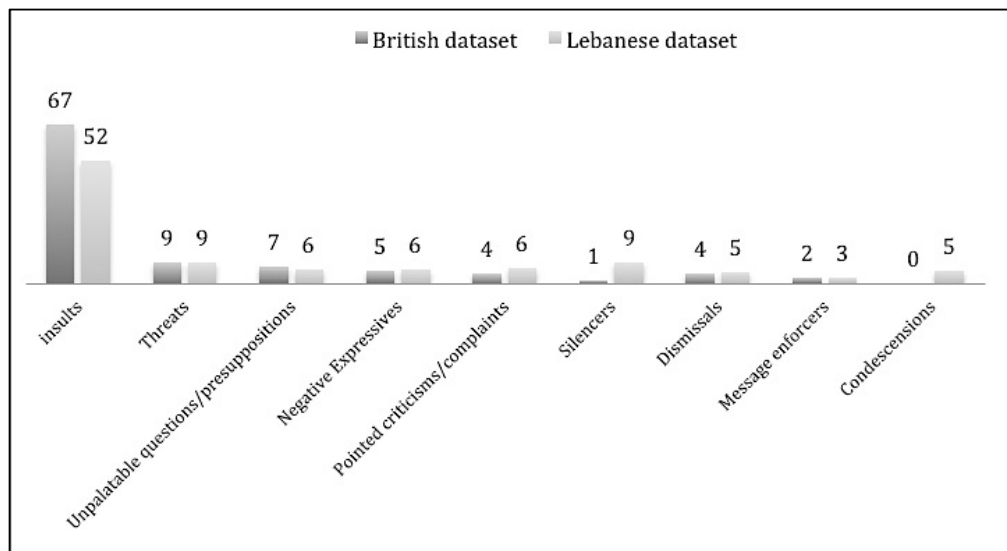


Figure 17. Comparative Distribution of Impoliteness Triggers Within the Conventionalised Impoliteness Formulae Category (Figures refer to the percentage as a proportion of all CIF in the related dataset.)

The general profile obtained for the variation of CIF in comics is very similar to the one obtained by Culpeper, Iganski and Sweiry (2017, p. 15) in their study of CIF in court cases of religiously aggravated crime in England and Wales. Indeed, this study reveals the following frequency sequence of the impoliteness formulae in common with the comic data: insults (47%), threats (18%), negative expressives (8%), and then dismissals (6%). Conversely, the impoliteness profile obtained in comics clearly contrasts with that of Kleinke and Bös (2015, p. 56) in their CIF-based classification of rudeness

in the British Broadcasting Corporation's *Have Your Say* online discussion forum. Theirs reveals a dominance of pointed criticism (21%), followed by insults (16%) and two categories, "belittling" (7%) and "patronizing" (3%) that may be considered as closely related to condescensions. The fact that the general CIF profile in comics is much closer to that of British court hate crime data rather than to that of online discussion may partly be attributed to the "the specific nature of online political discussions, where rather subtle, rhetorically sophisticated 'off-record' criticism often takes precedence over more direct 'on-record' strategies" (ibid., p. 55). This is clearly neither the case in court cases where it is in the best interest of the concerned parties to plead their case as directly and clearly as possible, nor in comics where it has already been established that unambiguous prefabricated impoliteness formulae are favoured. Additionally, while in forum discussions the purpose of the interactions is mainly to attract attention (ibid., p. 53), with hate crimes the notion of social harm is central, and "the motivation is to redress a grievance" (Culpeper et al., 2017, pp. 15, 25). It has been suggested in section 3.5 that in addition to their entertaining function, comics, particularly those involving social satire, are also motivated by the desire to redress a perceived grievance in the established norms and lampoon the established moral order and its main actors (section 2.5). Comics and hate crime court interactions may therefore share this aim, along with the need to deliver their message as swiftly and unequivocally as possible, which may justify the similarity in their CIF distribution profile.

On the other hand, as can be observed in Figure 17, the internal variation of CIF is quite similar in the British and Lebanese datasets except arguably for three CIF sub-categories, insults, silencers and condescensions. To establish whether there is a statistically significant difference between the two datasets in these three categories, the Fisher exact test is run. The result is that the two datasets do not differ significantly in the insult category (p-value = 0.06), but they do so in the frequency of condescensions (p-value = 0.035) and quite importantly too in that of silencers (p-value = 0.017). However, the frequency of condescensions corresponds to very small numbers. They are practically inexistent in the British data¹⁰ and only account for 5% of the Lebanese CIF. They

¹⁰ In the British data, there are no cases of condescension conforming to the formula proposed by Culpeper (2001, pp. 135-6), [that] 's/is being] [babyish/childish/etc.]. However three

therefore cannot be convincingly analysed quantitatively, as only a qualitative analysis can help shed light on the dynamics of their use (Chapter 8). On the other hand, while silencers only account for 1% of all CIF in the British dataset, they make up 9% of the Lebanese one with 18 occurrences. This relatively small proportion actually corresponds to the second highest proportion within CIF in Lebanese comics, alongside threats. It is a frequent observation that the Lebanese tend to be rather expressive and loud (section 2.7.2). In fact, as will be shown in section 5.5, some frequent visual and compositional forms observed also seem to support this seemingly stereotypical trait of the Lebanese. In light of this observation, the high comparative frequency of silencers would make sense in that it might be an annoying trait one can easily take aim at.

The largest proportion of CIF in comics is taken up by the insult category (Figure 19) with a proportion of 67% in the British data and 52% in the Lebanese data. Threats come second and constitute 9% of all the coded CIF in both datasets. In fact, both insults and threats fall under the coercive impoliteness type, which “involves coercive action that is not in the interest of the target, and hence involves both the restriction of a person’s action-environment and a clash of interests” (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 226). The resulting action-environment restriction and clash of interests are decidedly quite important for plot and character development in fiction, which might explain their high frequency in the comics examined. Indeed, these two CIF types make up 36.27% of all impoliteness behaviours examined in the British data, with insults alone making up 32.12% and 31.7% of all impoliteness behaviours in the Lebanese data, with 27.06% for insults alone. Moreover, it was hypothesised that the high frequency of insults might itself be the result of the fact that insults tend to be reciprocated with counter-insults (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 205; Leech, 1983, p. 144). However, such examples are not many in the data examined. There are indeed such cases where for example the husband calls his wife “whore!” and she retaliates with “cunt!” However, the bulk of the data includes a variety of counter impoliteness that is by no means only restricted to insults.

Personalised Negative Vocatives have the belittling adjective “little” in them: YOU LITTLE... / YOU LITTLE WANKER / YOU WRETCHED LITTLE NOVICE, and two Personalised Negative Assertions literally call out the offensive condescending attitude: YOU CAN BE SO CONDESCENDING and YOU THINK YOU’RE SO SUPERIOR. So the 0% under the condescension category actually reflects a structural rather than a conceptual absence from the data.

Among the insult category, the two types that recur with a high frequency in the British data are Personalised Negative Vocatives that make up 50% of all insults and Personalised Negative Assertions that make up 29.03% of them. The dominance of these two insult types reflects other studies in impoliteness (Culpeper, 2011a and Culpeper et al., 2017, p. 17). Examples of Personalised Negative Vocatives from the data include GROTESQUE MANSECT / YOU SELFISH FUCKING CUNT / YOU SPIKEY TWAT / BUM NOSE / YOU CHICKEN SHIT WANKER / Y' FILTHY HOM / Y' CHEEKY GET / YOU WRETCHED LITTLE NOVICE / CARAMAC / FATTY BUM BUM FACE / GINGE / GINGERNUT. Examples of Personalised Negative Assertions in the data include: YOU LOOK LIKE A WHORE / SO UNSIVILISED (written like this) / YOU CAN BE SO CONDESCENDING. Similar to the British dataset, the largest proportion of insults in the Lebanese dataset is taken up by Personalised Negative Vocatives (PNV) and Personalised Negative Assertions (PNA), which by themselves constitute 69.5% and 21% of all insults in the Lebanese data.

It is important to note that while it might be rather expected of British data, albeit of a different nature, to fit under a classification developed largely based on British data (Culpeper's, 2011a), it might not be that obvious for Lebanese data to map well onto it. This is why the full compilation of CIF collected from the Lebanese dataset is provided, as it is helpful in making clear the extent of the correspondence between Culpeper's (2011a, pp. 135-136) CIF classification and the CIF used by the Lebanese in French, English and Lebanese. These CIF have been divided into two lists, the first (Figure 18) includes the CIF that are used in the comics in French and English, while the second (Figure 19) features those that appear in Lebanese. In the Lebanese CIF list, an additional category is added under insults, personalised third-person negative assertions (in the hearing of the target), based on the suggestion in section 5.3. For reasons of space, I provide the lists in a compressed form in Figure 19, but they are reproduced in actual size in Appendix H.

<p>Insults</p> <p>1. Personalised negative vocatives ESPÈCES DE CAPITALISTES/ESPÈCE DE FAINEANT/CONNARD/MONSTRE/VIPÈRE/SALOPE/DÉBILE/LES CONS/QUEL CON SHITHEAD/STUPID/IDIOT/PUNK/PRICK/YOU PIECE OF SHIT/DONKEY SHIT/SON OF A B.../YOU LAZY CUNT/YOU LITTLE SQUIRT/ASS LICKER/DORKY/YOU CREEPS</p> <p>2. Personalised negative assertions T'ES DEGUEULASSE/CA VA PAS NON? TU ES FOLLE OU QUOI?/VOUS ÊTES TOUS UNE BANDE DE CONS/VENDU/CA VA PAS/VOUS ETES NON CIVILISÉS/INCULTES/TU ES UNE PSYCHOPATHE AU VOLANT/TU AS UNE TÊTE DE CON/T'ES FÊLÉ</p> <p>3. Personalised negative references ALORS LA TON SAC? UNE SAINTE HORREUR/ TON PROXÉNÈTE DE FILS</p> <p>4. Personalised third-person negative references (in the hearing of the target) LES ALCOOLOS ET LES TOXICOS /(TU NOUS SAOULES AVEC) TON FILM POURRI</p> <p>Pointed criticisms/complaints INSUPPORTABLE / INHUMAIN / QUELLE AUDACE / C'EST CRIMINEL/C'EST DE L'ARNAQUE</p> <p>Unpalatable questions or presuppositions SI TON VOISIN TE CONSEILLE DE TE JETER DANS LA GUEULE DU LOUP... TU LE FAIS?/CA VA LA TÊTE? / MAYBE THAT WAY YOU WILL BE GOOD AT SOMETHING</p> <p>Condescensions PETIT / GIRL</p> <p>Message enforcers YOU LISTEN UP</p> <p>Dismissals ALLEZ...OUST/CASSE-TOI / FUCK OFF</p> <p>Silencers LA FERME / SHUT UP/STOP BLABBERING/SHUT UP</p> <p>Threats ENCORE UN DE PLUS ET JE VOUS BUTE TOUS / BEAT IT SHRIMP OR I'LL BUST YOUR ASS</p> <p>Negative expressives (e.g. curses, ill-wishes) TAKE THIS (THE FINGER) AND PUT IT UP YOU'RE (sic) A.../WE HOPE YOU CHOKE ON IT/DAMN YOU/SUCK MY DICK</p>
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Figure 18. CIF in French and English in Lebanese Comics

Insults		Pointed criticisms/complaints																						
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<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Lebanese expressions</th> <th>Communicative translation</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Literal translation</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>وله / ولا / ولي yo/ hey</td> <td>(yo/ hey) (boy/piece of shit/shithead)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(يا) وسخ / حيوان / شرموطه / أزعز / بلا أخلاق / أبري (you/oh/hey) dirty / animal / slut / yob/ with no manners/ my dick</td> <td>(you/oh/hey) sleazy/animal/slut¹/ yob/bill-mannered/dick</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(يا) مسطوط / بهيم / نكرة / حوش / جاهل / فريع (you/oh/hey) idiot / animal / nobody / coward / beasts / ignorant/uneducated / little dick</td> <td>(you/oh/hey) idiot²/animal/squirt³/ coward/beasts/ignorant/little dick</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(يا) كلب / حمار / إرهابي / محدود / أحق / رب / خاين (you/oh/hey) dog / donkey / terrorist / stupid / fool / dick / traitor</td> <td>(you/oh/hey) dog/ass⁴/terrorist/stupid/ fool/dick/traitor</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(يا) مؤزه / كذابه / صفر عالشمال / إحوات إل... (you/oh/hey) injurious / liar / zero to the left / sisters of...</td> <td>(you/oh/hey) evil/liar/cipher/son(s) of a ...</td> </tr> <tr> <td>يا إمر قرون (you/oh/hey) mother of horns</td> <td>(you/oh/hey) bitch</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation	Literal translation		وله / ولا / ولي yo/ hey	(yo/ hey) (boy/piece of shit/shithead)	(يا) وسخ / حيوان / شرموطه / أزعز / بلا أخلاق / أبري (you/oh/hey) dirty / animal / slut / yob/ with no manners/ my dick	(you/oh/hey) sleazy/animal/slut ¹ / yob/bill-mannered/dick	(يا) مسطوط / بهيم / نكرة / حوش / جاهل / فريع (you/oh/hey) idiot / animal / nobody / coward / beasts / ignorant/uneducated / little dick	(you/oh/hey) idiot ² /animal/squirt ³ / coward/beasts/ignorant/little dick	(يا) كلب / حمار / إرهابي / محدود / أحق / رب / خاين (you/oh/hey) dog / donkey / terrorist / stupid / fool / dick / traitor	(you/oh/hey) dog/ass ⁴ /terrorist/stupid/ fool/dick/traitor	(يا) مؤزه / كذابه / صفر عالشمال / إحوات إل... (you/oh/hey) injurious / liar / zero to the left / sisters of...	(you/oh/hey) evil/liar/cipher/son(s) of a ...	يا إمر قرون (you/oh/hey) mother of horns	(you/oh/hey) bitch		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Lebanese expressions</th> <th>Communicative translation</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Literal translation</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>مش معقول this is unthinkable عيب على هيك (تمثيل) Shame on such an (acting) شو هل (فانون) السرماه هيدا What this law shoe this (مدينه) مأيرة (وضعب) رير fucked up (city) and (people/nation) dick</td> <td>this is unthinkable (this is) such disgraceful/shameful (acting) what a crappy/shitty/lousy (law) a fucked up (city) and a dick of a nation</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation	Literal translation		مش معقول this is unthinkable عيب على هيك (تمثيل) Shame on such an (acting) شو هل (فانون) السرماه هيدا What this law shoe this (مدينه) مأيرة (وضعب) رير fucked up (city) and (people/nation) dick	this is unthinkable (this is) such disgraceful/shameful (acting) what a crappy/shitty/lousy (law) a fucked up (city) and a dick of a nation
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<p><i>*In fact the personalised negative vocatives category is really only made up of 2 different conventionalised formulae, the first entry and the second one. All the other entries are variations on the vocative in the second formula. They have been separated into different entries to better serve the purposes of transcription and translation.</i></p>		<p>Unpalatable questions and/or presuppositions</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Lebanese expressions</th> <th>Communicative translation</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Literal translation</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>بعد تاني (انت) still lacking (you) شو عم نبيع بطاطا? what are we selling potatoes? تعلم كيف (تعشبي) قبل ما تنفي (تقرر تصور من بيتك) learn how to (walk) before you decide to leave your house</td> <td>that's all I needed! Someone like you (to waste my time/add to my trouble...) do you think we're playing here? you should learn how to (walk) before you decide to leave your house</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation	Literal translation		بعد تاني (انت) still lacking (you) شو عم نبيع بطاطا? what are we selling potatoes? تعلم كيف (تعشبي) قبل ما تنفي (تقرر تصور من بيتك) learn how to (walk) before you decide to leave your house	that's all I needed! Someone like you (to waste my time/add to my trouble...) do you think we're playing here? you should learn how to (walk) before you decide to leave your house															
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<p><i>*The last two entries are actually the same formula in terms of structure.</i></p>																								

Figure 19. CIF in Lebanese in Lebanese Comics

Condescensions		Negative expressions (e.g. curses, ill-wishes)	
Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation	Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation
Literal translation		Literal translation	
(يا) ابني (you/oh/hey) boy / who's your daddy? *Highly dependent on context for such an impoliteness effect حس نصيشا chill / don't get too excited/chow down stop living it ما عندي وقت لضغو معك I have no time to waste on you الحس صياطي kiss my ass lick my boots		العمى بعونك (شو اخول) blindness in your eyes (what a cross-eye) يحرق (دينك) burn your religion يلعن دينك damn/curse your religion الله ياخذك god take you يلعن الساعة اللي... curse/damn the hour that... خود take that اكله تاكلك let an organ-eating disease (like cancer or gangrene) eat you بغطة نشالله unpleasant food (experience) if God wills يلعن (لسانك) curse/damn your tongue	damm you (what a cockeye) damn you/screw you damn you/screw you damn you/screw you drop dead/die curse/damn blast the moment that... take that take that 'die of cancer/gangrene hope you choke on it/your food damn (your big mouth)
Message enforcers		Negative expressions (e.g. curses, ill-wishes)	
Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation	Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation
Literal translation		Literal translation	
شو ما بنفهم? don't you understand? فاهم? (do you) get it?	don't you understand/get it? (you) get it?	شو حصك? what is it to do with you? روح (وله) go away/get out (shitface/...) زحط beat it/fuck off/piss off/get lost/shove off هلا واوك? fuck off/piss off... انغير fuck off/piss off	
Dismissals		Negative expressions (e.g. curses, ill-wishes)	
Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation	Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation
Literal translation		Literal translation	
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Silencers		Negative expressions (e.g. curses, ill-wishes)	
Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation	Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation
Literal translation		Literal translation	
كلى خرا / اكل خرا eat shit اسد بوزك shut your trap سدو shut it اخرس shut up be dumb/mute (انت) سكتني (you) shut up	eat shit shut your trap shut it shut up shut up (you) shut up	ابري بهك (بلد/شغل...) my dick in such a (country/work...) ابري فيك/فيكي my dick in you اخت (هالحياء) على اخت حظي الخرى بهك (جيرة) the sister (of this life) on the sister of my shitty luck in such a (marriage) تيزي ف (توني/فيك/...) my ass in (Tony/you...) الحس طيري lick my ass (يا) عيب الشوم عليك/عليكي (oh) the shame of gloom on you شو ديب what/such a (female) bear كل/كلو خرى ع هل(التمثيل) / كل/كلو هوا ع هل(التمثيل) eat shit for such lousy (acting)/eat dirt for such lousy (acting) ولك ذحتونا ب... (...) you shoved us aside with your... حاج عامللي حالك (فنان) stop pretending you're (an artist)	damm you (what a cockeye) damn you/screw you damn you/screw you damn you/screw you drop dead/die curse/damn blast the moment that... take that take that 'die of cancer/gangrene hope you choke on it/your food damn (your big mouth)

Figure 19 (continued). CIF in Lebanese in the Lebanese Comics

When perusing the lists, it is important to remember what was noted in the method section about classifications being fluid and overlapping. Indeed, though placed under a given category, some impoliteness expressions may carry some undertones, which, depending on the context, may make them fit more under a different category. For instance, the expression كل خرا / كلي خرا (/eat shit), which is placed under “silencers” in my list of CIF may also carry a bit of the negative expressive attributes in it. When uttered in Lebanese, it does effectively act as a silencer, but its effect is also very similar to how the *Oxford Dictionary* defines its equivalent English expression, “eat shit”, i.e. as “an exclamation expressing anger or contempt for, or rejection of, someone” (“Eat Shit,” n.d.). In this latter sense, it may well fit under the negative expressive category, depending on its context of use. Another example of an impoliteness formula with a portmanteau effect is هلا وأنتك؟ (/now is your time?). In its literal meaning and original form in Lebanese, it may be said to fit under the unpalatable questions category, a kind of put-down with the presupposition that the person addressed is not valuable enough to spend one’s time on, and so s/he should go away. However, the communicative meaning of هلا وأنتك؟ is unmistakably “piss off/fuck off,” as it functions as a dismissal. In fact, the communicative function of the conventionalised impoliteness formulae under consideration was ultimately given precedence in determining the categorisation of ambiguous expressions.

The compiled list of French and English CIF (Figure 18) in the Lebanese comics examined can be said to reflect a fair match with Culpeper’s (2011a, pp. 135-6) original classification, with all the categories represented. The list of Lebanese CIF (Figures 19 and 20) also features all the original categories except for two sub-categories under insults, personalised negative assertions and personalised third-person negative references in the hearing of the target. However, though these two categories are not represented in the comics examined, they do exist in Lebanese speech (e.g. انت واحد أزعز/حمار /you are [a] stupid/rude [one] and (وحده) شرموطة/خونة / [the/one] bitch/nutzo).

The largest and most semantically and structurally diverse category among the Lebanese CIF is the negative expressives category, with 19 entries. Among the nineteen negative expressives in the Lebanese CIF list, eight are in fact curses that invoke Divinity either explicitly (e.g. الله ياخذك / (may) God take you, meaning “drop dead/die”) or

implicitly through a conventionalised elliptical structure. For instance, بلعن (لسانك) /damn (your big mouth) is in fact an elliptical structure for الله بلعن (لسانك) / May God damn (your big mouth). These negative expressives that involve religious curses and ill-wishes may in fact be quite reflective of the Lebanese society that is reportedly highly religious (Harb, 2010, p. 15). Indeed, with religion ranked the third most highly endorsed aspect of social identity among the Lebanese youth (section 2.7.2), it only seems natural for blessings and curses to be part and parcel of the fabric of Lebanese interactions

Besides religion, an important thematic thread that runs through some of the Lebanese CIF seems to be honour. A number of the collected CIF are honour-related: عيب على هيك (تمثيل) / this is (such) disgraceful/shameful (acting), لأنشعر عرضك / I will shame you, (يا) عيب الشوم عليك/عليكي / shame on you. The reason attacking or threatening to attack another person's honour is seen as offensive can be linked to the fact that honour is one of the two most prized values among the Lebanese (Harb, 2010, p. 16 and section 2.7.2). Another potentially distinctive feature of some of the Lebanese CIF is the use of family members in the impoliteness formulae. Examples from the data include (يا) اخت/إخوات/بنت/ابن ال... / (you/oh/hey) sister/sisters/daughter/son of a... and اخت (هالحياة) على اخت حظي الخرى بهيك (جيزة) / the sister (of this life) on the sister of my shitty luck in such a (marriage) [with the communicative equivalent *fuck this life and my shitty luck in such a (marriage)*]. These CIF are in fact structural templates with a multitude of other possible fillers and variations, so the possibilities are numerous. This practice reflects an Israeli-Arab practice, according to Silverton (2011, p. 4187), whereby swearing is directed at the parents or mentor of a subject rather than at her/him directly. In fact, such CIF are perceived as more offensive and hurtful (ibid., p. 4192), possibly because family dynamics (along with inter-communal ties) prevail in the social identification process of the Lebanese society that ranks family highest among social identity aspects (Harb, 2010, p. 15).

Lastly, among the characteristic aspects of the collected Lebanese CIF, aggressiveness is looked into since Merhej (2015) has pointed out that certain Lebanese expressions are very aggressive in their denotative literal meaning. A closer look at the collected Lebanese CIF does seem to lend weight to this observation as a number of expressions involve threats or ill-wishes involving smashing, killing, burning, or burying

people. Though the smashing and killing can also be seen in the English equivalents of these expressions, the burning and burying threats and wishes are rather specific to the Lebanese examples. Particularly aggressive are the conventionalised impoliteness expressions *آكله تاكلك* [/let an organ-eating disease (like cancer or gangrene) eat you] and *العمى بعيونك (شو احوول)* [/blindness in your eyes (what a...)] [=damn you what a...]. Their invoking a deadly disease and blindness as ill-wishes are in fact gruesomely violent and may in fact reflect the particularly highly emotionally charged Lebanese impoliteness contexts (this aspect becomes clear as the analysis unfolds).

Needless to say, the Lebanese CIF list presented (Figures 19 & 20) is simply a list of the CIF observed in the Lebanese comics examined. It does in no way claim comprehensiveness or exhaustiveness. It is also important to note that though the compiled expressions are indeed conventionalised formulae whose impoliteness uptake is rather strong, they would necessarily have to be carefully examined in other contexts before their impoliteness interpretation can be ascertained.

5.2.2 A focus on implicational impoliteness. Implicational impoliteness, the second largest category of impoliteness behaviours in both datasets, naturally involves the more complex and intricate displays of impoliteness (section 2.4.1). Though a quantitative look at their frequency of occurrence in both datasets may certainly be revealing, only a qualitative analysis in their sociocultural context can do their sophistication justice, which is the principal aim of Chapters 6 & 7.

Figure 20 shows how implicational impoliteness triggers follow the same pattern in both datasets with a clear dominance of form-driven impoliteness behaviours, followed by context-driven and then convention-driven ones. A potential difference in the density of the three implicational triggers between the two datasets is tested and rejected via the Fisher exact test, which further consolidates the similarity between the profiles of implicational impoliteness in the two countries' datasets.

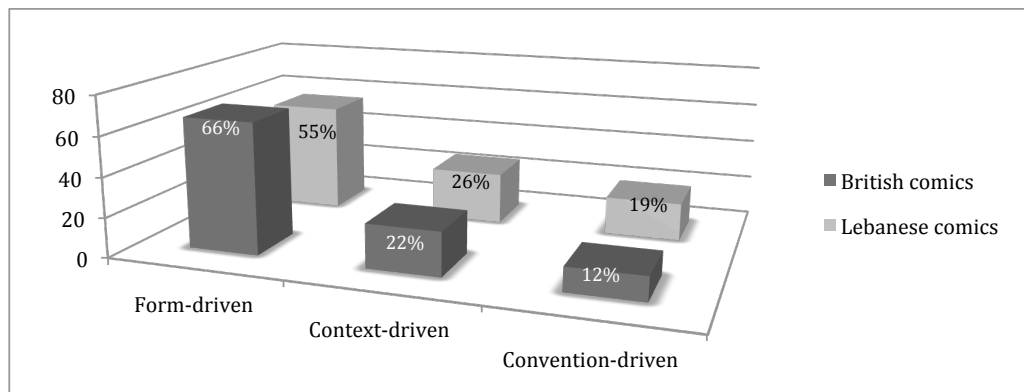


Figure 20. Variation of Impoliteness Triggers Within the Implicational Impoliteness Category (Figures represent the proportion of each of the three behaviours within the implicational category in the related dataset)

Form-driven implicational impoliteness, the largest category, is mainly achieved through Gricean flouts (123 occurrences) and to a much lesser degree through conventional implicatures (3 occurrences). This high density of form-driven impoliteness does not seem consonant with the view that “relatively few cases can be captured easily through the Gricean account” expressed by Culpeper (2011a, p. 193). However, it is important to remember that the data examined are fictional and so, in a way, carefully crafted and not as spontaneous (for the most part, at least), and so in that sense, they may differ from Culpeper’s (2011a). Another potentially telling observation (Figure 20) is the fact that the context-driven category is the second most frequent type of implicational impoliteness in comics. This may be particularly significant because the context-driven category is believed to be a rather scarce and therefore potentially “suspect category” (ibid., pp. 193-4). This is visibly not the case in the medium of comics. Again, this may be owing to the nature of the comic medium, which has an important visual aspect besides the linguistic one. In addition to relying on conflicts generated through the verbal exchange, comics also seem to rely on conflicts brought about by physical actions that can be visualised. Since context-driven triggers rely on situational mismatches for their impoliteness effect (ibid., p. 180), they may be an important part of the action in the comic narrative. This may in fact be the driving cause behind their important presence in comics. The rather distinctive presence of context-driven implicational impoliteness will be examined in context mainly in the qualitative analysis in section 6.1.

Lastly, the fact that convention-driven implicational impoliteness has the lowest density may be attributed to the fact that one of its subcategories, the synchronic internal mismatches, may be challenging to realise in a written medium. Indeed, this subcategory often relies on multimodal mismatches between a polite semantic proposition and an impolite prosody (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 438; section 2.4.1). And while comics do enable the realisation of prosodic cues even more than other literary genres, this realisation is still rather limited to loudness and sound lengthening to the exclusion of the more nuanced pitch, intonation, and rhythm (sections 2.4.2 and 3.3).

5.2.3 A focus on behavioural impoliteness. The “other” category comes third with regard to the overall distribution of impoliteness behaviours in both countries’ datasets (Figure 16). As mentioned in the method section (4.4.3), it encompasses two sub-categories, special variations on existing impoliteness triggers and purely behavioural potentially conventionalised offending acts. Twenty occurrences, seven in the British dataset (3.63%) and thirteen in the Lebanese one (3.35%), are tagged as variants of existing impoliteness triggers; these will be discussed in section 5.4. The remaining fifty-six are all categorised as purely behavioural offending accounts. These account for 10.4% and 9.3% of respectively the entire impoliteness British and Lebanese data. Once more, these densities across the two datasets are quite similar and may therefore reflect a trend characteristic of the comic genre if also observed in other comic studies.

In the British data, examples of behavioural impoliteness include pushing, kicking, shouting, interrupting when someone is speaking, stepping on someone, appearing naked in public, slamming a door in someone’s face, and behaving inappropriately at a funeral. The inappropriate behaviour at the funeral is discussed within the qualitative analysis in section 5.1.1. Examples of pushing and interrupting that may be interpreted as impoliteness behaviours are shown in Figure 21.

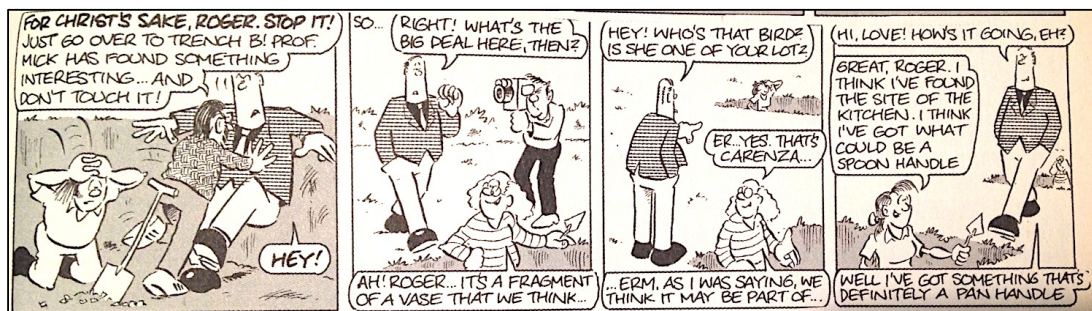


Figure 21. N.A. (2002). Roger Mellie. In *Viz. The Bag of Slugs*, p. 69

The first panel in Figure 21 includes the act of pushing which is read as an offensive behaviour as is clear in the offended facial expression of Roger Mellie with his open mouth, furrowed brows and eyes that are so close together they almost merge. The “HEY!” he utters is also in bold big typeface and cues his loud outrage or anger at the inappropriate behaviour. It might be argued here that the pushing is a non-verbal cue that accompanies the bald imperative “STOP IT” and “DON’T TOUCH IT!” rather than an impoliteness behaviour in and by itself. Though it cannot be confirmed, this is a likely interpretation here since the act of commanding is not in keeping with the relative power dynamics in the depicted context (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 194). Indeed, Tom, Roger Mellie’s manager, is actually commanding his boss. The first command is further exacerbated by the use of “FOR CHRIST’S SAKE”, further driving the direct command towards an impoliteness interpretation. But while the pushing behaviour in the first panel cannot be unequivocally separated from the accompanying verbal impoliteness, the two interruptions in the rest of the panels are rather clear in their being impolite behaviours in their own right. As the scientist is enthusiastically explaining about his discovery, Mellie rudely interrupts him to ask about an attractive female he sees nearby. The crestfallen expression and disappearing smile of the scientist, along with his reining his arms closer to his body and his hesitations (“...”) and the signs of dysfluency he utters at the interruption “ER” and “ERM” are evidence of his shock. Here the interruptions are not tied to the linguistic content of the utterances that happen to be said at the same time, and so may convincingly be perceived as behavioural impoliteness rather than mere non-verbal rhetorical accompanying strategies of linguistic impoliteness.

Of the twenty occurrences coded under the behavioural category in the British dataset, fourteen are unequivocally merely behavioural. The six other impoliteness behaviours (instances of pushing, kicking, and shouting) are all accompanied by linguistic utterances that are aggressive, if not full-fledged impolite behaviours (e.g. "DON'T COME BACK"; "PISS OFF"; "GIZ THAT FUCKIN' SWORD"). In this, they are very similar to the discussed example of Tom and Roger Mellie in the first panel of Figure 21, and so cannot indisputably be separated from the accompanying verbal impoliteness. Therefore, they may very well be functioning as rhetorical strategies that bolster the impoliteness interpretation, as Culpeper (2011a, pp. 136-137) suggests (sections 2.4.2 and 4.4.3).

As in the British dataset, the "other" category in the Lebanese dataset captures non-linguistic behavioural impoliteness that may be more than disambiguating visual impoliteness forms and that may therefore be seen as 'impolite' in and by themselves. Twenty-three of these behaviours occur irrespective of any accompanying linguistic impoliteness, and thirteen of them occur in conjunction with linguistic impoliteness. Offensive behaviours that are common to both the Lebanese and British datasets mainly include burping, spitting, laughing mockingly at someone, pulling down someone's trousers in public, shoving someone aside, kicking, grabbing, interrupting, and other threatening gestures. Behavioural impoliteness exclusive to the Lebanese dataset includes poking, groping, conspicuous staring and whistling, inconsiderately delaying people over trivialities, littering, peeing in public spaces in plain sight, mocking someone using gestures, mimetic sounds, as well as laughter, and obscene hand gestures. Of these, mockery and obscene gestures occur more frequently than the others.

Examples of full-fledged mockery, including mocking laughter and gestural and vocal mimicry can be found in Figure 22. Whereas Ghosn's (2009) two panels are self-explanatory with their pointing and mocking laughter, Tannous's (2012) panel is a bit more complex and involves both gestural and vocal mimicry.

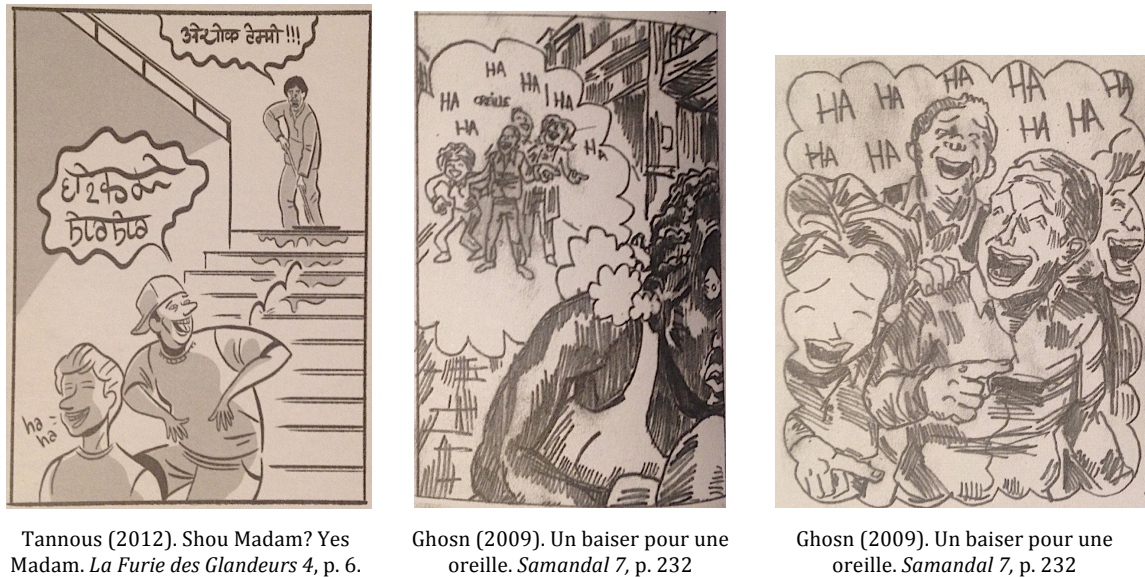


Figure 22. Examples of Mockery

In Tannous’s (2012) panel (Figure 22), the two boys are seemingly teasing and mocking the Sri-Lankan worker by trying to mimic the way his language sounds, doing some offensive mocking gestures with the arms, and laughing at him. Tannous’s (2012) panel is an example of impolite mimicry (section 2.4.1), which here specifically involves the following:

A marked echo and the implied echoed behaviour. The echo is marked (usually involving distortion or exaggeration), thus signalling the need for further inferencing. Moreover, the marked echo implies that the behaviour it echoes is also marked, that is, abnormal in some way. This is the implied echoed behaviour. (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 165)

This is indeed the case here, as the verbal echo is marked in that only its first three letter sounds look identical to the original utterance, but then the rest of the utterance is clearly nonsensically distorted, with even “blablabla” added but written in the same, presumably Sri-Lankan, script style. Moreover, the monkey-like gesture the boy with the cap seems to be doing implies a similar echoed behaviour on the worker’s side. The invited highly offensive inference may be that the worker is an uncultured person who comes from a primitive country where language sounds funny and monkeys and wild animals roam

freely. In fact, this attitude is reflective of the prejudiced beliefs about foreign workers common among certain people in the Lebanese society.

In addition to mockery, obscene gestures also occur frequently in the comics studied. An illustration of such gestures and a qualitative analysis of their significance can be found in section 7.1 in the qualitative analysis. Figure 23 further shows three such gestures.

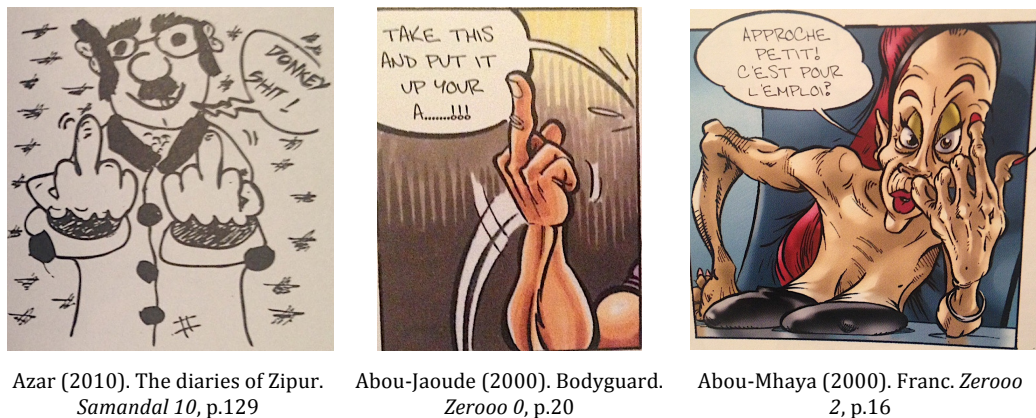


Figure 23. Examples of Obscene Gestures

The middle and left panels both show “the bird” gesture, with the intended significance verbally spelled out in Abou-Jaoude’s (2000) “Bodyguard”. As Bergen (2016, p. 60) observes, “the association in people’s minds between aggression and extending this one particular finger is strong.” However, it is important to note that this gesture has multiple variations in its realisation in different countries and cultures (Lefevre, 2011, p. 132). One of these is raising the index finger (often used in Lebanon); another, “the British equivalent uses both the middle and the index fingers in a V-shape” (Bergen, 2016, p. 61). Alternatively, the third picture in Figure 23 shows a highly offensive gesture, the upturned forefinger beckon, which, according to Lefevre (2011, p. 90), “is used only for dogs, and to use it on a person implies that you think he is one.” Though Lefevre attributes this particular significance of the beckoning gesture to the Philippine context, it is very much used in Lebanon too, and has exactly the same meaning.

5.2.4 A focus on the indeterminate category. In the entire dataset, only two impoliteness behaviours are classed as indeterminate, one in the British dataset and another in the Lebanese one. The example from the British data is reproduced in Figure 24.



Figure 24. Smith, S. (2010). Being Homeless Ain't Swell. In *The Comix Reader 1*, p. 16

It cannot be accurately determined in the last panel whether the homeless man is addressing the passer-by directly or referring to him in his hearing (highly likely judging by their proximity), or even muttering the insult to himself. Since the impoliteness behaviour cannot be classed as Personalised Negative Vocative or a Third Person Negative Reference in the hearing of the target with any degree of certainty, it is classed as indeterminate. It is important to note though that this indeterminacy is largely due to the medium itself – which relies on encapsulating only a select few moments from the whole event (see section 3.2).

Similarly, in the Lebanese data, among 388 impoliteness behaviours, only one is classed under the indeterminate category, an ambiguous case where the behaviour could be either genuine or mock impoliteness. In Maouad's (2011) "Les Bobos" (*La Furie des Glandeurs 1*, p.3, Panel 15), a man is asking his aging father a question about "les bobos", and the father proposes to look it up on the internet, saying, "Your pimp of a son (may he bury me God willing) taught me." A genuine impoliteness interpretation may be plausible here because of the highly offensive nature of the personalised third person reference "your pimp of a son." However, the interactants' relational proximity and the use of a conventionalised Lebanese informal endearment formula in the utterance "may (he) bury me (God willing)" may also point towards a mock impoliteness interpretation.

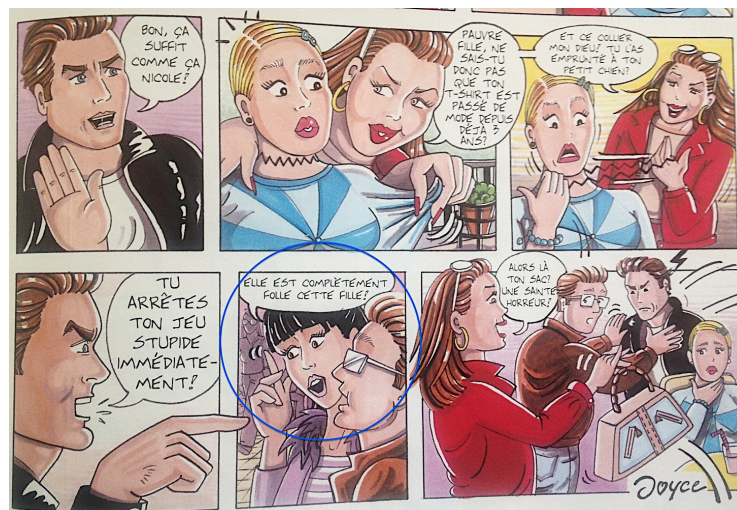
In the absence of sufficient context and clear disambiguating visual clues, the event was classed as indeterminate.

The fact that out of 581 impoliteness behaviours, only two could not be easily classed, and rather owing to the nature of the medium itself and lack of sufficient contextual clues, is a testimony to the robustness of Culpeper's (2011a) impoliteness framework. It is also a strong indicator of its adaptability to the multimodal fictional genre of comics on one hand, and its ability to cater to impoliteness behaviours from a country with a different culture and language.

5.3 Distinctive Usage Patterns

In this section, I discuss three cases of distinctive usage from the comic dataset. The first is a variation on an existing CIF, the personalised third person negative assertions in the hearing of the target. The second is a type of offence by association, an impoliteness behaviour that involves special face dynamics. The third is a distinctive linguistic pattern in impoliteness in Lebanese comics.

Personalised third person negative assertions in the hearing of the target. A conventionalised impoliteness form encountered in both datasets, though it does not figure among Culpeper's (2011a, p. 135) list of CIF, is personalised third person negative assertions in the hearing of the target. It is a conventionalised insult that is very similar to the personalised third person reference in the hearing of the target, which is in Culpeper (2011a, p. 135), except that it involves a negative assertion rather than a negative reference. Examples of this insult form are shown in Figure 25.



Nasard (2001). *Bimbos. Zeroo 4*, p.33



El Khouri (2008). *Samandal 2*, p. 29

Figure 25. Personalised Third Person Negative Assertions in the Lebanese Comics

Nasard’s (2001) example involves a young brunette woman viciously picking on and attacking another woman (the blond one) who is having lunch with a man who seems to be the brunette’s (ex-) boyfriend and another couple. The third woman present is outraged and says, “ELLE EST COMPLÈTEMENT FOLLE CETTE FILLE!” (“This girl is totally nuts!”) while flicking the side of her head with her index finger. This insulting negative assertion is clearly made in the presence of the target, hence the suggestion to refer to such examples as personalised third-person negative assertions in the hearing of the target. The other example in El Khouri’s (2008) panel (Figure 25) follows the same pattern. Realising that the two girls are from the same village, the young man asks the woman with the long hair, “WHAT WAS SOURA LIKE WHEN SHE WAS YOUNG?” [Soura

being the girl with the shorter curly hair]. The woman with the long hair replies, “SHE WAS CHUBBY AND PLUMP.” When the young man responds with a surprised “REALLY?!” the young woman goes on, “I’M NOT KIDDING. SHE WAS THREE TIMES THE SIZE SHE IS NOW.” Though the terms used in the first utterance “chubby” and “plump” may be considered rather affectionate references to being fat, it is clear from Soura’s furrowed brows, glare, tightened lips, raised shoulders and clenched fists that she is upset and offended by these and the ensuing assertions made in her presence about her having been fat.

Offence by association. There are some impoliteness behaviours in the data where the offence perceived is rather an offence by association. Unlike personalised third person negative assertions in the hearing of the target, which are suggested as an additional sub-category under CIF, offences by association are not impoliteness formulae. They rather fall under the distinctive usage category because they involve special face dynamics slightly different from the ones discussed in the literature (section 2.3.1). Examples of these from both datasets are discussed in the following examples.

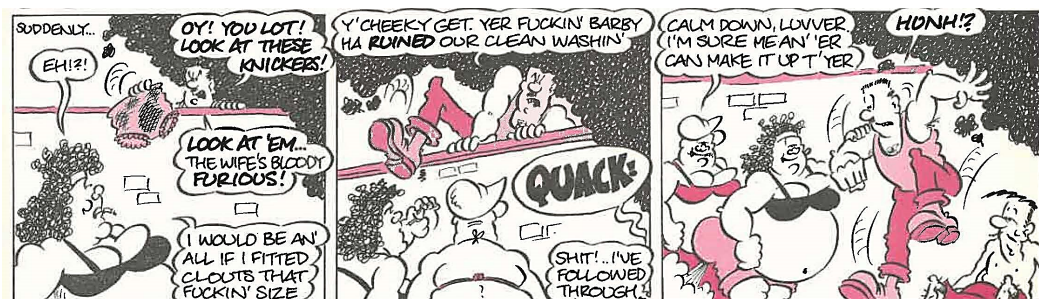


Figure 26. N.A. (2003). The Fat Slags. In *Viz. The Bear Trapper's Hat*, p. 39

In Figure 26, a visibly angry man is brandishing his wife’s smoke-stained underwear over the separating fence, saying, “OY! YOU LOT! LOOK AT THESE KNICKERS!” “LOOK AT ‘EM... THE WIFE’S BLOODY FURIOUS!” The woman with the curly hair chooses to ignore the actual meaning of the complaint and comments on the size of the underwear instead: “I WOULD BE AN’ ALL IF I FITTED CLOUTS THAT FUCKIN’ SIZE.” This is clearly an insult, possibly a third person negative assertion to the effect that the wife is distastefully fat, as suggested in the first part of this section. And though the insult is in fact addressed to the

wife rather than the man, the latter, most likely as a result of his close association with his wife, is obviously offended and takes issue with it. This is clear in the fact that he counters the impoliteness with a Personalised Negative Vocative, “Y’ CHEEKY GET...” and is visibly enraged as he climbs over the separating fence threateningly.

The second example of offence by association is taken from Ross (2011). Maps to live by. *Solipsistic Pop 4*, p. 7 (Figure 27).



Figure 27. Ross, E. (2011). Maps to Live by. In *Solipsistic Pop 4*, p. 7

When the bully calls out “WHO’S THAT CHINKY IN YER HOOSE?” (Figure 27) the boy visibly takes offence, pulls his sleeves up and lunges at him, uttering the Negative Expressive “FUCK YOU!” The online *Oxford Dictionary* entry for *chinky* reads, “*offensive, informal*” for “A Chinese person” (“Chinky,” n.d.), and so the initial insult is a third person negative reference, but not one uttered in the hearing of the target. However, the boy is obviously offended by it. Knowing that the boy’s mother is Indian, it can be posited that the offence he perceived was one by association that involves his social identity face (section 2.3.1). Being himself of mixed race, it is probable that he reads in the “chinky” reference a negative evaluation of a social identity value he has in common with the Asian group (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 29).

Similar examples from the Lebanese dataset where the offence perceived is one by association are reproduced in Figure 28.



Azar (2010). The diaries of Zipur. *Samandal 10*, p. 128



Azar (2010). The diaries of Zipur. *Samandal 10*, p. 129

Figure 28. Offence by Association in the Lebanese Comics

The first example from Azar (2010) in Figure 28 comes after a man goes into an Armenian takeaway restaurant in Bourj Hammoud, an Armenian district in Beirut, and requests food with a Turkish accent. Seeing red, the shop owner tells him that he only has Armenian food, and suggests the man try ‘basturma’ (traditional spicy Armenian ham), at which the customer angrily flashes him the bird and responds, “FUCK BASTURMA.” In addition to being a mere offensive refusal of the offered suggestion, by association “FUCK BASTURMA” actually insults the identity face of the restaurant owner, who, judging by his reactions in the rest of the comic feels very strongly about his Armenian identity. The ensuing physically and verbally aggressive exchange testifies to the intensity of the offence perceived. In fact, the second panel in Figure 28 is taken from that same comic and is part of the riposte to that first insult. Interestingly, it does itself include an insult by association, “FUCK YOUR MOM”, instead of the more conventional “Fuck you.” Knowing that honour is a valued Arabic emic value (Harb, 2010, p. 8) and the extent to which Lebanese men (and Arab men more generally) prize their family’s honour (section 2.5.2), especially the females’ honour within their family, this insult is expected to be even more offensive than the more conventionalised “fuck you” version (Silverton, 2011, p. 4192).

Language and impoliteness in Lebanese comics. In the analysed Lebanese comics, the linguistic impoliteness triggers appear in different languages according to the frequencies shown in Figure 29.

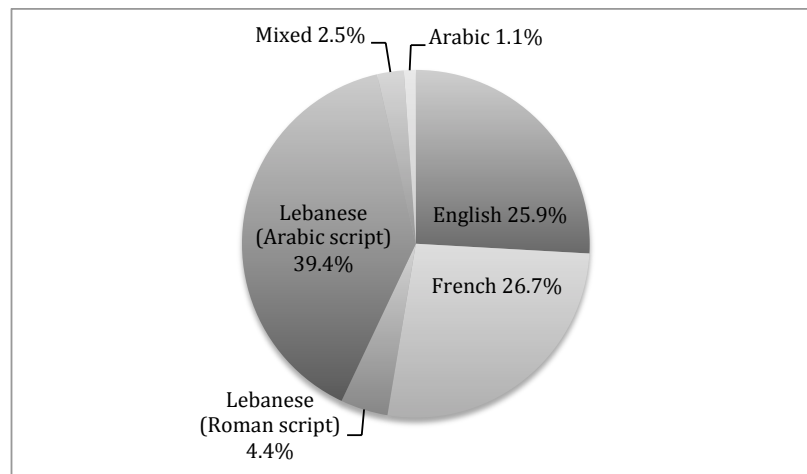
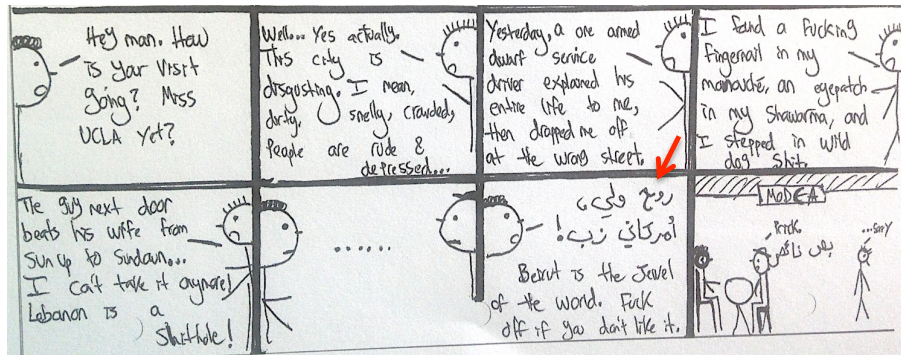


Figure 29. Proportion of Linguistic Impoliteness Triggers by Language in Lebanese Comics

As can be observed, the lowest density of linguistic impoliteness triggers corresponds to those uttered in standard, literary Arabic, which only amount to 4 out of 363 impoliteness occurrences in the Lebanese data, two of which are translated from a comic originally written in French. Incidentally, all four occurrences are observed in the *Samandal* anthology, which openly aims for a broader Middle-Eastern readership. In contrast, the highest number of linguistic impoliteness triggers recorded is in colloquial Lebanese (43.8%), followed by 26.7% of impoliteness triggers in French and 25.9% in English, and then further behind those in mixed languages (2.5%). Moreover, in a number of cases (one of which was examined in section 6.2), impoliteness is accompanied by a distinctive language shift to colloquial Lebanese. Examples are reproduced in Figure 30.



Naim (2009). Welcome to Beirut. *Samandal 4*, p. 150



Bassil (2011). Bienvenue a Boboland! *La Furie des Glandeurs 1*, p. 8



Bassil (2011). Bienvenue a Boboland! *La Furie des Glandeurs 1*, p. 9

Figure 30. Examples of Language Shift for Impoliteness

In Naim's (2009) example, the Lebanese interactants, who have been so far conversing in English, shift to colloquial Lebanese (indicated by the arrow) to deliver the impoliteness. Also in Bassil's (2011) comic (Figure 30), the speech balloons indicated by the two arrows include the only impoliteness behaviours in the comic: a context-driven

implicational impoliteness where a mother imposes a condition on her adult daughter before she can go out (translation: “There’s no going out if you don’t clean the room”) and an implied threat (translation: “Do you want to turn off the music or do I turn it off to my liking?!?”). Incidentally, these impoliteness behaviours happen to be the only utterances in Lebanese in a comic that otherwise mainly uses French. While the language shift occurring may be competence related here, it cannot possibly be ascertained.

These observations about the prevalence of colloquial Lebanese in the linguistic impoliteness recorded in the Lebanese data (Figure 29) and about the sudden shift to colloquial Lebanese to deliver the impoliteness trigger in an otherwise different linguistic context may actually be attributed to three phenomena. For one, it has been documented that emotion-laden words and expressions carry more weight in one’s mother tongue (Dewaele, 2013, 2016). Not only are linguistic impoliteness triggers emotion-laden expressions as they undoubtedly both express and generate emotional states, but they are also usually uttered in emotionally charged contexts. Moreover, in a study specifically involving Arab speakers, Albirini (2011, p. 547) notes a number of reasons why speakers shift to dialectical Arabic, that is, their colloquial dialect; these include situations where they need “to discuss taboo or derogatory issues” as well as “scold, insult, or personally attack.” He (*ibid.*, p. 552) also adds that switching to the colloquial local language is also commonly done for “joking, sarcasm, or underhanded criticism.” It is clear that the situations Albirini (2011) mentions are situations where impoliteness in our present understanding (e.g. section 2.4.4) is rife. This then, in addition to the fact that impoliteness triggers are indeed emotion-laden expressions better expressed in one’s mother tongue (Dewaele, 2013, 2016), may be important reasons why impoliteness in the Lebanese data is dominantly delivered in the native spoken Lebanese. Interestingly too, the fact that impoliteness occurs fairly frequently in French and English, in almost a quarter of all cases of impoliteness for each (26.7% and 25.9% respectively), and that the lowest, almost non-existent frequency of impoliteness is in standard Arabic may well reflect the conflict around language ideologies and social identity in Lebanon (section 2.7.2).

Another possible cause behind the dominant use of Lebanese to achieve impoliteness may have to do with the degree of pragmatic competence required for

engaging in impoliteness (Beebe, 1995) and the uncertainty of many multilinguals with regard to the pragmatic calibration needed in the use of emotion-laden impoliteness expressions. Indeed, as Dewaele (2016, p. 214) remarks:

Negative emotion-laden words have “red flags” because without exact understanding, or without the knowledge of which hedges to use, the knowledge of appropriateness in the situation (Dewaele, 2008; Jay and Janschewitz, 2008), they may cause offence and loss of face to both user and interlocutor (Fraser, 2010).

Arguably, causing offence and face loss to the interlocutor may well be a motivation or objective behind impoliteness; causing oneself to lose face, however, is certainly not.

5.4 Impoliteness-Related Pragmatic Noises and Onomatopoeia

As discussed in sections 3.3, and 4.4.2, pragmatic noises and onomatopoeia are important linguistic impoliteness-related features that may help disclose the interactants’ attitudes and emotions and cue impoliteness. The pragmatic noises and onomatopoeia that accompany impoliteness behaviours in the comic datasets are grouped as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Pragmatic Noises and Onomatopoeia Accompanying Impoliteness Behaviours

	British comics	Lebanese comics
Noises of surprise or shock	EH?! / EH!?! / EH? / EEH! / HUH / OH! / WOH! / WHAOA! / WAHAY! / HEY!	AH, WAAAAAW, HEH, YIII, OOH, HUH, OH, HEIN
Noises of mockery, mocking laughter or satisfaction	HA / HA HA (x2) / HA HA HA! / HUHUUH / OH HA HA! / HEE HEE!	HA HA HA, HIHIHI HI, HEHEHEHE
Noises of disgust	ARRGGHH! / AARGH! / AHG! / UGH! / EURGH! / EEEK! / EWWW!	TFEEEH, BEUUURK, BEURK, NIIA7
Noises of pain or discomfort	AHG! / AARGHH! / AUCH! / AIEEEE!	AAAKH, AKH, ARGH, AAAAA, OI
Other	OY! / OOF / MMM / OIT / LAAA! / TT / ER... / ERM	MMM, KHHHHH...TFOUUU, TSK TSK TSK, TAKH, PSSST PSSST, PFFFF, OH OH
Onomatopoeia	SHOVE! / JAB! / WHAP / WHACK! / FWIT! / CREEK / STRAIN / CLENCH / THUD / WAFT / STOMP / SOB! / SLAM! / YEARN	BURP, POC, VNNN, BZZZZZ, OUIN

In addition to sharing the same overarching thematic categories of pragmatic noises, the two countries' datasets have a lot of pragmatic noises in common, though some decidedly with a different spelling (e.g. HEE HEE in the British data versus HI HI). The largest category of pragmatic noises in the British data is the one of noises of surprise or shock uttered by the offended party upon the delivery of offence. This category mainly expresses the offended's outrage, which is one of the negative emotions usually associated with offence (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 436). In the Lebanese data, however, this category of noises occurs almost as frequently as that of the noises of mockery and laughter. This observation may be linked to the presence of condescensions in the Lebanese data and their absence from the British data, as condescension also often involves derisive and mocking comments and noises. The combination of mockery and criticism may suggest a higher propensity for mockery in Lebanese comics. Naturally, the noises of mockery are all uttered by the offenders, and those of pain and discomfort by the offended, generally in reaction to physical impoliteness behaviours (like kicking or punching). Noises of disgust, on the other hand, can be observed on both sides of the offence; some of them are uttered by the offender before the insult, and some are uttered by the offended in reaction to the offence perceived.

In contrast to the British data, the onomatopoeia in the Lebanese are not that frequent. Moreover, while all except one onomatopoeia (FWIT!) in the British data are lexical, in the Lebanese data, all except one (BURP) are non-lexical (POC, VNNN, BZZZZZ, OUIN) (see section...). In fact, there seems to be more to using lexical onomatopoeia than just capturing and connoting certain sounds. Lexical onomatopoeia seem to take on a more complex function, according to Uyeno (2015), who posits that, beyond the imitation of sounds, lexical onomatopoeia also describe and "clarify the events in a panel by enhancing an action that is hard to capture in a still image." This clearly seems to be the case in the lexical onomatopoeia observed in the British comics, and in some particularly more than in others as in SHOVE! / JAB! / CREEK / STRAIN / CLENCH / STOMP / SOB! / YEARN.

5.5 Frequency, Distribution and Variation of Non-Verbal Impoliteness-Related Features

Non-verbal impoliteness-related features are mainly taken to refer to facial expressions (namely brow, eye, and mouth movements), postures, gestures, and comic compositional features. It might be worth mentioning at the onset that such visual depictions may be to a certain extent subject to the comic writer's artistic skill, and so some limitations are occasionally observed in the rigidity of certain drawings, which allows little variation or nuanced subtleties in posture, gaze, and gestures (This is notably the case in some *Sid the Sexist* comics as for example where Sid is drawn with the exact same posture and facial expression in all or most panels). When such is the case, visual features are not counted unless they clearly depart from the established internal norm observed in the comic.

The non-verbal features observed alongside the impoliteness behaviours coded in the comic anthologies are shown in four tables: one for facial expressions, one for posture, one for gestures, and one for compositional features. The criterion adopted is that for a visual feature to count as a non-verbal trigger for impoliteness attributions in impoliteness behaviours, it has to appear in at least 50% of the panels with recorded impoliteness behaviours in my data. The number of panels rather than the number of impoliteness behaviours is adopted as a benchmark here for the obvious reason that the comic writer gets to make one visual representation per panel, no matter the number of impoliteness behaviours this panel may include.

It is extremely important to emphasize that though I will be focusing on particular visual aspects separately for obvious analytical reasons, no single non-verbal form or feature single-handedly cues impoliteness, or even the emotions generally associated with it. It is rather a particular combination of verbal as well as non-verbal features, which, taken together and in context, may cue such a pragmatic phenomenon. As Calero (2005, p. 77) warns, one should not read too much into single expressions, which by themselves, may simply not mean anything; one should rather look for "patterns of expression or behaviour" instead. However, the fact that some of the studied forms may occur in more than 50% of the panels deemed to contain impoliteness would undoubtedly be a strong

indication that their presence is a non-verbal trigger, which with the appropriate combination, may contribute to an impoliteness attribution in certain contexts.

Table 6 shows the salient facial expressions observed among the comic characters involved in impoliteness behaviours.

Table 6

Salient Facial Expressions of Interactants Involved in Impoliteness Behaviours

Dataset		British comics		Lebanese comics	
		Offender raw number (%) in 137 panels)	Offended raw number (%) in 137 panels)	Offender raw number (% in 298 panels)	Offended raw number (%) in 298 panels)
Facial expressions	Brows furrowed/contracted: (\ /) or (^ ^)	51 (37.2%)	23 (16.8%)	116 (38.9%)	34 (11.4%)
	Brows raised: (/ \) (^ ^)	3 (2.2%)	38 (27.7%)	29 (9.7%)	44 (14.8%)
	Brows contracted with 1 brow raised higher than the other	13 (9.5%)	0 (0%)	5 (1.7%)	2 (0.7%)
	Total brow movements	67 (48.9%)	61 (44.5%)	150 (50.3%)	80 (26.8%)
		128 (93.4%)		230 (77.2%)	
	Eyes down close together	13 (9.5%)	16 (11.7%)	2 (0.7%)	4 (1.3%)
	Eyes wide open (e.g. staring; glaring; gawking)	20 (14.6%)	21 (15.3%)	115 (38.6%)	78 (26.2%)
	Total eye movements	33 (24.1%)	37 (27%)	117 (39.3%)	82 (27.5%)
		70 (51.1%)		199 (66.8%)	
	Mouth open	30 (21.9%)	20 (14.6%)	91 (30.5%)	30 (10.1%)
	Mouth slightly open with one corner raised more than the other	9 (6.6%)	2 (1.5%)	8 (2.7%)	0 (0%)
	Lips tightened/pressed	4 (2.9%)	13 (9.5%)	23 (7.7%)	43 (14.4%)
	Lips tightened with one corner raised more than the other	2 (1.5%)	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.3%)	1 (0.3%)
	Teeth clenched	13 (9.5%)	3 (2.2%)	24 (8.1%)	8 (2.7%)
	Total mouth movements	58 (42.3%)	39 (28.5%)	147 (49.3%)	82 (27.5%)
		97 (70.8%)		229 (76.8%)	
	Other (red/black/green/blue complexion, strained neck muscles, tears, frown lines, sweat beads...)	17 (12.4%)	23 (16.8%)	14 (4.7%)	11 (3.7%)

Brow movements. Brow movements occur abundantly in the vicinity of impoliteness behaviours. There are three frequently occurring brow movements. The

dominant category is that of furrowed brows, which, in the right context and combination, typically cue aggression (Eisner, 2008b, p. 32) and/or anger (e.g. Ekman, 2003, p. 144; Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 82; Forceville, 2012). Furrowed brows occur more than twice and three times as much among the offenders than among the offended in the British and Lebanese comics respectively, which is quite normal since it is usually the offender who initiates the aggression. Conversely, the furrowed brows among the offended may be caused by the fact that one way of reacting to a perceived offence is to reciprocate the impoliteness with a similarly aggressive impolite response (Section 2.4.3), in which case, anger is also witnessed among the offended party. Otherwise, the offended person could simply be angry at the offence s/he had to suffer.

On the other hand, raised brows generally cue surprise, shock, or outrage (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 37). Naturally then, and as is clear in Table 7, they typically occur more frequently among the offended who represent the side that experiences shock and outrage at the offence dealt them. However, while the two countries' datasets share this pattern, they do differ in the density of occurrence of this brow movement within the offender-offended categories. Raised brows are more frequent among the offended British characters compared to the Lebanese ones (p -value = 0.01). This may indicate a higher degree of outrage among the British characters faced with impoliteness, potentially reflecting a stereotypical British tendency towards politeness and conflict-avoidance (Fox, 2004, p. 15). Conversely, raised brows are significantly more frequent among the Lebanese offending characters compared to the British ones (p -value = 0.008). This may suggest that the delivery of impoliteness in the Lebanese comic context may be more associated with shocked outrage and a sense of righteousness, which is somewhat along the lines of the notion of coercive impoliteness as redressing a moral wrong (Culpeper et al., 2017, p. 15).

The third brow movement, with one brow raised higher than the other, is usually a sign of irritation or disapproval according to Site (2013): "One eyebrow raised and the other level or neutral is a widespread sign of scepticism or displeasure and is called the eyebrow cock." This brow movement is observed more frequently among the offender category, particularly in the British data, and may therefore be more typically associated with the triggering of the offence. In sum, the three brow movements observed in the data

cue aggression, anger, shock or outrage, and disapproval, emotions which, as we have already established, are tightly linked to impoliteness.

Eye movements. With regard to the eye movements observed accompanying impoliteness behaviours, they involve either the wide open or down and close together movement. The widening of the eyes, which is the most frequent movement practically among all categories, is usually part of the cluster that signals surprise (Ekman & Friesan, 2003, p. 37) or an angry glare (Ekman & Friesan, 2003, pp. 82, 144), depending on the combination of other non-verbal signs that accompany it. Therefore, as shown in the table, this eye movement can be observed among both offenders, where it generally cues anger, and the offended, where it more commonly indicates surprise or outrage. At the same time, and this is often the case among offenders, gaze may be associated with dominance, power, or aggression (Matsumoto and Hwang, 2016, p. 92). More particularly, “a sustained gaze can express dominance or even threat” (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 152). So in addition to being motivated by a feeling of anger, glares can also mirror an aggressive, dominant stance. As a matter of fact, the frequency of glaring is much higher among the Lebanese offending characters compared to their British counterparts (38.6% versus 14.6% with a p-value of 0.000). It usually takes the form of glaring, gawking, or staring – all somewhat aggressive and potentially offensive moves, especially when accompanying verbally offensive behaviour. In fact, a frequent observation the Lebanese make to physically describe someone who is being rude or insolent or behaving inappropriately is that s/he gawks, glares/glowers (*بفتنجر عيونو / بتفتنجر عيونها*).

On the other hand, when the eyes are lowered and brought close together, in the right context and with the proper combination, it might be a sign of sadness, hurt, or embarrassment. “Often in sadness the gaze is down rather than straight ahead, particularly if there is shame or guilt blended in with the sadness” (Ekman, & Friesan, 2003, p. 119). A downward gaze is indeed part of the cluster of signals cueing embarrassment according to Keltner (2005, p. 134). The sadness and embarrassment would obviously be on the side of the offended. However, it might also be useful to note that in the data, the downward gaze also occurs a number of times as an angry look, but

one directed from the dominant or higher position of the offender; hence the number of such gazes under the offender column.

Mouth movements. The mouth movements observed are the second most frequent facial movement accompanying impoliteness behaviours after the brow ones. Prominently parted lips or a wide open mouth movement is quite frequent in the data, and depending on the accompanying combination, it may either signal anger (Ekman, 2003, p. 144; Forceville, 2005, p. 76) or surprise (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 37). In both datasets, a wide, open mouth is more frequent among offenders. However, the open mouth is slightly different in its graphic realisation in the two datasets with more subtle open mouth depictions in British comics (Figure 31) compared to more conspicuous and detailed open mouths in their Lebanese counterparts (Figure 32).



Figure 31. Examples of Impoliteness Behaviours Featuring Open Mouths in British Comics



Figure 32. Examples of Impoliteness Behaviours Featuring Open Mouths in Lebanese Comics

This seems quite consonant with the intensity with which offenders seem to be delivering their offence, an intensity that often verges on shouting or screaming. In fact, salient mouth movements come second in the British data in terms of frequency after brow movements, but they are almost as dense as the brow movements in the Lebanese data with 229 versus 230 occurrences each. Once more, this seems to point towards a vocal intensity that is rather prominent in the Lebanese emotionally charged situations associated with impoliteness.

Ironically, with the right combination, the pressed or tightened lips movement may also cue anger (Ekman, 2003, p. 146; Forceville, 2005, p. 76). In my data, the thinning of the lips occurs more frequently on the offended party's side in both countries' comics. This might well be justified by the fact that "this action of narrowing the lips is a very reliable sign of anger; it is often a very early sign of anger, or it may be highly controlled anger" (Ekman, 2003, pp. 150-1). Indeed, in response to a perceived offence, it would be quite understandable to observe among the offended signs of budding or controlled anger.

Moreover, clenched teeth are typically a sign of aggression (Eisner, 2008b, p. 32), and so it is not surprising to find them more abundantly on the offender party's side in both datasets. However, as Eisner (2008b, p. 82) also observes, when accompanied by closed fists, arms hugging the body, spine upright, and rigid neck muscles, clenched teeth may also be a sign of shame and an attempt "to deal with disapproval." This may well justify the few occurrences of clenched teeth seen among the offended party. Finally, among the mouth movements, a distinctive movement observed is when one corner of the mouth is slightly raised more than the other, whether with the lips parted or tightened. Such a movement occurs largely on the offender's side in the data, and more so in the British data (p-value = 0.012). It is, according to Ekman and Friesen (2003, pp. 67, 71), a sure sign of contempt or of its variants, scorn, sneers and smirks (Eisner, 2008b, p. 32; LaFrance, 2011, p. 119). On contempt and scorn, Ekman and Friesen (2003, p. 67; my emphasis) posit:

In contempt there is an element of **condescension** toward the object of contempt. **Disdainful** in disliking the persons or their actions, you feel **superior** (usually morally) to them. (. . .) Scorn is a variant of contempt, in which the object of contempt is **derided** for his failings, often with

some element of humour which **amuses** the person showing the scorn and **hurts** the recipient.

This description of the emotion of contempt places it at the very heart of an impoliteness uptake as it seems to group several of the domains that are perceived at the origin of an impoliteness uptake described by Culpeper (2011a, p. 94): condescension, superiority, disrespect, hurtfulness, and mockery. What is more, its higher density in the British data may be a reflection of the fact that patronizing behaviour, which is by definition condescending, is a highly conventional impoliteness strategy in British culture (ibid., p. 94; section 2.7.1).

Overall, while the observed impoliteness-related brow and mouth movements occur more frequently than eye movements, when accounting for both offender and offended, each of these three sub-categories of visual features (brow, eye, and mouth movements) is found to occur above the 50% cut off point. In other words, these features occur in more than half of all panels that contain impoliteness behaviours in both the British and Lebanese datasets. Consequently, they seem to have become conventionalised for impoliteness, and so there is a strong possibility that in the appropriate context and with the proper combination these salient visual features could be considered strong non-verbal impoliteness indicators.

Posture. Table 7 shows the salient posture features among interactants involved in impoliteness behaviours in the comics examined.

Table 7

Salient Posture Indicators Among Interactants Involved in Impoliteness Behaviours

		British comics		Lebanese comics	
		Offender raw number (% in 137 panels)	Offended raw number (% in 137 panels)	Offender raw number (% in 298 panels)	Offended raw number (% in 298 panels)
Posture	Head turned	0 (0%)	7 (5.1%)	7 (2.3%)	10 (3.4%)
	Head tilted upwards	6 (4.4%)	3 (2.2%)	8 (2.7%)	11 (3.7%)
	Total head movements	6 (4.4%)	10 (7.3%)	15 (5%)	21 (7.1%)
	Spine upright/rigid	6 (4.4%)	3 (2.2%)	49 (16.4%)	23 (7.7%)
	Leaning/movement forward/slumping	25 (18.2%)	17 (12.4%)	85 (28.5%)	53 (17.8%)
	Turning away/Back turned	4 (2.9%)	1 (0.7%)	8 (2.7%)	1 (0.3%)
	Total upper body movements	35 (25.5%)	21 (15.3%)	142 (47.7%)	77 (25.8%)
	Other (e.g. legs apart, legs crossed, kicking...)	9 (6.6%)	0 (0%)	12 (4.0%)	3 (1%)
	Total number of salient posture movements	50 (36.5%)	31 (22.6%)	169 (56.7%)	101 (33.9%)
	Total by dataset	81 (59.12%)		270 (90.6%)	

A broad look at Table 7 shows that, just like facial expressions, posture indicators overall accompany impoliteness behaviours in the data in more than 50% of the panels containing impoliteness in both datasets, and as such, they may also be seen as a reliable non-verbal trigger for an impoliteness attribution in impoliteness behaviours. Also looking at the total, it is clear that the Lebanese dataset is much denser in impoliteness-related posture features (p-value = 0.010). A closer analytical look at the individual posture aspects reveals the following.

All the occurrences of the turned head cue surprise and shock, and so naturally, they all occur on the offended side. Conversely, turning one’s back or turning away is among the “conventionalised non-verbal visual impoliteness behaviours in British culture” cited by Culpeper (2011a, p.136), and so these occur mainly on the offender’s side in the data. The instances on the offended party’s side (only two of them overall) involve turning away from the aggression and deliberately refraining from responding to it.

The body movements with the head tilted upwards and spine held stiffly upright are generally associated with dominance and pride (Frank & Shaw, 2016, p. 51). Indeed, “figures in power tend to stand straight and hold their heads high” (Calero, 2005, p.113). This reading is also confirmed by Raah (2015, pp. 71-2), who suggests the upward posture and upward head tilt are part of the demeanour of a dominant, confident leader. As might be expected, this role is commonly taken on by the offender or the initiator of the offence, who may feel s/he has the upper hand, at least initially. This is indeed the case in the data where this posture is twice as frequent among the offenders as among the offended in both datasets. However, according to Eisner (2008b, p. 62), an upright posture could also be adopted by the offended who might be feeling shame, and so might react with clenched teeth, closed fists, arms hugging the body, spine upright, and rigid neck muscles precisely “to deal with the disapproval.” This might very well be the case when the head tilted upwards and rigid, upright postures are recorded among the offended. Interestingly, the stiff, upright posture is observed much more frequently in the Lebanese data, occurring in 24.1% of the panels containing impoliteness as opposed to 6.6% of the panels in the British comics (p -value = 0.000). It is also more frequent among the Lebanese offended characters than among their British counterparts (p -value = 0.029). Given that this posture is, as just discussed, associated with pride, its density in the Lebanese data may be consonant with the fact that the Lebanese are generally honour-bound people (section 2.7.2), and that they may be putting on a prideful show of bravado in a face-saving attempt to deal with the disapproval carried by the impoliteness. The overall difference also suggests that pride may play a relatively more important role in impoliteness events in the Lebanese data.

The forward leaning movement is more complex. It can be associated with aggression, threat and anger (e.g. Frank and Shaw, 2016, p. 51) on the one hand, and with shame and embarrassment (e.g. Keltner, 2005, p. 134) on the other. This explains its presence in the data on both sides of the offence. Furthermore, Raah (2015, p. 71) sees the slouching movement with slumped shoulders and the head bent forward as part of the signs that cue nervousness and low self-esteem. Indeed, it is assumed that face attack may very well affect the offended’s self-esteem as a result of the damage perceived to her/his

face value. This is also largely in keeping with Culpeper’s (2011a, p. 62) suggestion that hurt feelings are commonly associated with Quality Face offences (section 2.3.4).

Overall, apart from the higher density of the upright, rigid posture in the Lebanese data, the frequency of the other posture movements does not significantly differ in the two countries’ datasets. It is therefore mainly the higher frequency of the upright rigid posture in the Lebanese data, probably indicative of the Lebanese ingrained sense of honour, which tips the overall balance of the posture category and makes it diverge (p-value = 0.01) in the two datasets.

Gestures. Table 8 shows the salient gestures among interactants involved in impoliteness behaviours.

Table 8

Salient Gestures Among Interactants Involved in Impoliteness Behaviours

Dataset		British comics		Lebanese comics	
		Offender raw number (% in 137 panels)	Offended raw number (% in 137 panels)	Offender raw number (% in 298 panels)	Offended raw number (% in 298 panels)
Gestures	Pushing	4 (2.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Arms and/or hands outstretched, open or raised	9 (6.6%)	15 (10.9%)	37 (12.4%)	6 (2%)
	Arms crossed/folded	3 (2.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (1.3%)
	Hands behind back	0 (0%)	3 (2.2%)	41 (13.8%)	2 (0.7%)
	Hand(s) in pocket	2 (1.5%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.3%)	3 (1%)
	Hand(s) on hips	3 (2.2%)	1 (0.7%)	13 (4.4%)	5 (1.7%)
	Hands crossed	1 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.3%)
	Clenched/closed fist(s)	4 (2.9%)	1 (0.7%)	22 (7.4%)	6 (2%)
	Pointing (some of them also deictic)	16 (11.7%)	2 (1.5%)	32 (10.7%)	4 (1.3%)
	Other (hand over mouth/side of forehead/chin; poking; grabbing; beckoning with fingers; hugging oneself; slapping; punching; brushing someone aside; other threatening gestures)	14 (10.2%)	4 (2.9%)	35 (11.7%)	7 (2.3%)
	Total number of gestures	56 (40.9%)	26 (19%)	181 (60.7%)	38 (12.8%)
	Total by dataset	82 (59.9%)		219 (73.5%)	

Similar to the impoliteness-related facial expressions and postures, gestures overall account for more than 50% of all panels with impoliteness behaviours in both datasets. The most frequent gestures in the data appear to involve outstretched or raised arms and/or hands and pointing.

Outstretched or raised arms and/or hands on the offender's side are generally part of a dominant, threatening stance. However, when appearing on the offended side in the data, they are generally a sign that the character is taken aback, therefore cueing surprised disbelief or even denial. This gesture is also sometimes done in a surrender-like move or to demonstrate one's good faith or peaceful intentions since "palms upwards would invite discussion" (Raah, 2015, p. 78). Interestingly, there is a highly significant disparity on the offended party's side between the two countries' datasets (p -value = 0.000), with a much higher density on the British side (10.9 %) compared to the Lebanese side (2%). This may in fact be seen as reflective of the British inclination to avoid confrontations and the embarrassment that comes with them (Fox, 2004, p. 113).

Pointing gestures occur mostly on the offenders' side. Three of these instances in the British dataset and eight in the Lebanese one have a deictic function; the rest are rather part of a broader aggressive stance. In fact pointing figures among the actions regularly described as rude (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 87). It could also be part of the cluster of behaviours that denote anger when directed at the wrongdoer (Forceville, 2012). Alternatively, it may be seen as an act of reprimand or blame when used to shake the forefinger at someone (Raah, 2015, p. 78). Finally, Calero (2005, pp. 294-5) sees it as a threatening gesture reminiscent of the thrusting of a dagger. In all cases, whether perceived as cueing anger, aggression, accusation or threat, the gesture of pointing among offenders seems highly justified. In contrast, the cases of pointing among the offended mainly occur in ripostes to the delivered offence and are partly deictic.

The other gestures that accompany impoliteness behaviours include the arms or hands crossed or folded, which are generally indicative of threat when combined with a forward leaning body according to Fein and Kasher (1996, p. 804). Similarly, the hands on hips gesture, or "arms akimbo" as Matsumoto, Hwang, and Frank (2016, p. 387) refer to it, also conveys a negative impression. Also the hands in pockets may be a sign of a confident, yet laidback, dominant position. However, these gestures occur so few times in

the data that they may be overlooked. Clenched or closed fists, which are observed a bit more frequently, usually cue a violent or confrontational stance (Calero, 2005, p. 113). This is probably why they occur more frequently on the offenders' side. However, with the appropriate combination, clenched fists could also cue shame (Eisner, 2008b, p.62), or even "fear, anger, or pain" (Raah, 2015, p. 78), hence their occasional appearance among the offended categories. Lastly, a seemingly distinctive gesture in the data is the hands behind the back gesture, which occurs largely among the offenders in my data. It is a gesture that is often part of postures typical of anger (Forceville, 2012), and appears much more frequently in the Lebanese dataset (14.5% versus 2.2% in British comics, p -value = 0.000). It may therefore point towards greater emotional intensity and ultimately the potential for aggressiveness in impoliteness behaviours in the Lebanese data.

Finally, looking broadly at gestures, what stands out is a higher frequency of overall gestures among the Lebanese offending characters than among their British counterparts (60.7% versus 40.9% with a p -value of 0.032). This may in fact be attributed to the fact that the Lebanese culture may be similar to other Middle Eastern cultures, that is, rather expressive when it comes to the use of expansive animated gesticulation (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2016, p. 90; section 3.3).

Compositional impoliteness forms and features. As discussed in section 3.3, deviations in composition from the internally established norm may be significant in that they may carry meaning potential, especially in revealing the characters' emotional and mental states (Forceville, 2012; Forceville et al., 2014, p. 490). Table 9 shows the frequency and variation of deviant composition features found in the panels that contain impoliteness behaviours in the comics examined.

Table 9

Frequency of Composition Features in Panels With Impoliteness Behaviours

			British comics raw numbers (% in 137 panels)	Lebanese comics raw numbers (% in 298 panels)
Panels & balloons	Panels	Image bleeds off/exceeds panel	4 (2.9%)	4 (1.3%)
		Deviant panel frame (red and black zigzag frame)	2 (1.5%)	19 (6.4%)
		Larger size panel	7 (5.1%)	13 (4.4%)
	Balloons	Deviant balloon contour/background	5 (3.6%)	37 (12.4%)
		Deviant balloon tail	2 (1.5%)	4 (1.3%)
	Total			20 (14.6%)
Frames & angles	Close up		6 (4.4%)	20 (6.7%)
	Extreme close up		8 (5.8%)	17 (5.7%)
	Total		14 (10.2%)	37 (12.4%)
Typography	Bold		65 (47.4%)	57 (19.1%)
	Bigger		45 (32.8%)	62 (20.8%)
	All caps (when rest is lowercase)		0 (0%)	5 (1.7%)
	Italics		1 (0.7%)	1 (0.3%)
	Underlined		9 (6.6%)	10 (3.4%)
	Otherwise internally deviant (e.g. red font, trembling lines, smudged, wavy, 3D, double underlining)		7 (5.1%)	7 (2.3%)
	Total		127 (92.7%)	142 (47.7%)
Pictograms & pictorial runes	Haloes lines/spikes/droplets/squiggles/smoke clouds around the character or character's head		8 (5.8%)	41 (13.8%)
	Lines/spikes/droplets/squiggles around/from the character's mouth		0 (0%)	12 (4%)
	Standalone punctuation marks		2 (1.5%)	8 (2.7%)
	Movement lines		28 (20.4%)	21 (7%)
	Other (small empty speech balloons above the head, various runes and pictograms, red band across offensive words...)		6 (4.4%)	39 (13.1%)
	Total		44 (32.1%)	121 (40.6%)

Taken as discrete categories, deviations in all but one of the comic composition features of the panels containing impoliteness behaviours in my data are well below the 50% cut-off point adopted. The only exception is typography in British comics, which is used in

92.7% of the panels containing impoliteness as opposed to 47.7% of the Lebanese ones. In fact, the two features behind this whopping difference between the two datasets (p -value = 0.000) are boldness and size in the typeface used, which occur more frequently on the British side. Bold typeface is prominently used in 47.4% of the British panels containing impoliteness (as opposed to 19.1% of the Lebanese ones with a p -value of 0.000). A bigger typeface is used in 32.8% of the British panels with impoliteness compared to 20.8% of the Lebanese ones (p -value = 0.04). As discussed in section 3.3, a marked typography indicates a marked prosody; more specifically, bigger fonts and bold typeface are generally suggestive of emphatic pronunciation or shouting. Therefore, their high density in the data, most probably indicative of overbearing, loud anger, is quite consonant with the impoliteness uptake they occur with. In fact, they may very well be one of the key elements that are contributing to this impoliteness interpretation.

Other compositional features that differ in density in the two countries' datasets are deviations in panel frames and in balloon contours and background. These appear a bit more frequently in the Lebanese panels containing impoliteness (p -value = 0.036 and 0.007 respectively). Nevertheless, their density is still very low (6.4% and 12.4% respectively), and though with other combinations they may help to disambiguate an impoliteness uptake, they cannot be said to be distinctive conventionalised impoliteness compositional features.

Lastly, under the pictograms and pictorial runes category, pictorial runes around a character or character's head, and those around a character's mouth particularly stand out in their relative higher frequency in the Lebanese dataset compared to the British one (p -values of 0.031 and 0.021 respectively). In fact, their distinctiveness lies in their significance rather than in their frequency. Pictorial runes around the characters' head or whole body mainly signal extreme outrage or anger. According to Forceville (2011, p. 889), these "appear to be a clear indication of strong emotion." Pictorial runes around a character's mouth, which exclusively occur in the Lebanese data, are evidently an indicator of vocal intensity. The fact that these particular runes are denser in the Lebanese data may suggest that impoliteness behaviours in the Lebanese context are strongly affective and vocally expressive and intense. In fact, when combined with other related aspects already flagged in the Lebanese impoliteness data, this aspect takes on added

significance. Indeed, the recorded frequency of mouth movements that almost parallels that of brow movements in the Lebanese dataset, the conspicuous depictions of the mouths of those uttering impoliteness, added to the higher density of pictorial runes around a character's mouth or head as s/he is engaging in impolite interactions, all combine to reinforce the impression of strong (and potentially aggressive) displays of affect of important vocal intensity in Lebanese impoliteness behaviours.

5.6 Summary

In this chapter I have attempted a quantitative analysis of the impoliteness comic data, along with some rather concise qualitative glimpses and interpretative discussions of examples and quantitative findings. The approach taken was largely comparative at the level of the countries, the comic anthologies, the impoliteness triggers and the various modes used to produce/realise impoliteness. The main objective of this chapter was to address the dissertation's central aim of looking at the forms of impoliteness in British and Lebanese comics. A quantitative look was therefore needed to study both the linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of impoliteness, patterns of use, distribution as well as variation across anthologies and country datasets.

Overall, this quantitative study has shown striking similarities in the general impoliteness profile of comic anthologies in Britain and Lebanon. It has also revealed how linguistic and non-linguistic forms are deployed in the realisation of impoliteness forms and has drawn attention to the impoliteness aspects that are characteristic of the comic genre. Quite importantly too, it has highlighted the areas of distinctiveness in impoliteness realisation in each country's comics. By doing so, it has tested the ability of the analytical framework adopted, and mostly, of Culpeper's (2011a/2015b) impoliteness model it is based on to account for impoliteness in a new medium and context. More particularly, it has shown how this framework was helpful in generating the impoliteness profile characteristic of a multimodal medium, while still flagging particular differences for analysis. Some impoliteness aspects that emerged which were not particularly quantitatively dense, but which nevertheless were found to significantly contribute to the impoliteness event are examined in the next qualitative analyses chapters.

Chapter 6 Impoliteness in British Comic Anthologies: A Qualitative Study

This chapter carefully examines three impoliteness events from the British data in their specific socio-cultural context, explores them in their full multimodal complexity, and analyses their functions. The events are chosen in accordance with the selection criteria discussed in section 4.4.3 and generally involve sophisticated, complex forms the subtlety of which cannot be adequately captured by a quantitative study. Moreover, their analysis is believed to be helpful in shedding light on important impoliteness dynamics, and on the functional aspect of impoliteness, thereby also helping address the second research question this dissertation revolves around. The chapter ends with a broader perspective on the function of impoliteness in British comic anthologies.

6.1 Magazine Anthology *Viz*

The following qualitative analysis of an impoliteness event from the British comic magazine anthology *Viz* is taken from pages 7&8 of the 2002 annual *Viz. The Bag of Slugs. A Coma Inducing Round of Below the Belters From Issues 100-105*. These are reproduced in Figures 33 and 34. The analysis is divided into a brief overview of the context and summary of the comic followed by an analysis centred around the context-driven implicational impoliteness in it, taking into account the non-linguistic features associated with the impoliteness recorded. In fact, the importance of a qualitative probing of context-driven implicational impoliteness in the comic context was noted in 5.2.2. Emphasis is placed on the aspects that cannot possibly be captured by a quantitative count, namely the different social norms of appropriate behaviours that are infringed in those context-driven impoliteness behaviours.



Figure 33. N. A. (2002). Roger Mellie the Man on the Telly, In *Viz. The Bag of Slugs. A Coma Inducing Round of Below the Belters From Issues 100-105*, p. 7 (The numbers in red have been added in the bottom corners of panels for ease of reference in the analysis.)



Figure 34. N. A. (2002). Roger Mellie the Man on the Telly, In Viz. The Bag of Slugs. A Coma Inducing Round of Below the Belters From Issues 100-105, p. 8 (The numbers in red have been added in the bottom corners of panels for ease of reference in the analysis.)

Context and summary. “Roger Mellie the Man on the Telly” (Henceforth “Roger Mellie”) is among “*Viz*’s best known characters” (Tait, 2007, p. 82). He is classed among the characters “whose primary role is to be incongruously rude” and whose success “depends on the inappropriateness of their behaviour; and the quality, variety, and ingenuity of the obscenities they use” (ibid., p. 86). This particular title of “Roger Mellie” certainly fits the description with regard to the inappropriateness of the behaviour but not the obscenities, as it does not happen to include any. In the comic, Roger Mellie shows up very late at the funeral of his own wife, engaging in multiple behaviours that seemingly shock and offend those present at the funeral. He then leaves to get ready for a medal ceremony, during which, he once more shocks those present with his inappropriate behaviour.

Impoliteness analysis. Context-driven implicational impoliteness plays a key role in driving the narrative in the first part of the “Roger Mellie” comic, and only a qualitative analysis can reveal its intricacies as it unfolds in context. As discussed in section 2.4.1, context-driven implicational impoliteness refers to “cases where the [impoliteness] trigger is not marked and there is no mismatch involving a conventionalized politeness formula. Instead, the impoliteness interpretation is primarily driven by the strong expectations flowing from the context” (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 180). Of the two categories of context-driven implication impoliteness identified by Culpeper (ibid. and section 2.4.1), the ones in “Roger Mellie” could all be said to fit under the unmarked behaviour category and can be mainly associated with a social-norm view of (im)politeness (section 2.1). It is quite evident in the reaction of those present that Roger Mellie’s behaviour at the funeral and then at the award ceremony is perceived as inappropriate, and this can be attributed to the fact that it violates the attendees’ expectations about social norms and the proper rules of conduct.

In the impoliteness cases under study, Roger Mellie may be seen as failing to uphold his obligations, thus resulting in thwarting the attendees’ expectations and triggering a negative judgment about social appropriateness and the corresponding evaluation of impoliteness (Spencer-Oatey, 2005b, p. 97). The breaches resulting in this impoliteness perception are mainly to do with the social norms and associated rules of

conduct related to manners and social etiquette and those related to demeanour and deference.

Manners and social etiquette. The social-norm view of (im)politeness subsumes notions such as ‘good manners’, ‘social etiquette’, ‘social graces’ and ‘minding your Ps and Qs’” (Culpeper, 2001a, p. 36). In several instances in the comic, Roger Mellie violates expectations related to the proper manners required or considered socially acceptable in the context he finds himself in, thus triggering an evaluation of impoliteness. Not only are funerals formal contexts, but they also constitute a ceremonial ritual in most societies. Goffman (1967, p. 55) suggests, “the code which governs ceremonial rules and ceremonial expressions is incorporated in what we call etiquette.” British funeral etiquette with its dos and don’ts was outlined in June 2017 in *The Telegraph*, which states that a funeral is “an emotionally charged event allowing mourning family, friends and colleagues to pay their final respects to the dearly departed,” and “is the last place one would want to unintentionally offend guests or make an embarrassing mistake” (“Funeral Etiquette”, 2017). Funeral attendance, according to *The Telegraph*, “comes with its own set of rules of behaviour”, some of which are about being there on time, not using one’s phone, not over or under-dressing, and not drawing attention to oneself (ibid.). Practically, Roger Mellie can be seen violating most of the items in the funeral etiquette cited in *The Telegraph*.

First, he wanders in conspicuously late at his own wife’s funeral in his trademark striped jacket, accompanied by an attractive researcher who is scantily dressed and whom he very casually introduces to Tom (Panel 2). The funeral etiquette in *The Telegraph* cites tardiness among the don’ts, as “making the effort to get there early, in time to show support and greet the mourners, is a good way to show respect” (“Funeral Etiquette”, 2017). Therefore by showing up that late, Mellie can be seen as showing the mourners both a lack of support or empathy and a lack of respect. In other words, he is perceived to violate their association rights, which, Spencer-Oatey (2005, p. 100) defines as people’s “fundamental belief that they are entitled to an association with others that is in keeping with the type of relationship that they have with them,” namely in aspects denoting involvement, empathy, and respect. So Mellie’s behaviour is a breach of the mourners’

association rights in two of their three components, empathy and respect.

This is without even taking into account the fact that Mellie is the husband of the deceased and would be expected to be there early among the close mourners as he would be considered to rank quite high in the “hierarchy of grief” in such a situation (“Funeral Etiquette”, 2017). The fact that he is not among those mourners shows lack of respect to the deceased herself, and by association, to those present to mourn her. What is more, Mellie casually refers to the start of the funeral ceremony as a “kick off” (SORRY I'M LATE TOM! I THOUGHT KICKOFF WAS AT HALF PAST). It is a term which, in itself is innocuous, but which would probably be much more fitting and appropriate at the start of a campaign or a ball game like football, and so may be an inappropriate choice of words for such a sombre ceremony. Since as Spencer-Oatey (2005b, p. 97) proposes, “(im)politeness is an evaluative label that people attach to behaviour, as a result of their subjective judgments about social appropriateness,” Mellie’s inappropriate behaviour, combined with his inappropriate linguistic choices, are most likely to be perceived as offensive and impolite by the attendees. Their reactions (as evidenced by their head position and the movement lines around the two men’s heads) as they suddenly turn and stare at Mellie and his companion with raised eyebrows may well indicate that they do consider this behaviour socially unacceptable.

The offence resulting from the perception of the violation of manners relating to what is socially acceptable in that context is likely to be what drives Tom, Mellie’s manager, to respond in kind and counter the impoliteness. To Mellie’s question, “HAVE I MISSED MUCH?” he responds with a sarcastic “OH, ONLY THE ENTIRE SERVICE”, a convention-driven implicational impoliteness. He then immediately follows his sarcastic response with “I THOUGHT EVEN **YOU** MIGHT HAVE BEEN ON TIME FOR YOUR OWN WIFE’S FUNERAL” (Panel 3). The conventional implicature carried in “even”, namely that Mellie’s behaviour is extreme and unexpected, and the semantically unnecessary but emphatic “own” clearly contribute towards an impoliteness uptake. Additionally, “**EVEN YOU**” with the prosodic intensification of the bold typeface “you” is a form-driven implicational impoliteness, a flout of the Maxim of Manner. Its lack of clarity and its broadly open to interpretation implicatures most likely hint at quite a number of face-threatening personal attributes: Airhead? Rude? Arrogant? The uncertainty seems even

more offensive than a more pejorative but stated attribute. The resulting face threatening implicature of the whole utterance is likely that even someone like Mellie (whatever that might actually be taken to mean) should know better and be more sensible and sensitive than to violate such an important social code of conduct. Tom's face-threatening challenge is accompanied by furrowed brows, the corner of the mouth raised on one side in a contemptuous manner, and his hands crossed low in the front whereas they were previously behind his back. According to Parvez (2015), this hand gesture is used "when a person finds himself in a position where he feels vulnerable but is required to display confidence and respect." It seems logical that as Mellie's manager, and so by association with him, Tom might feel vulnerable or embarrassed by the TV reporter's inappropriate behaviour, but would have still needed to show confidence and respect. Parvez (2015) also suggests that by doing this gesture, "the person feels secure and confident." Therefore, Tom might feel security and confidence after admonishing Mellie for his unacceptable behaviour, as his judgments about the social inappropriateness of Mellie's behaviour may be seen as one way of distancing himself from the inappropriate behaviour and upholding and reinforcing the dominant social norms in place (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3239). Mellie does indeed seem to pick on his manager's disapproval as his own brows contract and he redresses his head, as evidenced by the lines around it (Panel 3), before he attempts to justify himself.

Another way Mellie violates the social manners acceptable in a funeral context is by failing to put his phone on silent and then by taking a call as if nothing important is taking place. One of the precepts of "Funeral Etiquette" (2017) is to "leave your phone alone. (...) after all, a phone ringing or buzzing in a quiet, sombre environment is going to stand out." In fact, not only does Mellie fail to abide by this rule of proper behaviour, but he also adds insult to injury when he responds to what seems to be a question from her/his interlocutor about whether the latter is interrupting something with "NO, NOTHING SPECIAL... OH, IT'S JUST A VICAR... GO ON..." His reply, which comes immediately in the wake of a socially unacceptable behaviour in this particular context, contains further instances of impoliteness. The first is a form-driven implicational impoliteness in its flout of the Quality Maxim: "NO, NOTHING SPECIAL..." Saying that "nothing special" is going on is clearly not true as a funeral is generally a special occasion. Of course, it may be

possible that Mellie truly thinks it is nothing significant, and so his reply may actually not be a flout. However, to both the attending audience in the fictional world of the comic and the reader, the implicatures likely drawn could be that the event is insignificant in his eyes and that he has no respect for such occasions, with the likely added implication that the deceased was not that special or worth his attention or respect. Such an implicature would decidedly be highly offensive to the people present at the funeral, particularly those close to the deceased most likely to be in attendance, as it once more infringes on their association rights in its blatant lack of respect. This offensive implicature is in fact further compounded by Mellie's "GO ON..." which also goes against the very basic rules of funeral etiquette since "you're there to show attention and respect, not be otherwise engaged" ("Funeral Etiquette", 2017), especially if you happen to be the husband of the deceased!

Indeed, the offensiveness of his implicature clearly registers and earns him turned heads, angry stares with furrowed brows and eyes down and close together, tight lips with one corner lower than the other in a contemptuous expression, and even a challenging hands on hips stance from one of the attendees (Panel 7). His offence is further compounded by additional impoliteness delivered casually (OH) through a conventionalised implicature in his use of "just" in "OH, IT'S JUST A VICAR..." Again, though it may actually be the case that Mellie does not actually view the vicar as a person of special status or standing, to those in attendance, and especially the vicar himself, the conventional implicature that the vicar is not important and not worth suspending his call for is likely to be insulting. Indeed, his utterance elicits the same angry and contemptuous look from the vicar himself (Panel 8), who has visibly felt the offence and likely perceived it as a breach of his association rights, namely in the lack of consideration and respect reflected in Mellie's behaviour.

Demeanor and deference. Goffman (1967, p. 56) identifies deference and demeanour as two basic components of ceremonial activity. As will be presently shown, Mellie continuously fails to act with the proper demeanour and deference, going against the socially expected and acceptable in this context, and thereby triggering an evaluation of impoliteness. Despite the angry, contemptuous stares and the clear disapproval

directed at him, Mellie continues his phone conversation even more loudly than before as cued by the larger bold typeface in Panel 8 (“**WHAT!? FUCKIN’ GEDDIN!!**”). He also uses the expletive, “fuckin’”, which, though not normally that marked, is offensive here because of its social unacceptability in this particular context. From our own experience of the world, we know that people are supposed to act with decorum and behave discreetly and respectfully at funerals. By speaking loudly and using taboo language mismatching the expectations in that specific context, Mellie fails to adopt a demeanour proper to the situation, offending the attendees in the process as is clear in their angry stares, furrowed brows, raised chins, tight lips, and hands behind their backs (Panel 8).

In addition to behaving inappropriately in this context, Mellie shows a total lack of restraint by celebrating the announcement that he was the recipient of a medal “**HEY TOM! I’VE GOT A GONG! QUEEN’S BIRTHDAY HONOURS! A GONG! WAHAY!**” (Panel 9). His celebration is loud (bold typeface) and is, to Tom’s dismay as evidenced by his facial expression, accompanied by a dance and a triumph cry “**WAHAY!**” This exuberant celebration takes place in the context of his wife’s funeral and so is totally inappropriate. Still, ignoring the offended disapproval he elicits, he proceeds with his behaviour right until Panel 10 as he elaborates loudly on the benefits this honour would bring him. Not only is his lack of restraint inappropriate in the context, but it also goes against the “traditional British” norms of reticence and emotional continence (Cameron, 2007, pp. 130-131), of the need to refrain from intruding or imposing on people (Fox, 2014, p.54), and of drawing attention to oneself (ibid., p. 16). By showing such lack of restraint, Mellie clearly and carelessly flouts such traditional norms. In doing this, he is showing a lack of deference to those present, who, in all likelihood, believe in those values and expect such deference, if we are to judge by their outraged reaction. He can therefore be said to have violated the attendees’ equity rights (Spencer-Oatey, 2005, p. 100) by unduly imposing upon them his personal details and loud, offensive behaviour.

Mellie wraps up this offensive episode with one last context-driven implicational impoliteness when he asks his companion, “**CANDY, LOVE, LOB SOME SOIL ON THE COFFIN WHEN THE SKYPILOT SHUTS UP**” (Panel 11). First, instead of using the more standard “*sprinkle the soil*”, Mellie’s use of the colloquial term *lob*, much more appropriate in the world of sport, does not suggest a solemn, respectful action, but rather

a casual, rough one. Second, the “skypilot” slang reference to a vicar would not normally be that offensive, and neither would the assertion “when he shuts up.” However, in the present context, it is said of a priest celebrating a religious service, and though the comment is in the third person, it is clearly said in the hearing of the target as Mellie is still in the close proximity of the service party. This is why it is assumed to be an example of context-driven implication impoliteness that shows a further violation of the deference that would be expected towards the religious figure ratified to carry out the ritual in such a context. This lack of respect is also a violation of the priest’s association rights.

In the selected impoliteness event from *Viz*’s “Roger Mellie”, the context-driven implicational impoliteness behaviours are particularly powerful in revealing the characters’ attitudes towards social appropriateness and acceptability based on their expectations in the particular context of a funeral. As Spencer-Oatey (2005b, p. 99) posits, “very frequently, behavioural expectations are based on behavioural conventions, norms and protocols.” In that sense, the impoliteness examined is highly revealing of the conventions and rules of conduct that are perceived to be violated. Moreover, the impoliteness event examined that revolves around Mellie’s inappropriate yet largely carefree behaviour seems to be a good example of the power wielding function of impoliteness discussed in section 2.5. The exercise of power is mainly achieved through the symbolic power Mellie makes use of by undermining the dominant social conventions in place, even though as a character, he seems largely insouciant about it all. The same nonchalance cannot be convincingly claimed for the larger context of the comic, though. This is in fact made very clear in Tait’s (2007, p.89) assertion that “like punk, *Viz* was a dole-age rebellion against good manners.” In fact, Mellie’s seemingly nonchalant, casual behaviour may contribute to building a sense of normality around such behaviours traditionally seen as inappropriate. In that sense, the impoliteness may be socially disruptive in the potential repercussions it may have on the established social conventions and social organisation (section 2.5). This is especially true since Mellie, the comic’s protagonist, is a TV reporter, and his offensive behaviour takes place during a religious ceremony. This probably further lends weight to the argument that “in an era when traditional deference was breaking down, its icons of inappropriate behaviour, like Roger

Mellie, Paul Whicker and Rude Kid poked fun at the middle-class institutions: the BBC, the church, polite motherhood” (Tait, 2007, p. 89).

6.2 Newspaper/Fanzine Anthology *The Comix Reader*

What follows is the qualitative analysis of an impoliteness event from Sean Duffield’s (2010) “The Cran-kies,” a comic in the 5th issue of the British alternative comics newspaper anthology *The Comix Reader*. The analysis starts with an overview of the context along with a brief summary; it then follows the narrative in the analysed comic section, highlighting the role of impoliteness in driving the narrative. In the process of doing this, a special focus is given to the use of mimicry and metaphor in achieving impoliteness. The abundant use of CIF is also highlighted, first because of their key role in the development of the narrative, and second because their use is highly characteristic of impoliteness triggers in *The Comix Reader* anthology, which sports the highest density of CIF (71%) among the six anthologies examined. Lastly, there is a discussion of the role impoliteness plays in “The Cran-kies.”

Context and summary. The Krankies are a well-known Scottish husband and wife comedian duo -- Ian and Janette Tough -- who have been on the British comedy scene since the 1970s, with cabaret acts, television shows, pantomime, and a single in the UK pop chart. Though they have played different characters, the Krankies are quite famous for their act as a paternal figure, Ian Krankie (Ian), and a schoolboy Wee Jimmy Krankie (Janette) who is famed for her Fan-Daby-Dozi catchphrase.

Bearing the same name as the original comedian duo, bar a slight variation in the spelling, leading to the apt name “crankies”—*informal* eccentric, fussy and bad-tempered (“Cranky,” n.d.)—and featuring the same iconic characters of a couple dressed as a red-capped schoolboy with FAN-DABI-DOZI! printed on her red sweater and a tall paternal figure, Sean Duffield’s (2010) “The Crank-ies” comic is quite obviously a parody of The Krankies. Duffield’s attempt at parody is made even clearer in his subtitle, “**LIGHT ENTERTAINERS ON HARD DRUGS**” in Panel 1, where the antonymous pair “light” and “hard” are further foregrounded by the bold typeface and their parallel position in an antithetical structure. The antithesis is better appreciated when one is aware that The

Krankies are known to have “conquered *light* entertainment” (Ross, 2014, my emphasis) but are portrayed in Duffield’s comic as a couple of eccentric, foolhardy drug addicts solely fixated on ensuring their next meth fix, meth being the informal appellation for methamphetamine, a *hard*, highly addictive drug.

Duffield’s “The Crank-ies” (Figure 35) is divided into three sections, which correspond to separate yet inter-related episodes (Figures 36, 37, 38). The analysis below takes section 2 (Figure 37) as its primary focus. In this section, Janette and Ian have obviously been doing some shoplifting to ensure the money for their next fix, as Ian had suggested in section 1. As they are carrying away some home appliances that look like a microwave and toaster, they seem to have caught the attention of a policeman who has apparently guessed what they had done and is going after them. At Janette’s suggestion, they lead him down the canal where Janette “keep(s) him busy”, i.e. verbally provokes him and causes him to fall in the canal, while Ian is getting away with the stolen goods. The verbal exchange between Ian and Janette and the policeman is dense with impoliteness as will be detailed below.



Figure 35. Full-Page View of Duffield, S. (2010). The Crank-ies: Light Entertainers on Hard Drugs. In *The Comix Reader* 5, p. 19



Figure 36. Section 1 of Duffield, S. (2010). The Crank-ies: Light Entertainers on Hard Drugs. In *The Comix Reader* 5, p. 19



Figure 37. Section 2 of Duffield, S. (2010). The Crank-ies: Light Entertainers on Hard Drugs. In *The Comix Reader* 5, p. 19



Figure 38. Section 3 of Duffield, S. (2010). The Crank-ies: Light Entertainers on Hard Drugs. In *The Comix Reader* 5, p. 19

Impoliteness analysis. Impoliteness, mainly in the form of CIF, metaphor and mimicry, plays a key role in propelling the narrative in this section of “The Crank-ies.” In Panel 7, Ian utters a conventionalised insult, “JUST OUR LUCK, THE FILTH IS ON PATROL JUS’ AS WE’RE COMIN’ OOT THE SHOP!” “THE FILTH” is a personalised third-person negative reference most likely uttered in the hearing of the target here, judging by the proximity of the policeman. However, we cannot objectively verify whether the policeman heard the offensive insult or not. His pursuit of the couple may have been partly motivated by his reaction to the offending epithet, but it is also most likely triggered by the fact that he may be going after the fleeing couple to question and arrest them regarding possible theft. Moreover, there are no clues as to his emotional reaction in the next panel – neither verbal nor non-verbal – as we can only see the shaded outline of the policeman’s figure chasing the couple.

In Panel 9, the interaction is much less equivocal in terms of the issuing and the reception of the offence:

Janette: OI PEG! OINK OINK YA BIG UGLY TWAT!

The policeman: WHY YOU LITTLE...

“PEG” is a deviant spelling of “pig” probably meant to better convey the Scottish accent. “OI PEG!” is therefore an insulting personalised negative vocative that Janette uses to provoke the policeman. In fact, the definition of “pig” features a separate entry as a derogatory nomination for a police officer in the *Oxford Dictionary* (“Pig,” n.d.). “OI PEG!” is also an animal metaphor that can be offensive in its “well-known insulting overtones, when referring to humans” (Leech, 2014, p.230), bringing to mind “a greedy, dirty, or unpleasant person” (“Pig,” n.d.). Nevertheless, because the pig metaphor is extensively used, its metaphorical meaning may have lost some of its figurative power. Yet Janette’s mimicking of the pig sound, “OINK OINK”, is unmistakably bound to revive the full extent of the insult’s evocative power, thus further ingraining the pig analogy and intensifying the insult.

In addition to activating the pig metaphor and thereby intensifying the insult, Janette’s act of mimicry conveys impoliteness in and of itself. In this particular case, Janette’s OINK OINK can be said to be a marked echo (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 165). It is marked because it departs from the generally accepted norms of social address in similar

contexts. It is an echo because Janette is producing an echoic caricature of the sound pigs are known to emit in her address of the policeman, whom she had already called “peg”. Here the mimicry might be said to be essentially working “by attributing a behaviour to the target, regardless of how apparent or real that behaviour is” (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 164). In doing this, Janette may be said to activate the implied pig-like behaviour she ascribes to the policeman. “This implied echoed behaviour is attributed to the person who gave rise to it; more specifically, it is typically attributed to an identity characteristic of that person” (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 165). In other words, by mimicking the pig sound while addressing the policeman after she called him “pig”, Janette can be said to be attributing the characteristics of greed, filth, and unpleasantness to the policeman (adjectives based on the *Oxford Dictionary* definition of “pig” referred to above). In Goffman’s (1967, p. 5) theory of face, this mimicry clearly represents an attack on the policeman’s face in as far as he is denied “approved social attributes.” Interactionally too, based on Spencer-Oatey’s (2007, p. 644) proposal, face threat may be said to have occurred as a result of the mismatch between what one may logically assume to be the policeman’s claimed attributes and the pig-related attributes ascribed to him by Janette.

Janette then complements this face threat with yet another conventionalised personalised negative vocative, “YA BIG UGLY TWAT!”, which includes two modifiers, “big”, and “ugly”, for a more intensifying effect. It is evident that Janette has packed a high degree of offence in a mere cluster of eight words, but it can be argued that delivering maximum offence is exactly her purpose as she specifically sets out to distract the policeman by deliberately provoking him. The policeman is clearly offended as he counters Janette’s offence with the beginning of a conventionalised insult: “WHY YOU LITTLE...” This discontinued insult – probably the result of the policeman being overcome by anger and switching to physical action – is also preceded by the interjection “why”, quite probably denoting his surprised indignation.

As the policeman advances on Janette, she cleverly sidesteps him by climbing on a pole (probably a lamppost). Having lost his balance, he starts by uttering the beginnings of a conventionalised threat, “AH’M GONNA... WHA...?!” which is visibly interrupted by his impending fall into the canal, to Janette’s utter amusement. In Panel 11, Janette is laughing uproariously at the policeman’s plight, and she seems to have a tear of mirth on

her cheek. While the policeman is plunging head first in the water, Janette questions the old adage “pigs can fly” denoting the impossibility of something ever happening by merrily saying “WHO SEZ PEGS CAN’T FLY? HEH HEH!” While Janette’s utterance is not structured as a conventionalised impoliteness formula, it certainly revives the offensive pig metaphor in relation to the policeman. Her rhetorical question, coupled with the background showing the policeman catapulted through the air and plunging into the water, constitutes a sort of humorous extension to the metaphor to the effect of “metaphorical pigs can indeed fly!” In fact, the whole event where Janette outmanoeuvres the policeman and tricks him into falling into the water may be interpreted as a flout of the quality maxim, with the derived form-driven implicated impolite belief that policemen are easily outmanoeuvred or tricked. This event seems to serve the purpose of exploitative entertainment (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 219) since Janette and Ian are clearly having a blast at the expense of the policeman, as evidenced by the double sets of surrounding “HA! HA! HA!” and their laughing faces.

The policeman counters Jeanette’s offence with another offence by issuing a threat and personalised negative vocative “I’LL GET YEZ, YER BASTARDS!” in Panel 12, both conventionalised impoliteness formulae. His threat is also accompanied by several non-verbal signs: a frown, clenched teeth, and the brandishing of his club in a threatening way. Not seeming to be the least concerned, Ian responds to the policeman’s threat and insult with “AH, GO BLOW IT OUT YER ARSE, T. J. HOOKER!” before he and Janette merrily walk away. The first part of the utterance, “GO BLOW IT OUT YER ARSE”, seems to be a creative variant on the negative expressive [go] [to hell/hang yourself/fuck yourself] listed under Culpeper’s (2011a, pp. 135-6) conventionalised impoliteness formulae. The second part, though, “T. J. HOOKER!” is a more subtle form of implicational impoliteness. T. J. Hooker is a former detective and veteran police sergeant in an American TV programme. The policeman in Duffield’s comic is clearly not T. J. Hooker in this comic, and Ian’s reference to him as such is a clear flout of the maxim of quality that may be interpreted as form-driven implicational impoliteness. The incongruity of the implied comparison between the policeman in the comic and T. J. Hooker serves to further ridicule the policeman’s clumsiness and apparent ineptitude. The policeman is clearly offended by the whole event as he powerlessly watches the couple walk away.

This whole comic episode with its acrobatics, clever timing, mishaps, and coarse (exploitative) humour is somewhat reminiscent of slapstick comedy, “a type of physical comedy characterized by broad humour, absurd situations, and vigorous, usually violent action” (“Slapstick Comedy,” n.d.). As such, it seems to largely have an entertaining function, mainly based on exploitative impoliteness (section 2.5), with the humorous effect chiefly achieved at the expense of the policeman and of the protagonists themselves. The stereotypical policeman attire and gear and the caricatured shadowed figures, especially the policeman’s, in Panel 8 also seem to reinforce that impression. In terms of visual rendering, this second episode of “The crank-ies” is characterised by strong, vivid colours, along with an accented colour contrast, especially in relation to the often-shaded figure of the policeman. The resulting high modality in the visual representation (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 160) seems highly fitting in this section of Duffield’s comic, which largely revolves around knockabout action and humour.

6.3 Paperback Anthology *Solipsistic Pop*

The following qualitative analysis of an impoliteness event from the British paperback anthology *Solipsistic Pop* chosen is taken from Joe Blann’s comic “Things We Had” in *Solipsistic Pop* 4 (2011), reproduced in Figures 39 and 40. A brief summary of the comic is followed by an analysis of the power dynamics revealed in it, the impoliteness in the interaction, and the non-linguistic features associated with the impoliteness recorded.

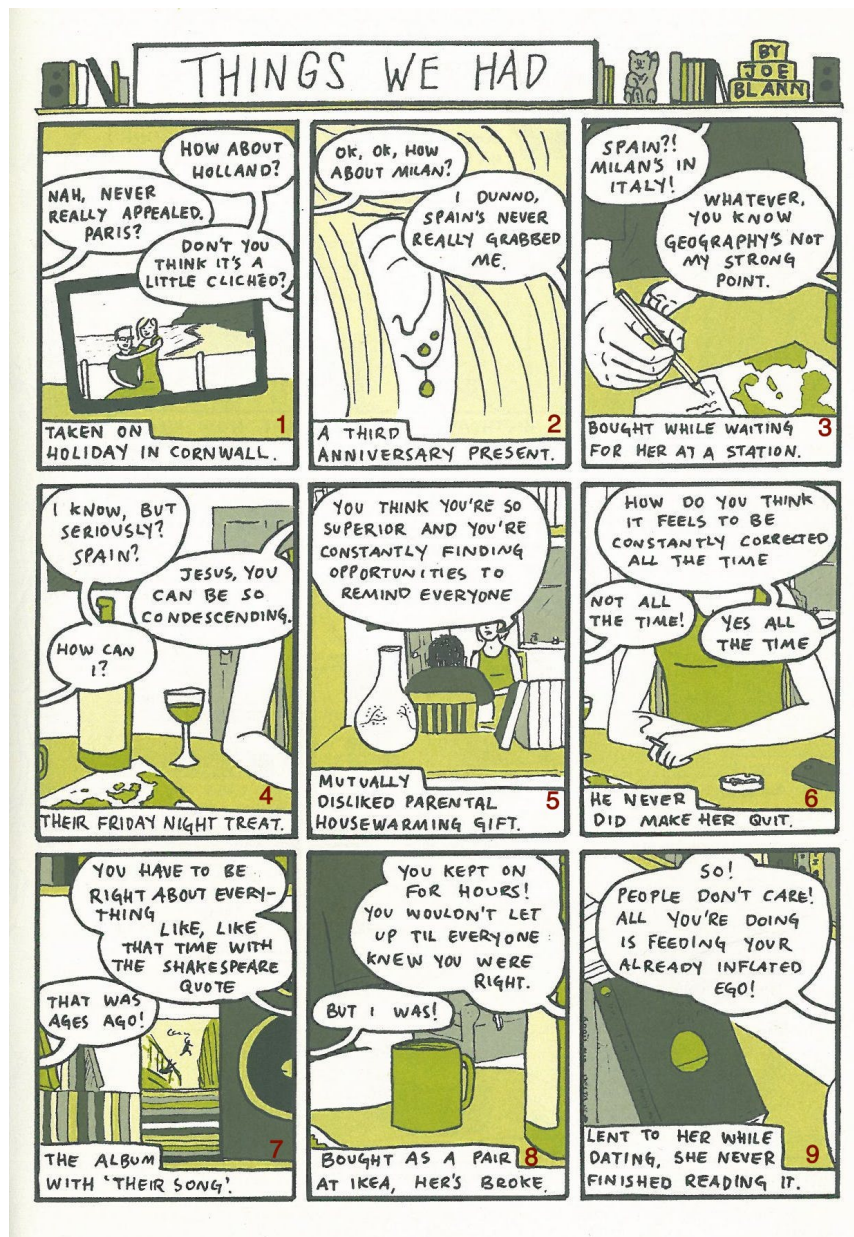


Figure 39. Blann, J. (2011). Things We Had. In *Solipsistic Pop 4*, p. 1 (The numbers in red have been added in the bottom corner of panels for ease of reference in the analysis.)



Figure 40. Blann, J. (2011). Things We Had. In *Solipsistic Pop 4*, p. 2 (The numbers in red have been added in the bottom corners of panels for ease of reference in the analysis.)

Context and summary. In Blann’s comic, a couple are discussing their next holiday destination. They seem to have been together for several years now as evidenced by their joint memorabilia and the woman’s earrings that are referred to as “A THIRD ANNIVERSARY PRESENT.” They also seem to have settled into a kind of routine judging by “THEIR FRIDAY NIGHT TREAT” and the map “BOUGHT WHILE WAITING FOR HER AT A STATION.” As the couple exchange holiday suggestions, the woman rejects Milan, mistakenly thinking it is located in Spain, a country she says “never really grabbed” her. The man is incredulous at her mistake and makes a point of showing his disbelief not once but twice, which prompts her to her accuse him of being condescending. This in turn triggers a whole interaction in which they both exchange blame back and forth.

Impoliteness Analysis. Emphasis is placed on how the impoliteness is unfolding in context through sophisticated sequencing and layering strategies (section 2.4.3), and how it plays a key affective and interactional role in the negotiation of the couple’s power dynamics in the course of their interaction.

Power dynamics. Examining turn taking patterns and visual point of view in Blann’s comic may help give a deeper insight into the couple’s power dynamics, which have important implications for impoliteness. Taking into account the turn distribution conventions adopted in “Things We Had”, turn taking seems relatively evenly distributed between the couple¹¹. Consequently, the power relations between the couple seem rather balanced in the exchange as each one takes turns casting blame. Power therefore seems to shift and alternate during the interaction as she blames him for being patronizing and condescending, and he blames her for being self-centred and negative.

Power dynamics between the couple also seem rather balanced in the comic’s visual point of view, identifiable through the frames and angles of the panels (see section

¹¹ There seems to be an established pattern in “Things We Had” where, even in the absence of the characters in the frame, the balloons to the right of the panel or with the tail pointing to the right encase the woman’s speech, and the balloons to the left or with the tail pointing to the left encase the man’s speech. Taking this into account, the couple’s exchange roughly comprises an equal number of turns, 16 turns for the man and 15 for the woman, with a comparable average number of words per turn for both (8.66 for her and 7.37 for him): Panels 1-4 have equal turns for both the man and the woman. Panels 5-9 show clearly longer turns for her, but then Panels 10-14 include longer turns for him. Panels 15 and 17 sport equal turns, with silence reigns in Panel 16. Finally, Panel 18 includes only one turn, the man’s.

3.3). Blann seems to be using overshoulder views, following the conventions of the 180-degree rule of films, alternating between the conversing partners (Kukkonen, 2013b, p. 47). The frames and angles of the panels alternate between medium and close up views of the woman, the man, or both, along with the objects that are part of their world, establishing a sort of shifting spatial point of view. This fluidity in the visual point of view results in a mobility of visual perception and corresponding alternation of points of view, distributing reader alignment between the man and the woman. Indeed, reader alignment is linked to the notion of spatial attachment, or characters' "spatio-temporal paths" in the narrative, as discussed by Forceville et al. (2014, pp. 489-490). It is a strategy borrowed from film studies, which favours the reader's alignment with a particular character's perspective. Since in "Things We Had", the narrative point of view does not really seem character-bound, spatial attachment, and consequently reader alignment, seems to be balanced between the two characters. This reflects an almost equal distribution of power largely in keeping with the lack of power imbalance reflected in the turn-taking patterns.

Sequencing and repetition. A great part of the confrontation in Blann's comic is driven by the implicational impoliteness achieved through the use of sophisticated sequencing and repetition, mainly via flouts of the Maxim of Quantity. First, when the man proposes Milan as a holiday destination and the woman replies, "I DUNNO, SPAIN'S NEVER REALLY GRABBED ME" (Panel 2), the man shows his surprise at her statement by saying, "SPAIN?!" MILAN'S IN ITALY!" By repeating the faulty part of her utterance, the man is implicating that she could not have possibly said that. Furthermore, the exclamation point that follows the question mark in "SPAIN?!" and then again after his rectification "MILAN'S IN ITALY!" indicate a prosody corresponding to surprised disbelief that she could have thought that. The implicature of the Quantity Maxim flout, further reinforced by the intensifying prosody cued by the punctuation marks, calls attention to her rather embarrassing mistake in basic geography. The whole response is therefore highly likely to be face-damaging to her as it amounts to the man "producing [or perceiving] a display of low values for some target" (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 256) – namely the value of knowledge for her.

Her own response and attempt to brush off and counter his attack (“WHATEVER, YOU KNOW GEOGRAPHY’S NOT MY STRONG POINT”) seems to include an indirect reference to the offensiveness in his repetition. By beginning her justification with “YOU KNOW” she is indirectly affirming that his initial response was indeed a flout of the maxim of quantity, as he should have known better than to tease her about an aspect he knows she is weak at. And though he starts by acknowledging that he does indeed know (“I KNOW, BUT SERIOUSLY? SPAIN?”), his use of the conventional implicature “but” counters the effect of this acknowledgement. The likely implicature is that this is something everybody knows, with the face-damaging implication that she may not be good at geography, but she could not possibly be that ignorant. “SERIOUSLY?” further adds to his expression of disbelief, though it may also imply the possibility that she might have been joking.

Once more, the man resorts to repetition (“I KNOW, BUT SERIOUSLY? SPAIN?”), which is clearly another flout of the maxim of quantity here since the man has already asked the same question in Panel 3 and received an answer. The implicature is once more the offensive face-damaging allusion to the impossible extent of the woman’s ignorance.

Conventionalised impoliteness formulae. The face-threat in the man’s implicational impoliteness is met with a typical tit-for-tat counter impoliteness response from the woman (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 436) when she addresses to him an insult in the form of a personalised negative assertion: “JESUS, YOU CAN BE SO CONDESCENDING.” Her use of the metalinguistic label “condescending” is a clear indication of offence since “condescending” is the third most frequent label for patronising behaviours, which are ranked as the most offensive on the list of impoliteness behaviours in Culpeper’s study of a hundred impoliteness events (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 94). Moreover, the woman’s use of “JESUS” as an expletive fronting her expression of offense further expresses her exacerbation and disapproval since “Jesus” is among the religious insults used as milder general swear words, which “participants felt expressed strong emotions, or were used as light-hearted insults” (Ofcom, 2016, pp. 15, 44). She then follows her offensive assertion with yet more personalised negative assertions: “YOU THINK YOU’RE SO SUPERIOR AND YOU’RE CONSTANTLY FINDING OPPORTUNITIES TO REMIND EVERYONE” (Panel 5);

“YOU HAVE TO BE RIGHT ABOUT EVERYTHING (LIKE, LIKE THAT TIME WITH THE SHAKESPEARE QUOTE)” (Panel 7); “ALL YOU’RE DOING IS FEEDING YOUR ALREADY INFLATED EGO!” (Panel 9), with this last personalised negative assertion also encompassing a personalised negative reference, “YOUR ALREADY INFLATED EGO!” All these conventionalised impoliteness formulae serve to call attention to the man’s condescending attitude and feeling of superiority. In fact, the superiority she explicitly accuses him of (Panel 5) is also among the metalinguistic labels used for patronizing behaviours, the dominant offense causing group of impoliteness events investigated by Culpeper (2011a, p. 94). It is “a group that captures reactions to the face-damaging acts produced in a context in which the ‘patroniser’ is perceived to act in a way which presumes a superiority that they are not considered to have; in other words, there is a perceived abuse of power” (ibid., p. 95). The woman is thereby explicitly accusing the man of being a patroniser. Her use of the present continuous in Panel 5, along with the adverb of frequency “constantly” in the second clause, further expresses her annoyance at his patronizing attitude and at the belittling displays of his knowledge, which are clearly read as an abuse of power, the symbolic power he seems to draw from his seemingly extensive knowledge. However, though the woman’s attack (Panels 4-9) came in response to the man’s perceived offensive comments, it, in turn, likely has a similar face-damaging effect on the man, who is portrayed as a relentless, pompous show off.

Layering of impoliteness. In addition to being achieved through the use of sequencing and repetition and of conventionalised impoliteness formulae, impoliteness in Blann’s comic is also rendered through two types of clever layering. The first type includes an intriguing interplay of alternating layers of mitigation and face threats, while the second includes multiple impoliteness embeddings in a single utterance.

The man’s counter impoliteness response in Panel 10, “OH, JUST LAY OFF WOULD YOU! YOU’RE NOT SO GOD-DAMN PERFECT YOURSELF YOU KNOW!” is a good example of the first type of layering. First, his rather mildly worded defensive dismissal-silencer (“JUST LAY OFF WOULD YOU!”) is further softened by the question tag “WOULD YOU!”, which, like other question tags, is “characteristic of positive politeness” (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 119). The second part of his response is also a mix of mitigation and

offense. It includes a form-driven implicated impoliteness (“YOU’RE NOT SO GOD-DAMN PERFECT YOURSELF YOU KNOW!”) where the negative form is a flout of the Maxim of Quantity in its lack of sufficient information, and so triggers the likely inference that she herself may be at fault. While discussing examples of indirect or mitigated criticisms, Leech (2014, p. 192) identifies “the use of negation combined with litotes (understatement)” as a tactic to mitigate criticism. To draw the parallel here, instead of using a pejorative adjective like *bad*, *imperfect*, or *flawed*, in “*You’re bad/imperfect/flawed*”, the use of the negation of the antonym, “*You’re not so perfect*” may be a milder form of criticism. However, two factors do not make it so in this particular case. First, the breadth of the likely implicatures triggered by the non-disclosure of a specific adjective in the use of “YOU’RE NOT SO GOD-DAMN PERFECT YOURSELF” likely carries a stronger implicature than a direct pejorative adjective. This is made clear in Leech (2014, p. 193):

“In the case of polar antonyms $\{X-Y\}$ such as $\{old-young\}$, $\{nice-nasty\}$, the adjectives of the pair represent tendencies toward opposite poles, such that there is neutral territory (neither X nor Y) in the middle range, as indicated in Figure 7.2 (a) [reproduced here below]. Hence “not X ” includes more of the scale than “ Y ,” and “not very X ” than “not X .” Grice’s first Maxim of Quantity is flouted in this rather uninformative statement, so “not X ” or “not very X ” is likely to carry as an implicature a stronger proposition containing Y .”

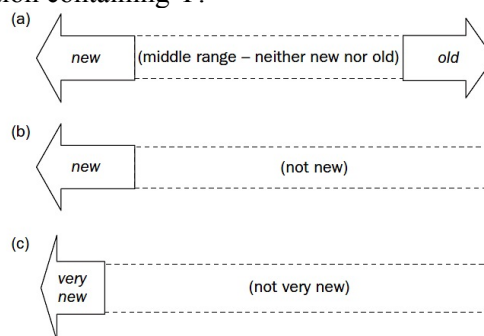


Figure 41. Leech (2014, p. 193): A Schematic Diagram Showing the Effect of Negation (and Negation Combined With Intensification) on a Pair of Polar Opposites New and Old.

If we take *perfect* to be X here and *imperfect* to be Y , here too, “not *perfect*” includes more of the scale than “*imperfect*”, and “not so *perfect*” more than “not *perfect*”. Therefore, the flout in Grice’s Maxim of Quantity in “YOU’RE NOT SO GOD-DAMN PERFECT YOURSELF” potentially leads to a stronger, more offensive implicature than a

statement to the effect of “YOU'RE IMPERFECT YOURSELF.” Secondly, the effect of the implicated impoliteness is further emphasised by the use of the intensifier “so” and the religious insult “Goddam” (Ofcom, 2016, p. 15), used here as a swear word to further exacerbate the offense.

Another interesting example of impoliteness, this time achieved through the clever layering of multiple impoliteness embeddings in a single utterance, can be found in the man's rhetorical question in Panel 12, “DON'T YOU THINK I GET SICK AND TIRED OF LISTENING TO YOUR TRUMPED-UP 'NO-ONE SUFFERS MORE THAN ME' PROBLEMS.” The implied strong assertion “I GET SICK AND TIRED OF LISTENING TO YOUR TRUMPED-UP...” is likely face-damaging in its emphasis on how redundant, tiring, and boring the woman's negative attitude is. The rhetorical question also includes a personalised negative reference, “YOUR TRUMPED-UP '... PROBLEMS”, which carries the added insulting implication that her problems are all a fabricated exaggeration. There also seems to be a form-driven case of implicated impoliteness in the part between inverted commas, “YOUR TRUMPED-UP 'NO-ONE SUFFERS MORE THAN ME' PROBLEMS,” which sounds very much like mimicry. The closest description that seems to apply in this particular case is Culpeper's (2011a, pp. 164-5) notion of impolite mimicry as

a caricatured (re-)presentation involving (. . .) *A marked echo and the implied echoed behaviour*. The echo is marked (usually involving distortion or exaggeration), thus signalling the need for further inferencing. Moreover, the marked echo implies that the behaviour it echoes is also marked, that is, abnormal in some way. This is the implied echoed behaviour.

The quoted part of the utterance ‘NO-ONE SUFFERS MORE THAN ME’ indeed seems like a caricatured presentation of how the man believes the woman feels, namely a constantly suffering victim. The echo is graphically and structurally marked as a result of it being encased between inverted commas. It is also deictically (and probably also prosodically) marked for point of view because of the shift that occurs from second person determiner “your” to the first person pronoun “me” to refer to the addressee (“DON'T YOU THINK I GET SICK AND TIRED OF LISTENING TO YOUR TRUMPED-UP 'NO-ONE SUFFERS MORE THAN ME' PROBLEMS.”). The result is indeed a marked echo, regardless of the fact that it may not truly reflect her state of mind because “mimicry can work by attributing a behaviour to the target, regardless of how apparent or real that behaviour is” (ibid.,

p.164). In addition, the mimicry is emotionally intensified by the use of the adjective “trumped-up” to further ridicule and denigrate such a state of mind. Similarly to most mimicry cases, this case of mimicry is probably threatening to the woman’s Social Identity Face (ibid., p. 163) as it portrays her in the role of the victim.

The man’s next negative assertion, “ALL YOU EVER TALK ABOUT IS YOURSELF AND ‘HOW HARD YOU’VE GOT IT’” is another example of impoliteness layering as it also includes an embedded case of mimicry between the inverted commas. However the mimicry here is not as marked as the one in Panel 12, partly because it includes no pronoun shift and no emotionally charged intensifier similarly to its precedent. The effect, however, is equally offensive in its damage to the woman’s identity face as, once more, she is portrayed as a self-centred, negative person and constant nagger.

A further case of impoliteness layering can be seen when the man adds, “UNLESS YOU’RE PROJECTING YOUR INSECURITIES ON ME,” and the woman responds with a rhetorical question, “AND WHO DO YOU THINK MADE ME SO ‘INSECURE?’” Her response implies the strong assertion that he is to blame for her insecurities. She further uses a marked echo between inverted commas (AND WHO DO YOU THINK MADE ME SO ‘INSECURE’) in her retaliation to his impoliteness offensive to caricature his earlier reference to her “INSECURITIES” and attributing their source to him.

Non-linguistic impoliteness-related features. Common comic-specific non-linguistic features observed accompanying impoliteness behaviours in the other studied comics include facial movements such as contracted brows and thinned lips, pointing, and forward leaning postures on one hand, and jagged or bursting balloon and panel contours and bigger and denser typeface on the other. These are all conspicuously absent from Blann’s comic. An important reason for the absence of the cited face and body movements associated with impoliteness is the lack of discernable detail in the visual representation of the couple. Apart from the photo frame in Panel 1, we only see a close up of the woman’s ear in Panel 2, the back of the head of the man, and the distant bottom half of the woman’s face in Panel 5. Instead, the objects that seem significant in the couple’s life and story are foregrounded and made salient, as evidenced by the close-up

shots and their placement in the foreground of the panels (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 117, 124, 148-9).

A graphic distinctive feature that may be associated with impoliteness in Blann's comic is the rather liberally used exclamation point, even when it is not structurally/syntactically expected, such as after a question mark or a question tag, as in "SPAIN?!" "WOULD YOU!", "YOU KNOW!" This use likely serves as a prosodic indicator of the strong feelings usually associated with impoliteness (Culpeper, 2015b, p. 436), namely hurt and outrage here. A second impoliteness related graphic feature used in Blann's comic is the inverted commas cueing mimicry discussed in the analysis (Panels 12, 13 & 14).

Otherwise, though, the typography follows an undistinctive, undisrupted, regularity in Blann's comic, suggesting an even speech volume. This, added to the unbroken regularity of the panel and balloon forms, may be suggestive of a certain normality in what is happening. The interactional pattern examined seems to be a frequent, somehow normalised occurrence in the couple's life. The resulting routine does not seem to warrant the strong, angry emotions that manifest themselves through raised voices or explosive outbursts usually signalled by jagged or bursting balloon contours or thicker, bigger fonts. The even balance power discussed in the power section and the parallel narrative lines captioning everyday objects with seemingly casual observations also reinforce the impression that this interaction may be a regular, "all in a day's work" occurrence in a familiar, lasting relationship.

In sum, in Blann's (2011) "Things We Had", impoliteness is tightly intertwined with the power relations of the couple, which are also revealed through turn-taking patterns and the visual point of view as indicated by the composition and angle of the panels. Impoliteness is achieved in the context of the couple's interaction through the use of conventionalised impoliteness formulae, but also more interestingly for this qualitative analysis through the more sophisticated means of sequencing and layering. As may have become gradually clear during the analysis, the impoliteness event Blann's comic revolves around mainly has an affective function, which itself is built and negotiated in the interactional dynamics underlying the impoliteness event.

6.4 A Broader Look at Impoliteness Functions in British Comic Anthologies

Besides advancing the plot and contributing to characterisation in fiction (Culpeper, 1998, pp. 86-7), the four functions of impoliteness discussed in section 2.5—the affective, power wielding, socially disruptive, and entertaining—are all part of the very nature of impoliteness. However, just like impoliteness itself, their presence in specific impoliteness events is of a scalar nature. In other words, some may be more dominant than others in a particular impoliteness behaviour depending on the context. The predominance of a given impoliteness function in context was discussed in the course of the impoliteness analyses presented in this chapter. In this section, however, an additional special illustrative focus is given to the creatively entertaining and liberating functions of impoliteness behaviours in the broader context of British comics.

Creativity and entertainment. Impoliteness behaviours frequently involve a certain degree of creativity, and as Culpeper et al. (2017, p. 10) argue, “creativity in impoliteness tends to go hand in hand with entertaining functions.” Since generally speaking, comic entries in anthologies partly aim to entertain readers, it is highly likely that the impoliteness in them is the product of thoughtfully crafted creative impoliteness. Moreover, because comics are a multimodal medium, they enable even more creativity in the representation of impoliteness. Some examples of creativity in the realisation of impoliteness involving the use of allusion and punning are briefly discussed in the following three examples from the British comic dataset.

The first example in Figure 42 has a highly creative convention-driven implicational impoliteness with a clear internal mismatch in the middle panel.



Figure 42. Wilkinson, R. (2009). Meanwhile. In *Solipsistic Pop 1*, p. 31

“...DVD’S DRUGS, AND UNECESSARY [sic] MASTERBATION [sic] DOE’S [sic] NOT A JOB SEEKER MAKE” can be seen as an example of mock politeness where the speaker uses an archaic proverb structure but with an insulting content. “One swallow does not a summer make” is often referred to as a proverb, but it is also commonly attributed to Aristotle (384 BCE–322 BCE). Consequently, the structural parallelism alluding to the traditional wise saying clearly mismatches the commonality and even crudeness of the propositional content. There is even further irony brought on by the two spelling mistakes in such a formulaic, classical structure.

Two further creative examples that include allusion and pun can be seen in Figure 43.



Figure 43. Duffield, S. (2012). Our Country’s Leaders! In *The Comix Reader* 4, p. 17

A British nursery rhyme about Georgie Porgie, “a badly behaved little boy,” goes *Georgie Porgie pudding and pie, / Kissed the girls and made them cry. / When the boys came out to play / Georgie Porgie ran away* (“Georgie Porgie,” n.d.). Over the years, though, “porgie” has acquired another possible meaning that is different from the original, that of “a weak heart person who is afraid to fight or has fear of being beaten in a fight” (“Porgie,” n.d.). It is most probably this new meaning that is at the origin of the impoliteness examined. Though the offence of David Cameron’s Personalised Negative Vocative “GEORGIE PORIGIE” may be perceived as slightly mitigated by the fact that it playfully references the nursery rhyme, the insult that is activated by the implied allusion to the new meaning of the expression is clearly not lost on George Osborne, who reacts by internally conjuring a counter insult, “sausage-faced cretin!”

A second creative example of impoliteness in Figure 44 could be seen in the use of the pun “IT’S JUST A LITTLE NICK!” Technically, it could be said that Cameron is only referring to cutting himself lightly (“just a nick”) while enthusiastically slashing the Liberal Democrats’ policy suggestions. However, knowing that Nick Clegg was the deputy prime minister and Liberal Democrats leader back then, and seeing how the proposals of his party were handled, “IT’S JUST A LITTLE NICK!” (with bigger and bolder typeface for “LITTLE NICK”) takes on an offensive, insulting and condescending tone as a third person negative reference in the hearing of the target. However, Nick’s seemingly oblivious, clueless smile and the lack of evidence of perceived offence have in fact led me not to count this instance among the impoliteness behaviours coded.

Liberty in vulgarity. The liberating function of impoliteness alluded to in the subtitle of this section is not a new function but rather the effect of the combination of the four functions of impoliteness discussed in section 2.6. It is therefore suggested that the affective relief, power gain, social (re)organisation, and entertainment impoliteness may entail, all contribute towards a sense of liberation. At the heart of this argument is the disputed rise in incivility in Britain (section 2.7.1).

In fact, the alleged increase in rudeness and the breaking down of deference in British culture (Gorji, 2007, p. 13; Tait, 2007, p. 89; Truss, 2005/2009, p. 149) are further contested on the grounds that the purportedly traditional ‘British’ norms they are

measured against are not truly representative and inclusive. Indeed, some argue that “traditional accounts of British politeness behaviour have only ever in reality described the norms of the middle and upper classes” (Cameron, 2007, p. 136) while in parallel, rude language was rather associated with the lower class (Gorji, 2007, p. 12). In light of this, Lakoff (2003), suggests that the perceived increase in rudeness, or verbal ‘coarsening’ or incivility, could mean better representation and “a mark of positive sociological change, both a sign and a result of the enfranchisement of previously marginalised groups” (Gorji, 2007, p. 13). Indeed, “the end of deference is presented as politically progressive and therefore a good thing” (Truss, 2005/2009, p. 149). It is seen as a sign of class defiance and a rebellion against the norms imposed by the ideologies of those traditionally perceived to monopolise social power.

Effectively, in the British comics examined, oftentimes the targets of impoliteness are mainly middle- and upper-class self-professed models of virtue and propriety like the royalty, the government elite, the church, the BBC, etc. (e.g. the vicar, queen, and members of government). Based on the potential of impoliteness to undermine the target’s symbolic power (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 227; section 2.5), impoliteness in the British comics could be seen as an active attempt to symbolically reduce the power of these traditional institutions of propriety and “get power” in the process. It is then suggested that, in addition to reflecting shifting ideologies (section 2.7.1), the portrayal of impoliteness in comics could also be seen as a sign of egalitarianism and democracy. This is largely owing to the potential of impoliteness to disrupt established dominant social ideologies (sections 2.3.3 and 2.5) and “undermine people’s (...) sense of social and moral normality” (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 246).

Interestingly, this is explicitly expressed in the logo on the inside cover of *The Comix Reader 3* (2012). The logo is in fact a suggested coat of arms for the comic with the inscription LIBERTI EN VULGARITAE (Figure 44). It therefore confirms and illustrates the present argument in the sense that “liberty in vulgarity” references both the freedom to express oneself in a relaxed unguarded, and authentic way on the one hand, and the symbolic power to do so freely, unhindered by the bindings of what may be regarded as standard appropriateness in subject matter and language.



Figure 44. Bagott, E. (2012). In *The Comix Reader 3*, p. 2

6.5 Summary

In this chapter, three selected impoliteness events from the three British comic anthologies were qualitatively analysed. The focus was put on aspects of impoliteness not easily revealed through the quantitative part of the study, namely the more subtle forms of implicational impoliteness, the gradual unfolding of impoliteness in context, the socio-cultural dynamics underlying interactional impoliteness, and the roles impoliteness plays in the related comic narratives and contexts.

This qualitative look at the selected impoliteness events in context is central to an in-depth understanding of impoliteness phenomena in British comics. Each of the three analyses undertaken had a particular focus. The analysis of the impoliteness event from Roger Mellie's comic was focused on context-driven implicational impoliteness, a highly context-tied form of impoliteness. It particularly analysed impoliteness brought about by an infringement of the established social norms and conventions and what is perceived as appropriate and acceptable in the social context examined. In the process of doing so, it provided a glimpse into expectations related to the social manners and etiquette in the context of British funerals. It was further observed that the infringements at the origin of the impoliteness examined contributed to plot and character development and provided dramatic entertainment. Moreover, it was suggested that the ordinary, run-of-the-mill way the protagonist committed these breaches may contribute to building a sense of normality around the perception of the breaking down of the related traditional norms and rules of conduct.

The qualitative analysis of "The Crank-ies" provided an opportunity to explore the use of mimicry and metaphor in achieving impoliteness. It also offered a close look at the use of exploitative impoliteness in achieving dramatic entertainment. On the other hand, the analysis of Blann's (2011) "Things We Had" encompassed a detailed analysis

of impoliteness patterns, namely through the use of sequencing and layering strategies. It also was an opportunity to closely examine the key role impoliteness may play in the negotiation of power in the course of an interaction, along with the relational dynamics that come into play in such exchanges.

Very importantly too, the three qualitative analyses that make up this chapter closely examined the interplay between the verbal and non-verbal elements in the realisation of impoliteness in comics. Lastly, in addition to the analysis of the functions of impoliteness in the particular contexts of the three impoliteness events studied, a broader look was taken at the functions of impoliteness in British comics more generally, with illustrative examples from the data. This look emphasised the centrality of creativity and entertainment in the realisation of impoliteness in British comics, particularly through the use of allusion and punning. Lastly, it was posited that impoliteness may also have a liberating function through a combination of affective relief, power negotiation, and the defiance and disruption of the ideologies and social norms and expectations in place. The next chapter will offer a similar qualitative probing of impoliteness phenomena, but in Lebanese comics.

Chapter 7 Impoliteness in Lebanese Comic Anthologies: A Qualitative Study

This chapter examines three selected impoliteness events as they unfold in their fictional context in the three Lebanese anthologies. In doing so, it explores their forms in all their sophistication and complexity and looks into their functions. Necessarily, the interactional dynamics underlying these impoliteness phenomena in the Lebanese socio-cultural context are also explored, before some conclusions are drawn on a slightly broader level.

7.1 Magazine Anthology *Zerooo*

The following is a qualitative analysis of an impoliteness event from Feghali's (2000) "Ya Weil Ya Eib" comic in the Lebanese magazine anthology *Zerooo*. It is divided into a brief overview of the context and summary of the comic, followed by a discussion of how attitudes to language are exploited in achieving impoliteness. Translanguaging is then examined as a source of creativity and criticism in the realisation of a type of impoliteness where the key function is shown to be exploitative entertainment.

Context and summary. "Ya Weil Ya Eib" is a parody of a popular entertainment television programme, *Ya Leil Ya Ein* that aired on the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) from 1999 to 2007, with hosts Marianne Khlat and Tony Abu Jaoudeh. The show featured artistic performances, games, and short, light-hearted interviews (Nabboot, 2017). 'Ya leil ya ein,' (literal translation: "oh night oh eye") is in fact a popular lyrical expression that is part of many a Middle Eastern song refrain, and as such, immediately evokes musical entertainment. The title adopted for the parodic comic, "Ya Weil Ya Eib," is a rhyming twist on this lyrical expression that literally translates as "oh woe oh shame." Briefly put, the comic lampoons the show itself for being an uninventive exact replica of similar Western shows, the male host for being stiff, the female host mainly for being shallow and for not speaking Arabic properly, and finally the guests for their inappropriate behaviour, surgically enhanced features, overly suggestive dress, and lack of talent. The comic runs over four pages, but the impoliteness

event chosen for analysis spans only the first page and the top of the second one (Figures 45 & 46).

Since the event chosen is mainly in Lebanese but includes some words in French and English, a translation of the dialogue in the numbered panels is juxtaposed to Figures 45 & 46. In order to try to reproduce the intended effect as closely as possible, the words that are written in French in the comic have been kept as in the original between inverted commas but have then been translated in English between parentheses. As detailed in section 4.5, I will be providing literal translations only when discussing particular impoliteness formulae within the analysis. Clarifying descriptions are provided between brackets {} in italics.



Figure 45. Feghali, H. (2000). Ya Weil Ya Eib. In *Zeroo 0*, p. 4

OH WOE OH SHAME – SCENARIO, DRAWING AND PRODUCTION BY HABIB FEGHALI

{Names displayed as “ZEYTONY” and “MARI-ÂNE EN ARABE” (French for “Mari-Donkey in Arabic”)}
 (1) TONY: GOOD EVENING READERS AND WELCOME TO YOUR FAVOURITE PROGRAMME “OH WOE OH SHAME” MY NAME IS “ZEYTONY” BECAUSE I AM VERY STIFF AND MY JOINTS NEED LUBRICATING. AND THE SHOW IS NAMED LIKE THIS BECAUSE WOE TO A NATION WHOSE TELEVISIONS GET THE INSPIRATION FOR THEIR SHOWS FROM THE WEST, AND REQUIRE MORE THAN ONE PERSON TO PRODUCE THEM THOUGH WE’RE NOT ADDING OR REMOVING... AND SHAME ON A PROGRAMME HOST WHO DOESN’T KNOW HER MOTHER TONGUE OR THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LETTERS!!! BUT HER PRESENCE ON THE SCREEN IS NOT STRANGE COMING FROM A TELEVISION CHANNEL THAT STILL ALLOWS A PERSON LIKE “MAY ILA MATA?”¹² TO GO ON AIR...

(2) MARIANNE: HI!! ANA “MARIANNE EN LANGUE ARABE” (Marianne in the Arabic language) AND MY ONLY CONCERN IN THIS “PROGRAMME” (/programme) IS TO HAVE FUN PERSONALLY AND DANCE AND SHOW PEOPLE THAT I KNOW ALL THE “PAROLES” (/lyrics) OF THE SONGS... EVEN THE SONGS OF “ASSI EL HALLANY”¹³ AND “GEORGE WAL-SOUF”¹⁴... AND THERE ARE LOTS OF PEOPLE WHO WONDER IF I LAY EGGS BECAUSE I WEAR FEATHERS A LOT AND IF I DON’T KNOW THE LANGUAGE, AT LEAST “JE SUIS BELLE” (/I am beautiful) AND YOU “TAIS TOI” (/shut up)... AND LET’S START WITH...

(3) MARIANNE: THE TEAM OF THE YOUNG LAAAADIES!!!
 {Names displayed: NAFAR-TIT-I, SILLY-CONNE, MAH-BOOB-A, and BALL-ETTE}

(4) MARIANNE: AND THE YOUNG MEN...

¹² May Matta is a famous but controversial Lebanese journalist. “May ila mata?” is Arabic for “May till when?”

¹³ Popular Lebanese singer whose name the host pronounces

¹⁴ Another popular singer whose name the host mispronounces



Figure 46. Feghali, H. (2000). Ya Weil Ya Eib. In *Zeroo 0*, p. 5 (Only the top two panels of this 2nd page are part of the studied impoliteness event, but the lower panels were kept in the figure because the images overlap across the panels)

(5) MARIANNE: ARE YOU READY BOYS FOR THE FIRST GAME, WHICH YOU ALL WAIT FOR TO HEAR ME SAY THE FAMOUS WORD THAT NOONE WAS ABLE TO CORRECT FOR ME...

(6) MARIANNE: THE RHYTHM

(7) MARIANNE: MUSICCCC

(8) MAN ON THE KEYBOARD: {thinking} AND YOU ARE INSULTING/DETRIMENTAL TO THE ARABIC LANGUAGE

Impoliteness analysis. Impoliteness in Feghali’s (2000) comic is analysed primarily with a focus on attitudes to language and translanguaging.

Attitudes to language and impoliteness. Feghali’s (2000) comic is entitled “Ya Weil Ya Eib” (/oh woe oh shame), and as the show host sets out to explain, the ‘woe’ part expresses his distress at the lack of innovation and renewal on Lebanese TV channels, which he subjects to disparaging pointed criticism. Of more interest to us, however, is the ‘oh shame’ part of the show title because it is the part that is at the basis of much of the impoliteness in the comic. The source of the lamented shame turns out to be mainly the female co-host’s incompetence in Arabic, as is made clear in the male host’s comment, *عيب على مقدمة برامج ما بتعرف لغتها الأم والفرق*. The equivalent in English would be ‘SHAME ON A PROGRAMME HOST WHO DOESN’T KNOW HER MOTHER TONGUE OR THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LETTERS’. According to the *Oxford Dictionary*, “shame on you” is an expression “used to reprove someone for something of which they should be ashamed” (“Shame on You,” n.d.). The host’s utterance may then here be considered an insult, more specifically a personalised third-person negative assertion in the hearing of his targeted co-host, indirectly admonishing her for her lack of competence in her mother

language¹⁵. His reprimand is also accompanied by a variation of the offensive bird gesture directed at her.

To understand a possible reason behind the host's vehemence at his co-host's incompetence in Arabic, it is important to understand the significant and complex role language plays in identity assertion in the Lebanese society (section 2.7.2). Briefly put Arabic is often associated with an Arab, mostly Muslim, affiliation and identity while French rather has Western, non-Islamic associations (Suleiman, 2003, pp. 204-5) and is linked with a certain sense of superiority among the Lebanese privileged elite (Hartman, 2014, pp. 2-3). Amid these sociolinguistic ideological tensions, some Francophone Lebanese actually take some pride in their poor command of Arabic and do not take real measures to remedy it. Consequently, these people become the object of the scorn of those who believe the Lebanese should master and take pride in their mother tongue, the spoken Arabic of Lebanon. These differing ideological attitudes to language seem to be at the heart of the conflict between the two show hosts.

In this context, the host's conventionalised insult ("SHAME ON A PROGRAMME HOST WHO DOESN'T KNOW HER MOTHER TONGUE OR THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LETTERS") is not only an attack on his co-host's quality face, that is, a questioning of her linguistic competence, but it is also an attack on her social identity face and sense of belonging. Marianne is obviously piqued by the disparaging comment and counters it with "AND YOU "TAIS TOI" (/shut up)..." Though this is a mild silencer, when hosting a live TV show, it clearly becomes a context-driven implicational impoliteness as it runs counter to expectations of appropriateness in that particular context. Also in keeping with her endorsed linguistic social identity, her speech is peppered with French expressions and an altered, soft production of some pharyngeal Arabic sounds. In fact, this is a trait commonly observed in the speech of some Francophone Lebanese who, undoubtedly influenced by the considerably less guttural French phonetic system¹⁶, often drop the emphatic, pharyngeal quality of certain distinctive Arabic sounds. Though no empirical

¹⁵ Since the expression "shame on you" seems elliptical, its interpretation and subsequent categorization may depend on the context of use. In this context, the interpretation given seems the most plausible, but in other contexts where the meaning could be more of an ill-wish such as "may shame be upon you", it would better fit under negative expressives.

¹⁶ In contrast to the Arabic phonetic system that includes many glottal, uvular and pharyngeal sounds, the French phonetic system includes only one uvular fricative (r).

studies have yet confirmed this phonetic influence, it is a phenomenon that is hard to miss¹⁷. It may also be problematic because the pharyngeal articulation may produce contrastive sounds in Arabic. For instance, the voiceless alveolar fricative [s] and its pharyngealised allophone [ʕ] may produce different meanings: [s é : f] ‘sword’ compared to [ʕ é : f] ‘summer’ (Obégi, 1971, p. 12). Of course, not all Lebanese words have such contrastive pairs. However, even when the alteration of the pharyngeal quality of sounds does not lead to a different word, the outcome is phonetically distorted and inaccurate, and often likely to be perceived as westernised and rather ‘delicate’ sounding.

This is exactly how Marianne seems to be speaking Arabic in this comic. In doing this, she is actually confirming her co-host’s negative evaluation, mispronouncing several Arabic words, altering them phonetically and sometimes even semantically. First, she mispronounces the name of a popular Lebanese singer, Assi el Hallany, by substituting the pharyngealised [ʕ] sound in his first name with a clear one. The resulting عاسي instead of the original عاصي leads to a word that roughly means “tough”, as in ‘tough meat’, with connotations like ‘old’, ‘hard’, and ‘unbending’. She again mispronounces another popular Lebanese singer’s name, George Wassouf, by adding a case inflection to his family name, changing it from جورج وصوف to جورج والصوف, and so turning it into “George and the wool.” Additionally, she invariably manages to reduce the emphatic pharyngealised quality of consonant sounds and alter the quality and length of the vowel sounds. As a result, فريق الصباية becomes فريق الصبايا and الإيقاع becomes الإيكاع. While the semantic content of these two words remains mainly unaffected, the resulting phonetic output is extremely alien sounding.

Eventually, though, Marianne turns موسيقى (/music) into a distorted موسسينا, an inaccurate phonetic rendering that sounds closer to the word مسينة (/insulting; detrimental) than to the original موسيقى (/music). This time the man on the keyboard seems so offended that he aims at her an obscene gesture and internally responds to the

¹⁷ Obégi’s (1971) investigation of the influence of French on “the phonology of the Arabic spoken by the educated Christian community of Beirut” (1971, p.iii) reflects a scholarly awareness of this phenomenon in the speech of Francophone Lebanese, but his mere 10-informant study had a very limited sample where no major influence could be detected. However, he himself admitted that further studies were needed to draw firm conclusions in that regard.

distorted version of the word using the offensive near homophone, *مسيئة*. His complete thought, which is actually encased in a thought bubble, can be translated as ‘AND YOU ARE INSULTING/DETRIMENTAL TO THE ARABIC LANGUAGE’. The interesting point worth looking into is why the man considers the host’s faulty Arabic pronunciation a source of personal offence. It might be argued that proficiency in one’s mother tongue is a primary sign of belonging to one’s community or nation, and therefore a key marker of identity that creates cohesion within that community or nation. Failure to demonstrate mastery in that mother tongue may cast doubt on one’s authenticity and belonging as a member of that group, which might cause the other members in that group to take offence at the perceived intrusion. Indeed, “impoliteness evaluations can ensue as a result of (i) identity partial or non-verification and/or (ii) a threat to the authenticity/self-worth/self-efficacy attributes associated with one’s identity” (Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch, 2009, 2013 cited in Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch & Sifianou, 2017, p. 238). Here the factors that mostly seem to come into play in the man’s negative evaluation are ‘identity partial or non-verification’ and the threat to authenticity and self-efficacy that the woman’s linguistic ineptitude seem to embody.

Interestingly, the man’s thoughts are made in faulty Arabic, namely misusing masculine and feminine diacritics and inflections. These errors are usually typical of the Lebanese-Armenian community¹⁸ in Lebanon, which may suggest that the man is a Lebanese-Armenian¹⁹. This possibility, however, only compounds the irony that even a man whose mother tongue is not Lebanese is so offended by Marianne’s mistreatment of the Arabic language that he feels compelled to counter the offence on live TV with an obscene gesture and what seems like a heartfelt offensive personalised negative assertion in his thoughts.

Paradoxically, that same ideologically motivated language stance of Marianne that makes her the target of offensive treatment at the hands of her two colleagues on the show is also what makes possible a highly creative kind of impoliteness through

¹⁸ Though the Armenian community has settled in Lebanon a hundred years ago, following the Armenian genocide by the Turks of the Ottoman Empire, the Armenians in Lebanon have notoriously maintained Armenian as their mother tongue.

¹⁹ The Armenian community is one of the 18 officially recognised religious communities in Lebanon (section 2.5.2).

translanguaging. Indeed, although this view is not one endorsed by all Lebanese nationalists, it is generally accepted that “culturally, French signifies Lebanese linguistic and literary hybridity as a way of supplanting any monolingualistic or monoliterary articulations of the national self” (Suleiman, 2003, pp. 205-7). It is precisely this linguistic and literary hybridity’s role in the realisation of impoliteness that is analysed next.

Translanguaging as a source of creativity and criticism in exploitative entertaining impoliteness. The idea for the analysis in this section is inspired by Garcia and Wei’s (2014, p. 42) study on how “bilingual speakers select meaning-making features and freely combine them to potentialise meaning-making, cognitive engagement, creativity and criticality” (See section 2.7.2 for more detail). This will be mainly shown in this section through the choice of the characters’ names and the orthographic and graphological realisation of these names, which are used to achieve impoliteness.

The first page of Feghali’s (2000) comic reproduces the names of the two show hosts and four participants as they are supposedly displayed in the show. These names are clearly meant to reflect the nature of the people they refer to. First, the name of the male host, Tony, is appended with the (nonsensical) prefix “zey” and so transformed into “ZEYTONY”. In Lebanese, the term *zeyto(o)ny* means “lubricate me”, and as the host himself explains, “MY NAME IS “ZEYTONY” BECAUSE I AM VERY STIFF AND MY JOINTS NEED LUBRICATING.” True to his word, his stance remains unchanged throughout the entire show section (re)presented in the comic. Still, it may be argued that there is more playfulness than offence to be read in his name alteration, especially that he himself participates in this self-deprecation. The same cannot be said for his co-host, Marianne, though.

Marianne’s name is the object of an unflattering, offensive treatment that relies on bilingual semantic, orthographic and graphological manipulation for its effect. The name “Marianne” is reproduced as “MARI-ÂNE en arabe” (Figure 47).



Figure 47. Close up of Feghali, H. (2000). *Ya Weil Ya Eib. Zerooo 0*, p. 4

Cutting “marianne” into two hyphenated parts creates two new semantic units within the original one, one of which is “Âne”, the French word for ass or donkey. The result is a marked surface form and semantic content, clearly a form-driven trigger for inferential impoliteness with a resulting disparaging innuendo in reference to the host. The intended offensive effect is secured by the hyphenated structure, and further reinforced by the foregrounded circumflex accent above the *a* in “Âne” which is placed in such a way that it exceeds the name frame, thus drawing additional attention to the word it is part of (i.e. the ass reference). The addition of “en arabe” right next to “MARI-ÂNE”, as if to retract or cancel the embedded insult ‘in French’, only adds insult to injury by reinforcing and reactivating the offensive interpretation. This is a typical example of how the use of cancellability in implicatures may exacerbate the offence, as “the cancellation or denial of an innuendo articulates and so makes more explicit what is considered to be non-mutually manifest” (Bell, 1997, p. 47).

The overall effect is that, as it is rendered, the host’s name, “MARI-ÂNE” is clearly face-damaging to the host mainly for three reasons. First, it echoes the shallowness of her brief self-description while introducing the show – that of a pretty feather-obsessed lady, who does not know the language and whose only concern in the programme is to have fun, dance, and show off her knowledge of all the songs’ lyrics. Second, and more importantly, it also necessarily includes the implicit allusion to her ineptitude in her mother tongue and its phonetic system, an incompetence that is the subject of a derisive conventionalised impoliteness formula in the co-host’s opening comment. Third, Marianne’s subsequent linguistic blunders further demonstrate her incompetence in her mother tongue and confirm this negative evaluation. In fact, combined with the derisive personalised negative assertion of her co-host and reinforced by the offensive implication in the marked rendering of her name, these missteps may convincingly be seen as discursively constructing and inviting a negative evaluation as regards Marianne’s authenticity as a Lebanese and her efficacy in hosting the show. This time, the

impoliteness evaluation is likely the result of the “threat to the authenticity/self-worth/self-efficacy attributes associated with (her) identity” (Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch, 2009, 2013 in Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch & Sifianou, 2017, p. 238).

In a similar fashion, the female show participants are subjected to an offensive treatment in the handling of their names. As host Marianne introduces “the ladies’ team”, the name of each participant is displayed in front of her. The names are playful yet unflattering and sexist trilingual combinations (Figure 48). As I will demonstrate next, it is here the marked graphology that acts in the same way “prosody and other intensifying techniques are used to ensure that we are guided to the ‘impolite’ interpretation” in the spoken interactions examined by Culpeper (2011a, p. 157).



Figure 48. Close up of Feghali, H. (2000). *Ya Weil Ya Eib*. In *Zerooo 0*, p.4

The way they are manipulated through translanguaging and graphology, the four names end up sharing one common theme, large breasts. Indeed, the strategically placed hyphens invariably yield either one of the words that denote breasts, as in “tit” and “boob”; a metaphor, as in “ball”; or arguably a metonymy, as in the homophone ‘silicone’, a substance often used in breast augmentation procedures. The resulting name combinations can be broken down as follows:

- **NAFAR-TIT-I**
“NAFAR” is Lebanese for ‘spew’ or ‘spill out’. “TIT” is English vulgar slang for a woman’s breast. The “I” adds the Arabic inflection at the end that means “mine”. The combination of these hyphenated semantic units amounts to a crude reference to the wardrobe malfunction resulting from the way the woman is dressed, literally amounting to “my tit spilled out.” The resulting sound combination, however, is close to “Nefertiti”, the name of the ancient Egyptian queen.
- **SILLY-CONNE**
“CONNE” is here the French equivalent of either ‘idiot’ or ‘bitch’. Fronted by the English adjective “SILLY”, it becomes a double insult that is also a close

homophone of the word ‘silicone’, a product widely known to be used in breast augmentation procedures.

- **MAH-BOOB-A**

The word includes the explicit informal English word for breast, “boob”, graphologically marked between hyphens. The entire phonetic combination produces the Arabic word ‘mahbouba’ which means ‘(well) liked’

- **BALL-ETTE**

“BALL” here metaphorically refers to a woman’s breast. “ETTE” is an inflection used to turn some Lebanese or Arabic words into the plural form. The combination is ultimately a direct reference to the seemingly inflated breasts of the woman it names as these are clearly drawn as a football and a basketball.

To understand the implied criticism and ensuing offence behind the unflattering drawings and names attributed to the participants, it is important to briefly mention that the 2000s witnessed the start of the plastic surgery boom in Lebanon, with breast augmentation figuring among the commonly requested procedures. Hence the fixation on names that highlight the participants’ extreme breast size and, in the process, include allusions to ‘silicone’ and inflated balls.

The resulting structurally and semantically marked representations are used to achieve entertaining exploitative impoliteness. Indeed, translanguaging involving English, Lebanese and French creatively infuses judgementalism into the names of the female host and participants. As a result, it contributes to achieving entertaining impoliteness, which involves exploitative entertainment as discussed by Culpeper (2011a, pp. 233-4; section 2.5). The key points of interest here about this exploitative entertaining impoliteness are that

It involves entertainment at the expense of the target of the impoliteness (...). It is not the case that the target is always aware of the impoliteness (...). What is important, however, is that others, aside from the target, can understand the probable impoliteness effects for the target (...). Impoliteness, however, can be designed as much for the over-hearing audience as for the target addressee, and that audience can be entertained (Culpeper, 2011a, pp. 233-4).

Indeed, rather than being a more usual example of inter-character impoliteness, the entertaining function in this type of impoliteness works at the expense of the targeted characters, namely Marianne and the other female participants. There is no evidence in the comic that the fictional characters who are the targets of the impoliteness are aware that they are. However, the trilingual Lebanese reader, to whom the comic is addressed, is

clearly expected to understand the wider impoliteness effects. In reality, such a reader would be perfectly aware that the offensive effect is not only restricted to the direct female host and participant targets in the comic, but that it extends more generally to the vain, image-conscious Lebanese women they represent. So the impoliteness here may in fact be targeting an entire social group rather than simply individual characteristics. In that sense, it may be perceived as part of a social critique, which would fit very well in the context of the social satirical bent of *Zerooo*, the anthology it is featured in.

Primarily then, the entertaining function of the analysed impoliteness event is mainly achieved by the cleverness and creativity behind the examined ‘impolite’ combinations, in large part made possible by translanguaging practices and a marked graphology. As demonstrated, translanguaging has indeed enabled the realization of creative and entertaining semantic and graphological combinations that act as vehicles for the criticism, judgementalism, and negative evaluation behind the impoliteness uptake in this context. And so it may be further argued that the playful cognitive engagement required to decode and process the evaluative function in these combinations actually adds intellectual pleasure to the usual entertaining mix triggered by impoliteness.

7.2 Newspaper/Fanzine Anthology *La Furie des Glandeurs*

What follows is the analysis of an impoliteness event from Wassim Maouad’s (2011) “Les Bobos”, a comic in the first issue of the Lebanese fanzine/newspaper anthology *La Furie des Glandeurs*. After a brief overview of the comic’s context, the analysis structure follows the impoliteness event as it unfolds in context, highlighting the impoliteness aspects and functions as they unfurl in the comic. The role of translanguaging (section 2.7.2) in the realisation of impoliteness is also explored in the course of the analysis.

Context and summary. “Les Bobos” (Figures 49 & 50 with the translation in Appendix I) is a comic entry in the first issue of *La Furie des Glandeurs* on the theme “Beyrouth Bobo.” “Bobo” is an informal term for “a person having both the values of the counterculture of the 1960s and the materialism of the 1980s; a bourgeois Bohemian” (“Bobo,” n.d.). Maouad’s (2011) “Les Bobos” is presented as a broadcast from a daily investigative programme hosted by correspondent Marcel Duracel. In it, he interviews

several characters from different walks of life in an attempt to get answers about bobos, who they are, where they can be found, and how they interact with their environment.



Figure 49. Maouad, W. (2011). Les Bobos. In *La Furie des Glandeurs 1*, p. 2 (Translation in Appendix I)



Figure 50. Maouad, W. (2011). Les Bobos. In *La Furie des Glandeurs 1*, p. 3 (Translation in Appendix I)

Impoliteness analysis. Though the inter-character interaction in “The Bobos” is not immediately identifiable in the classic sense of the term, each panel is in fact the response of a given character to Duracel’s questions in Panel 2. These questions actually seem to be framed as subtitles to the comic (Extract 1).

Extract 1: The text in Panel 2 of Maouad’s (2011) “The Bobos”

2 LES BOBOS
 QUI SONT-ILS? QUE SONT-ILS? OÙ PEUT ON LES OBSERVER? QUEL EST LEUR RAPPORT
 AVEC L'ÉCOSYSTÈME QUI LES CONTIENT? ET TOUT PLEIN D'AUTRES QUESTIONS
 PASSIONANTES!

2 THE BOBOS
 WHO ARE THEY? WHAT ARE THEY? WHERE CAN WE OBSERVE THEM? WHAT IS THEIR
 RELATIONSHIP TO THE ECOSYSTEM THAT CONTAINS THEM? AND LOTS OF OTHER
 EXCITING QUESTIONS!

Indeed, the respondents’ comments include various telltale forms of direct address aimed at a male interlocutor, the show host (see Appendix J for an illustration of this point). The responses in the panels can therefore convincingly be examined as part of the comic’s inter-character interactions. Nevertheless, the nature of these interactions is somewhat characteristic of vox pop interviews, which generally rely on a basic two-turn conversation structure rather than multiple conversational turns. Additionally, vox pop style interviews typically do not show the reporter’s reaction(s) to the responses. This implies that Duracel’s reactions to the interviewees’ responses and potential evidence of offence or challenge in his responses are not always visible/available for analysis. In those cases, the nature of the offences analysed, the multimodal context they occur in, and analytical expectations based on similar occurrences in my data have guided me in drawing some plausible conclusions with regard to the perception of the offence (See section 4.4.1).

“Les Bobos” might be said to take on a rather irreverent tone right from the onset of the comic when in Panel 1 Marcel Duracel greets his fictional viewers with a personalised negative vocative (GOOD MORNING STUPID JERKS!) before addressing to them an indirect pointed criticism (THE TOPIC IS QUITE SILLY, BUT THE AUDIENCE IS EVEN MORE SO). The show host also wraps up his broadcast by again insulting his audience with a personalised negative assertion (YOU ARE A BUNCH OF JERKS/ASSHOLES). In addition to the generally offensive tone of the reporter, a number of panels may be argued to have impoliteness in them; these are Panels 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, and arguably Panel 15. However, in accordance with the selection criteria decided upon in section 4.4.3, only one event, the impoliteness event that starts in Panel 3 and resumes in Panel 10 will be the object of the present qualitative analysis.

In Panel 3, a brawny man with bushy eyebrows and a cross tattooed on his arm is standing by his moped as he responds to the correspondent’s questions about bobos (Extract 2).

Extract 2: The text in Panel 3 of Maouad’s (2011) “The Bobos”

Original text: French and Lebanese written in Latin script	NO ʒABIBÉ, CE MOT NE ME DIT RIEN, MAIS JE NE T’AIME PAS, ALORS															
Literal translation of the Lebanese text	<table border="0"> <tr> <td colspan="5">love</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ZAʒʒET</td> <td>ABL MA</td> <td>NIK</td> <td>AJALAK.</td> <td>FÊHEM?</td> </tr> <tr> <td>slide/slip</td> <td>before</td> <td>I fuck</td> <td>your time</td> <td>(do you) get it</td> </tr> </table>	love					ZAʒʒET	ABL MA	NIK	AJALAK.	FÊHEM?	slide/slip	before	I fuck	your time	(do you) get it
love																
ZAʒʒET	ABL MA	NIK	AJALAK.	FÊHEM?												
slide/slip	before	I fuck	your time	(do you) get it												
Fluent translation	NO LOVE, THIS WORD MEANS NOTHING TO ME, BUT I DON’T LIKE YOU, SO BEAT IT BEFORE I FUCK THE LIFE OUT OF YOU. YOU GET IT?															

The man’s response includes three conventionalised impoliteness formulae: a dismissal, “ZAʒʒET”/“BEAT IT”; a threat, “[ZAʒʒET] ABL MA NIK AJALAK”/“[BEAT IT] BEFORE I FUCK THE LIFE OUT OF YOU”; and a message enforcer, “FÊHEM?”/“YOU GET IT?” An important point to add here is that what may have sounded like a term of endearment at the outset of the response is not at all so in this context. ʒABIBÉ, or *habibé*, is indeed a Lebanese term of endearment that translates as “(my) love” or “(my) dear” in English. However, outside the realms of close relationships, it is not used as such, but rather has

two common uses. The first is a rather vulgar use in transactional contexts where the user of *ʔABIBÉ* is seen as somewhat buttering up to the addressee to gain approval or a favour; the second is a form of address that often fronts a threat as a kind of message enforcer (e.g. *lek habibé ...* or *shouf habibé ...*). It is hard to determine which meaning *ʔABIBÉ* has in Panel 3, but it does seem to be a cross between these two, partly a sign of affected vulgar familiarity and partly a threat judging by the content of the clause that follows it.

In addition to these conventionalised impoliteness formulae, Panel 3's respondent's translanguaging and subsequently sustained language choice will be shown to be a form of unmarked, context-driven implicational impoliteness where the impolite interpretation is "primarily driven by the strong expectations flowing from the context" (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 180). One strong expectation tied to the context has to do with the language use. The investigative programme is presented in French, and apart from addressing his grandfather with the familiar Lebanese vocative "جدو/grandpa" in Panel 14, all the host's utterances are in French. French can therefore be considered the preferred, compliant language choice for the respondents who can speak it in this fictional context. It is true though that Panel 5's seemingly clueless French-speaking young man notwithstanding, none of the other respondents use French, but one may assume from the context that is a competence- rather than a preference-related language choice (Cashman, 2005, p. 306) of "the man in the street" (Panel 13). However, the case does seem different for the respondent in Panel 3 because the part of his utterance in French is quite idiomatic, so he does seem perfectly capable of communicating his point of view to the programme host in French. Instead, he switches from French to Lebanese halfway through his response. According to a study by Cashman (2008, p. 269) "not choosing an interactant's preferred language . . . can (also) be interpreted as inappropriate and impolite." The man's deliberate switching to colloquial Lebanese may therefore be interpreted as an indirect impoliteness challenge in its implicit refusal to comply with the francophone host's expectations.

Moreover, it can be observed that the French part of the response ("NO [ʔABIBÉ], CE MOT NE ME DIT RIEN, MAIS JE NE T'AIME PAS, ALORS"), though decidedly unpleasant, is not really offensive. It is the Lebanese part that packs all the conventionalised formulaic

impoliteness previously pointed out. Cashman (2008, p. 255) cites Valdés's (1981, p. 106) argument on the potential strategic functionality of code-switching in interaction "used strategically to both aggravate and mitigate requests." In this particular case, the man's switching to the colloquial Lebanese clearly seems to aggravate his forceful request that he be left alone. Moreover, given that "non-compliant language choices may serve to maximize the face threat of a request" (Li Wei, 2005 in Cashman, 2008, p. 255), the man's switching to a less cooperative language choice in that particular context may further exacerbate the offensiveness of his dismissal and threat. In fact, the man's face-threatening verbal request seems to be working in conjunction with his equally menacing body language: his closed facial expression and fisted left hand with the thrusting index. This act of pointing at someone is clearly a threatening gesture sometimes likened to the thrusting of a dagger (Calero, 2005, pp. 294-5).

In addition to aggravating his request and maximising its face threat, it can be argued that the man's translanguaging is a powerful tool in an underlying dynamic of an ideological power struggle. Several elements in the comic may be seen to point towards a certain social and ideological divide between the host and the respondent in Panel 3. First, there is clearly a difference in social status between the host and his respondent in Panel 3. The host's apparent professional success and celebrity status, his expensive (albeit donated suit), his "beautiful watch" in constant display, his white, perfectly aligned teeth, and the fact that he seems totally unfazed by a smashed camera may be evidence of a certain level of wealth. His middle-class status is further accentuated by the fact that his French-speaking "product of the mandate" grandfather appears to live under the same roof ("ON VA CHEZ MOI... ON DEMANDERA A MON JEDDO POUR LES BOBOS!"), in a typical three-generation patrilineal extended Lebanese family traditional form. The overall context of the reporter therefore points to a rather complacent imported colonial bourgeoisie. By comparison, the man in Panel 3 is casually dressed, with no apparent sign of sophistication, wealth, or distinct profession. On the contrary, there is a certain incongruity in the contrast between his somewhat imposing stature and the diminutive light-framed moped behind him. Unlike the host, his teeth are stained and rather crooked (Panel 10). All of this seems to point towards a modest, lower class background.

In addition to the difference in social status between the two characters, there seems to be a tension in their political ideology. The respondent's physical build, his threatening poses and gestures, the cross that is tattooed on his right arm, and his quick recourse to violence can all be seen as evocative of sectarian militiamen who terrorised people during the Lebanese civil war. In the political economy of post-war Lebanon, the militiamen came to be seen as the unenlightened, poor and violent 'other' as opposed to the well-educated, modern elite in what Hourani (2008, p. 305 cited in Haugbolle, 2012, p. 125) refers to as the "process of othering." Consequently, "the bourgeois nostalgic discourse singles out the militiaman as an uneducated, uncivilized man whose wanton masculinity is to be deplored" (Haugbolle, 2012, p. 125). This is exactly what seems to be happening in "Les Bobos" as Marcel Duracel's polished background stands in contrast with the generally more basic one of his respondents, including the man in Panel 3. In fact, Duracel explicitly deplores the alleged ignorance of the common man in an extremely condescending comment in Panel 13: "THE MAN IN THE STREET (/THE COMMON MAN) PROVES THE ABYSMAL EXTENT OF HIS IGNORANCE, AT EVERY MOMENT! DEPLORABLE!" Maouad's comic, and particularly the event in Panels 3 and 10, therefore becomes the setting for an underlying power struggle within a dominant ideology where the polished bourgeois looks down on the "common man".

In this context, the man's impoliteness can be seen as "an exercise of power" (Locher & Bousfield, 2008, p. 8) "used to challenge and limit the power of an institutionally more powerful addressee" (Bousfield, 2008, p. 145). In addition to exacerbating the face threat of the conventionalised impoliteness formulae as already explained, the man's non-conformist, defiant language use actually plays a strategic role in the power dynamic within the existing dominant ideology. "Following or resisting the language choice expected by the norms of the community of practice" proved to be a means for bilingual speakers interviewed by Cashman (2008, p. 271) to either accede to or challenge and renegotiate the existing power hierarchy. In the context of the comic, the man may be seen as the less powerful interactant who, by resisting the linguistics norms expected of him, is challenging and renegotiating his place within the dominant ideology. In fact, the man's code-switching and sustained language choice of colloquial native Lebanese thereafter can be shown to be motivated by some ideological considerations

(Cashman, 2005, p.306). The choice of language plays a role in potentially indexing social identity and group membership by bringing out “distinctions between local versus regional languages, indigenous versus colonial languages, lingue franche versus national languages, or minority versus majority languages” (Auer, 2005, p. 405). Though in Lebanon French is largely considered a second language that is often used in daily conversations (see section 2.7.2 and Appendix A), it is still a language that carries a heavy colonial legacy. By choosing the native colloquial native Lebanese over the non-native French, the man may be said to be affirming his indigenous social identity in the face of what he may conceive of as an imported colonial, elitist social identity. By doing this, the man is challenging the dominant role of the host as an elitist bourgeois in the postwar Lebanese society’s power hierarchy, thereby undermining “the social conventions that serve power hierarchies” in dominant ideologies (Culpeper, 2010, p. 3239). His power challenge is further reinforced by his aggressive body language.

In fact, the interviewee’s response in Panel 3 is so aggressive and offensive that he probably does not expect the reporter to pursue his questioning. But six panels and probably as many interviewed respondents later, Marcel Duracel is back questioning him on the topic. This time, though, the man is totally incensed and lunges at the correspondent. His open mouth and aggressive posture are most probably a sign that he is yelling his response (Extract 3).

Extract 3: The text in Panel 10 of Maouad’s (2011) “The Bobos”

Original text (Lebanese written in Arabic script)	؟ حيوان يا قلتك شو أنا ولي
Transliteration	? ḥayawen ya ?iltillak shu ana wla
Literal translation	? animal (hey)you told you what I [?]
Fluent translation	[WLA] WHAT DID I TELL YOU YOU ANIMAL?

“WLA” is part interjection, part second person pronoun; it is an informal Lebanese form of addressing a male and is highly offensive if used with older people or strangers. It is also sometimes used to call dogs or other male animals. It seems to have no direct

equivalent English translation. I would have thought “hey” would have been a decent approximation if there were some objectifying, belittling undertone to be added to it. In *Arabic Sociolinguistics: Issues and Perspectives*, Suleiman (2013, p. 164) translates “wla” as “boy” but warns that the pragmatic force of these two words might differ. Though an unconvincing replacement in my view, this translation manages to capture the belittling, superior undertone of “wla.” Because the host is most probably a stranger who ranks rather high in the power hierarchy of the dominant ideology, WLA constitutes a highly offensive form of address in this context. What’s more, with its belittling, derogatory tone, it feeds the power struggle between the two characters by re-staking the respondent’s attempt at dominance.

“WLA” fronts the man’s question “WHAT DID I TELL YOU?” which is a flout of the maxim of quantity with the implicature that the host does not know or realise the meaning of what he was told to do. This question, along with its implicated doubt as to the man’s grasping of the issued request, seems to echo the man’s first message enforcer (“DO YOU GET IT?”) in Panel 3, which also implicates that the man has doubts about whether his addressee really got it. Worse yet, given the existing dominant hierarchy and the non-compliance of the host with his request despite its offensive, threatening nature and his repeated message enforcers, the respondent may have grounds to believe that the host is an elitist bully who won’t bother to respect the request of a common man. He therefore yells “**YOU ANIMAL**”, a personalised negative vocative, which is a derogatory nominative. The offensiveness of this conventionalised insult is further intensified by the distinctive prosody cued by the larger size and the bolder quality of the font in the two words making up the insult. Furthermore, not only is the animal metaphor highly offensive in itself, but through its flout of the maxim of quality, it also serves to convey the respondent’s implicated belief that Marcel Duracel does not understand what he is told as humans are supposed to. This implicature therefore comes to reinforce those of the man’s previous message enforcers. The respondent then drives his point across by acting on his previous threat and smashing the correspondent’s camera (Panel 11).

By the end of Maouad’s (2011) comic, while the field investigation has apparently yielded no visible results about the bobo phenomenon according to the reporter, the power dynamics underlying and driving the impoliteness in the interactions

can be said to have been much more revealing in that regard. Impoliteness has been shown to be a resource in the hands of some characters to challenge and (re)negotiate the power hierarchy within the dominant ideology in the postwar Lebanese society. Interestingly, these characters seem to be portrayed in a rather stereotypical way. In addition to their caricature-like representation, the conceptual, stereotypical status of “The Bobos” characters is reinforced by the low modality of the visual representation in the quasi absence of panel backgrounds and the black and white drawings (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 166). In fact, this abstract, stereotypical status of the offending characters may help suggest that the impoliteness forms studied are rather common practice among the related type or group of people in the Lebanese society.

7.3 Paperback Anthology *Samandal*

The last qualitative analysis from the Lebanese data is taken from the tenth 2010 issue of *Samandal*, from Ghadi Ghosn’s “The Adventures of Fakhr el Din”. The comic itself runs over 10 pages, but the impoliteness event chosen for analysis according to the selected criteria discussed (see section 4.4.3) is taken from pages 94 and 95 and is shown in Figures 51 and 52. This event is particularly interesting because first, it is almost entirely based on mimicry, and only a qualitative analysis could properly reveal its intricacies and the sociocultural dynamics that animate it. Second, it is also a distinctive example of how impoliteness may play a role in identity construction. The analysis is divided into a brief look at the context and summary of the comic, followed by an analysis of the ‘impolite’ mimicry event selected, where the interplay between impoliteness and identity is highlighted.

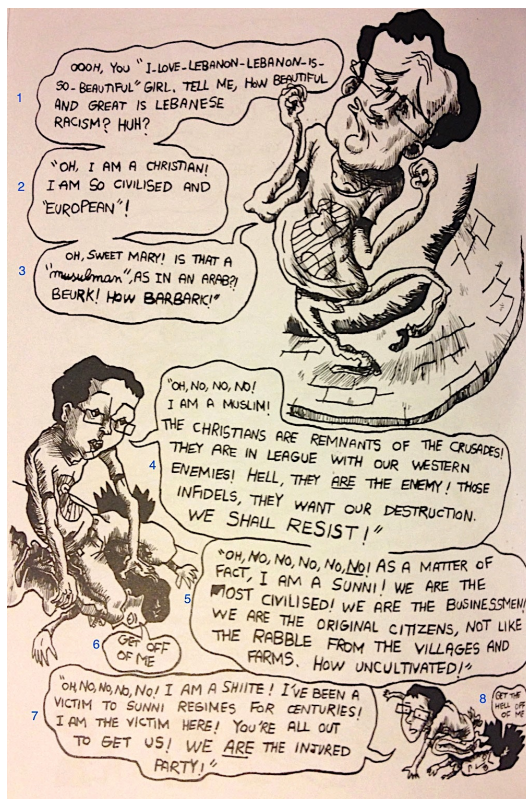


Figure 51. Ghosn, G. (2010). The Adventures of Fakhir el Din. In *Samandal 10*, p. 94 (The numbers in blue have been added for ease of reference in the analysis)

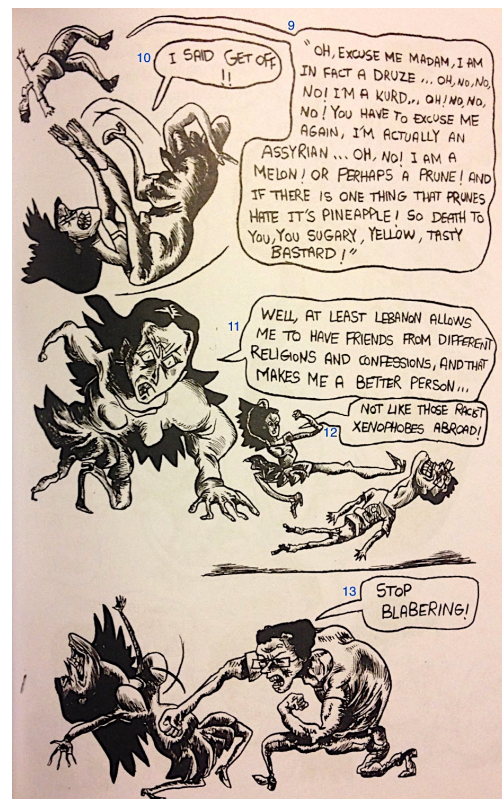


Figure 52. Ghosn, G. (2010). The Adventures of Fakhir el Din. In *Samandal 10*, p. 95 (The numbers in blue have been added for ease of reference in the analysis)

Context and summary. Sectarian classification and belonging is a key issue in Lebanon (section 2.7.2). Though the presence of the eighteen different religious communities leads to a much-prized cultural diversity, it is also a major source of tension as “this mix of minorities competing for resources has yielded a historical legacy marred by periodic eruptions of armed and bloody conflict” (Harb, 2010, p. 6). Even among the younger Lebanese generation, research has revealed a high level of sectarianism and a “lukewarm response” in the degree of warmth and acceptance towards other religious sects (Harb, 2010, p. 14). Furthermore, this sectarianism is an important identity marker in Lebanon. As Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch and Sifianou (2017, p. 247) maintain,

Identities are the product of difference and exclusion rather than unity, as it is only in relation to the other, to what one is not, that recognition is produced. Thus the ‘us’, for its mere existence, is dependent on a constitutive outside...

It is in such a context where identity construction is a somewhat contrastive process that “(im)politeness and aggression play a strong role in the construction of the out-group in processes of othering” (ibid., p. 228). It is precisely such an instance of this identity delineation through impoliteness and aggression that is analysed in the comic event chosen in this section.

Ghosn’s (2010) comic is named after Fakhr el Din, a 17th century Lebanese prince under whose rule Lebanon prospered both culturally and economically. Most importantly, though, he is remembered as the ruler who has “united the peoples of Lebanon” (Ghosn, 2010, p. 97). The comic is an unusual mix of anachronistic events and characters. In the scene leading up to the event studied, a young man is discussing his dilemma with a young woman. He has been commissioned to do a sociopolitical comic book about Lebanon to be published in Bulgaria and has been asked to adopt a positive outlook in it, which he claims he finds almost impossible. Visibly offended, the girl asks, “Did you say Lebanon sucks?!” This unleashes an aggressive, heated argument where the man enumerates the problems with Lebanon, and the woman takes the country’s defence. The comic, which up to that point had run in very neat, well-defined panels, explodes all over the following pages, with frameless sequences and severely distorted character drawings in erratic sizes, aggressive postures, and exaggerated facial expressions and gestures.

Several contentious issues are broached, leading up to the matter of sectarian tensions that is at the heart of the impoliteness event examined.

Impoliteness analysis. The analysis of the impoliteness event selected takes mimicry as its particular focus and explores the intricate interplay between aggression, impoliteness and social identity.

Mimicry, aggression, impoliteness and social identity. As will be presently shown, the impoliteness event analysed is almost a textbook case of implicational impoliteness through mimicry. It particularly fits the description of impolite mimicry in Culpeper (2011a, p. 161) as an adjusted form of Sperber and Wilson's (1986) concept of echoic irony, wherein the recovery of the impoliteness implicatures depends:

first, on a recognition of the behaviour as an echo; second, on an identification of the source of the behaviour echoed; third, the recognition that the source behaviour is a characteristic of the identity of the speaker who gave rise to it, and fourthly, on a recognition that the speaker's attitude to the behaviour echoed is one of rejection or disapproval.

These four steps can be seen as the young man takes turns at mimicking the alleged thoughts and attitudes of the major religious fractions in Lebanon, Christians, Shi'a Muslims, Sunni Muslims, and the Druze. First, the man's behaviour can clearly be recognized as an echo, albeit a caricatured one, as it explicitly starts with the man attributing his mimicry of singing Lebanon's praises to the young woman. He does this by using the second person pronoun followed immediately by the caricatured tune between quotation marks ("OOOOH, YOU "I – LOVE – LEBANON – LEBANON – IS – SO – BEAUTIFUL"). The fact that he is attempting to caricature her thoughts and beliefs is further ascertained when he continues by directly addressing her with a condescending ("GIRL") followed by a sarcastic question, "TELL ME, HOW BEAUTIFUL AND GREAT IS LEBANESE RACISM? HUH?" While the use of the word 'racism' to caricature sectarian tensions may be surprising to some, it is consonant with Harb's (2010, p. 6) reference to "the degree of sectarian ingroup bias [as] (sectarianism – akin to racism)." The subsequent behaviours can also be clearly recognized as echoes because they are all inset between quotation marks, an unusual and marked practice in comics where the balloon itself acts as a signal of direct speech. This further indicates that what this means is a sort

of report of direct speech within the direct speech of the character, an echo of yet another fictional character.

Second, the source of the echoed behaviour can clearly be identified as the young man starts every single one of his echoes with the identity of the alleged echoed person:

(2) "OH I AM A CHRISTIAN!"

(4) "OH, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO! I AM A MUSLIM!"

(5) "OH, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO! AS A MATTER OF FACT I AM A SUNNI!"

(7) "OH, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO! I AM A SHIITE!"

(9) "OH, EXCUSE ME MADAM, I AM IN FACT A DRUZE... OH, NO, NO, NO! I'M A KURD... OH! NO, NO, NO! YOU HAVE TO EXCUSE ME AGAIN, I'M ACTUALLY AN ASSYRIAN..."

The third element that plays a part in the recovery of the impoliteness implicatures is "the recognition that the source behaviour is a characteristic of the identity of the speaker who gave rise to it" (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 161). In fact, it is specifically this element, which Culpeper added to Sperber and Wilson's (1986) echoic irony to cater for an impoliteness model, which brings into play the Social Identity Face conceptual orientation that is at the heart of impolite mimicry. The attitude reflected by the utterance attributed to each member of the different sects can indeed be said to be characteristic of the particular identity of that sect in Lebanon, albeit in a stereotypical, caricatured way.

First, the mimicry of the Christian, "OH I AM A CHRISTIAN! I AM SO CIVILISED AND "EUROPEAN"!" reflects the strong association between the Christians of Lebanon and the Western world. These can be traced to the historical ties between the Lebanese Christians and European missionaries who used Lebanon as a gateway to try to introduce the Western civilization to the Arab world (Appendix A). The second part of the utterance, "OH, SWEET MARY! IS THAT A "MUSULMAN", AS IN AN ARAB?! BEURK! HOW BARBARIC!" is also highly characteristic of a prevalent attitude among some Lebanese Christians, "a sense of a Christian nationalist superiority" (Hartman, 2014, p. 2). This sense of superiority is especially manifested in relation to Arabs (Suleiman, 2003, p. 222); hence the caricatured disgust at the encounter of a Muslim Arab ("OH, SWEET MARY! IS THAT A "MUSULMAN", AS IN AN ARAB?!"). Additionally, the contrastive parallel between the Christian who claims to be "civilised" and "European" on the one hand, and the "barbaric" Arab Muslim on the other reflects yet another prevalent attitude among some Lebanese Christians. One last feature of the echoed behaviour that is highly typical

of the identity of the Lebanese Christian supposedly uttering is the use of French. The whole comic is in English, yet this particular echo of a Christian Lebanese includes two words in French, a predicate noun between inverted commas (“IS THAT A “MUSULMAN”), and a pragmatic noise in French, “BEURK!” (an equivalent of ‘yuck’). This is an example of how “language is involved in speakers’ internalization or display of particular identities” (Albirini, 2016, p. 123) since there is strong tendency among the Lebanese to associate French with Christians (Albirini, 2016, p.156; Joseph, 2004, pp. 205-207).

The rest of the echoed behaviours are also reflective of their purported speakers’ attitudes. Indeed, non-believers are referred to as “infidels” in the Koran, and many Muslims still see the Christians as associated with the enemy Western crusaders who had been bent on recovering the Holy Land from the Muslims. This is exactly what the young man is referring to when he says, “I AM A MUSLIM! THE CHRISTIANS ARE REMNANTS OF THE CRUSADES! THEY ARE IN LEAGUE WITH OUR WESTERN ENEMIES! HELL, THEY ARE THE ENEMY! THOSE INFIDELS, THEY WANT OUR DESTRUCTION...” In addition, historically, whereas the Shi’a in Lebanon were mainly a rural people, Lebanon’s Sunnis were chiefly an urban community involved in administrative functions as early as under the Ottoman rule, when “they established social, cultural, and educational institutions and engaged in a variety of professions, including business and industry” (Nir, 2014, p. 55). So when the young man says, “I AM A SUNNI! WE ARE THE MOST CIVILISED! WE ARE THE BUSINESSMEN! WE ARE THE ORIGINAL CITIZENS, NOT LIKE THE RABBLE FROM THE VILLAGES AND FARMS. HOW UNCULTIVATED!” he is mirroring the socio-historical identity of these two religious sects in Lebanon.

In parallel, when the young man describes the Shi’a as “uncultivated” and caricatures their own perception of their social identity in Lebanon, saying, “I AM A SHIITE! I’VE BEEN A VICTIM TO SUNNI REGIMES FOR CENTURIES! I AM THE VICTIM HERE! YOU’RE ALL OUT TO GET US! WE ARE THE INJURED PARTY!” he is also echoing how the Shi’a have been perceived. In other words, he is alluding to the Shi’a’s history as a socially and culturally deprived and often oppressed community (Nir, 2014, p. 55).

The fourth element needed to secure an impoliteness implicature in echoic mimicry is “recognition that the speaker’s attitude to the behaviour echoed is one of rejection or disapproval” (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 161). This is clearly the case here for several reasons. First, the implied echoed behaviours are negatively framed from the

beginning as they are introduced by the indirect yet strong assertion about sectarian racism in the young man's rhetorical question, "GIRL, TELL ME, HOW BEAUTIFUL AND GREAT IS LEBANESE RACISM? HUH?" Next, though the views reflected in the caricatural utterances certainly have very strong socio-historical foundations, the fact remains they are simplistic stereotypical overgeneralisations and exaggerations that portray their so-called utterers as narrow-minded and arrogant bigots. Moreover, the impoliteness layering within many of the utterances suggests that the young man intends for the expressed stances in these utterances to be negatively evaluated or rejected by the hearer. In (2), he uses "OH, SWEET MARY!" seemingly as an expletive to mimic the speaker's shock at seeing "a musulman." He is thereby visibly but mockingly conveying a shocked, condescending, disgusted attitude, as if the speaker had just seen an inferior, vile species. The reading of 'IS THAT "a musulman", AS IN AN ARAB?!' as an insult (a personalised third-person negative reference) is reinforced by its marked form within inverted commas and by the fact that it is in French and the only word in lowercase typeface in the whole comic. The addition of a pragmatic noise of disgust ("BEURK!") and a pointed criticism ("HOW BARBARIC!") further reinforces the impoliteness interpretation. Other cases of layering are used within the other echoic behaviours such as in the use of the personalised negative vocative "YOU SUGARY, YELLOW, TASTY BASTARD"; the personalised third-person negative references "THOSE INFIDELS", "THE RABBLE"; the pointed criticism "HOW BARBARIC!"; and the negative expressive "DEATH TO YOU."

A further indicator that the young man's attitude to the behaviours he is purportedly echoing is one of disapproval can be seen in his penultimate utterance (9). To the five religious sects he had previously mentioned (Christians, Sunni Muslims, Shi'a Muslims, Druze, and Assyrians), he now juxtaposes a melon, a prune, and a pineapple. These nonsensical additions, which he significantly also pitches against one another, may serve to ridicule the prejudiced antagonistic Lebanese Sectarianism.

The young man's physical behaviours provide yet another indicator that the echoed attitudes are objectionable. For each instance he assumes an exaggerated posture and visual features highly reflective of the attitude he is echoing. In (1) he assumes a dancing posture with gestures and a facial expression suggestive of an exaggerated heartfelt fervour as he mockingly sings about his love for Lebanon and its beauty. In (4),

he adopts an earnest expression as he talks about the enemy and need for resistance, and in (7) he dons a more diminutive stance, reflective of the victim role he is complaining about.

As demonstrated then, the four conditional elements for securing an impoliteness mimicry uptake are closely met in the impoliteness event analysed. The resulting interpretation of these mimicry sequences as implicational impoliteness is therefore unmistakable. This interpretation is further confirmed and reinforced by the aggressive counter response of the woman, who is visibly offended to the point of being enraged, as her posture, gestures, and visual features indicate. She pushes and kicks the young man and insults him by insulting the “RACIST XENOPHOBES ABROAD” he claims to prefer and identify with. Her insult finds its mark, apparently, as he retaliates with a silencer (“STOP BLABBERING!”) and a violent punch.

Lastly, in terms of function, as is generally the case, the impolite mimicry examined clearly involves Social Identity Face (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 163). The young man has produced caricatured (re)presentations of purported attitudes typical of Lebanon’s main religious sects. These caricatures are visibly offensive in the exaggerated yet simplistic and bigoted behaviours they reflect among the speakers they are attributed to. Since the only characteristic identity marker of these speakers is their religious belonging, it is clearly this Social Identity Face feature that is attacked. Moreover, in this event, through their focus on hate speech (“BARBARIC”, “ENEMY”, “INFIDELS”, “RABBLE”, “UNCULTIVATED”, “HATE”, “RACIST”, “XENOPHOBES”, “DEATH TO”) and processes of othering (“I AM”, “WE ARE”, “THEY ARE”, “NOT LIKE...”), it may indeed be said that “impoliteness and aggression play a major role in the construction of identity” (Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch & Sifianou, 2017, p. 237).

Overall, the present analysis of an impolite mimicry event has attempted to reveal the intricate workings of this subtle form of implicational impoliteness. It has also uncovered the sociocultural dynamics that are at the basis of the marked echo and implied echoed behaviour. In the process, it has endeavoured to show how impoliteness and aggression play a role in the construction and delineation of social identity, particularly through othering processes, which help demarcate the in-group from the out-group. This is especially important in a country whose society is “a patchwork of ethnoreligious,

cultural, linguistic, and national associations, each with their own specific perceptions of themselves, each with their distinct identities and national narratives, and each with their unique political personalities and communal ambitions” (Salameh, 2010, pp. 259-260).

7.4 A Broader Look at Impoliteness Functions in Lebanese Comic Anthologies

As discussed in the parallel section of Chapter 6, the functions of impoliteness are overlapping, scalar concepts, and while contributing to driving the narrative, impoliteness may also have more or less prominent affective, power wielding, socially disruptive, and entertaining roles, depending on the context. These roles were discussed at length in the course of the qualitative analyses. Moreover, in a parallel move to the British qualitative analysis, a broader perspective on the functions of impoliteness in Lebanese comics is taken here. Its focus is once more the entertaining creativity at the heart of impoliteness, which, in the Lebanese context, is particularly distinctive in its use of multimodal metaphors and translanguaging, as will be shown in the examples discussed below.

Creativity and entertainment in Lebanese comics. Entertaining creative examples of impoliteness abound in the Lebanese comics. Two particularly creative instances that heavily rely on the visual aspect of comics are reproduced in Figure 53.



Saliba (2001). غطس وفطس (/dip and suffocate). *Zeroo 5*, p. 33



Saliba (2001). غطس وفطس (/dip and suffocate). *Zeroo 5*, p. 33

Figure 53. Creative Examples of Impoliteness in Lebanese Comics

The literal translation of Saliba’s (2001) first panel in Figure 53 is “IF YOU DO IT AGAIN, I WILL CRACK YOUR CAVIARS!” The communicative translation would be, “If you do it again, I will bust your balls.” The creativity of this utterance resides in its effect as a multimodal metaphor that exploits multiple conceptual, visual, and verbal mappings. The caviar-laying fish clearly understands the threat as, with gritted teeth, it tightly attempts to protect its private parts. Saliba’s (2001) second panel in Figure 53 is a delightfully creative example that involves a form-driven implicational impoliteness in drawing. The man’s writing of “TITANIC” on the woman’s expansive black clad bottom is reflective of the act of painting a moniker on a ship hull. The fact that the man is inscribing the word “Titanic,” the name of a famous sunken British liner, further reinforces this interpretation. The result is a flout of the maxim of quality as the man “labels” a human with the moniker of a ship. The offence, however, is achieved through the knowledge that Titanic was the largest liner of its time (“Titanic vs. Oasis of the Seas,” 2012). The man’s flout of the maxim of quality therefore invites the offensive implicature that the woman is extremely overweight and likely to sink.

Other creative examples in the Lebanese comics examined involve the playful mixing of languages, here Lebanese and English, which is at the basis of the impoliteness effect (Figure 54).



Figure 54. Creative Impoliteness Examples Involving Cross-Linguistic Word Play and Puns

In Abou-Mhaya’s (2000) panel (Figure 54), seeing an object in the sky, three men take turns parodying the title and catchphrase of the well known 1966 Broadway musical and

ensuing TV shows based on Superman, “It’s a Bird, It’s a Plane, It’s Superman.” But instead of the climactic “It’s Superman”, one of the men simply says, “IT’S AN AIRPLANE.” The impoliteness occurs in the second panel, when another man takes up that last repartee and responds to it by saying, “**هيدا** AIR WITHOUT PLANE”. **هيدا** here means “this/it is”. Knowing that the word “air” sounds exactly like the Lebanese word for “dick”, **أيد**, the result is an offensive personalised third-person negative assertion along the lines of ‘this is a dick without plane.’”

The second example in Figure 54, Saliba’s (2000) panel with Santa ranting about mobile companies spying on him, is particularly dependent for its impoliteness effect on a creative cross-linguistic homophone effect.

Lebanese: **يا اخوان الإريكسون والنوكيا... عم تنصتوا عليي؟؟**

Literal translation: Sisters of the Ericsson and the Nokia²⁰... You’re spying on me??

Communicative translation: You sons of a dick cunt nookie... You’re (fucking) spying on me??

Unless the reader recognises the similarity with three highly offensive Lebanese swear words (**أيد** ‘dick’, **كس** ‘cunt’, and **منيوك** ‘nookie/fucker’) in the sound combination of the names of the two mobile companies mentioned (**إريكسون** Ericsson and **نوكيا** Nokia), the impoliteness effect will be wasted. It is important to note that many creative examples of impoliteness in the Lebanese comics are based on punning and word play whose effect is bound to be somewhat reduced in the translation. As these examples, along with those of cross-linguistic impoliteness discussed in section 7.1, demonstrate, the multilingual Lebanese landscape allows for an added degree of creative flexibility in the language choices and strategies used for impoliteness in the comics.

7.5 Summary

This chapter described the findings from the qualitative analysis of selected impoliteness events from the Lebanese comic anthologies. These bring to light key aspects of impoliteness, namely power dynamics and social identity matters, along with the role of impoliteness in challenging and renegotiating them. More specifically, the

²⁰ Ericsson and Nokia were the two leading mobile phone companies in Lebanon in 2000.

impoliteness events analysed show how conflicting language attitudes may also be tied to identity and trigger impoliteness evaluations. And so language choice and translanguaging are shown to have a strategic role in achieving impoliteness, particularly in their power to bring into play issues of affiliation, ideology and social power.

Moreover, special focus was placed on revealing the workings of the kind of impoliteness that mainly functions as exploitative entertainment, which, in the Lebanese case, relies heavily on multimodal metaphors and translanguaging for its realisation and effect. Additionally, the simultaneously entertaining and social-disruptive potential of impoliteness was also examined through the heavy parodic element, mainly in the *Zerooo* anthology and to a slightly lesser degree in *La Furie des Glandeurs*. In the analysis of the impoliteness event from *Samandal*, mimicry and the role of impoliteness in identity construction were explored. Finally, the element of translanguaging, with its possible trans-, multi-, and cross-linguistic interplay was shown to further contribute to the entertaining function of impoliteness behaviours in the Lebanese comics.

Similar to Chapter 6, this qualitative chapter aimed to contribute to an in-depth understanding of impoliteness phenomena in the Lebanese comics as the three selected impoliteness events were examined in their full complexity in their forms – the linguistic and non-linguistic –, underlying dynamics, and functions. It also provided the opportunity to explore the more sophisticated forms of implicational impoliteness, particularly mimicry. Similarly, impoliteness patterns were examined as they unfurled in their fictional context. Lastly, this qualitative probing revealed the potential distinctiveness in the realisation of impoliteness in Lebanese comics. It was therefore observed that impoliteness in Lebanese comics is often driven by the sectarian and ideological tensions that are rife in the Lebanese sociolinguistic landscape. In turn, the delivered impoliteness feeds those tensions in an intricate interplay of aggression and power play that is intimately linked to group membership and social identity construction.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

In this study, I investigated impoliteness in the British and Lebanese comic anthologies in their multimodal fullness, particularly focusing on their forms, functions and contexts of use. To do this, I adopted the integrative approach to impoliteness, which allowed me the breadth and flexibility needed to explore this interactional phenomenon in such a complex and multifaceted medium in two different cultures. I then combined Culpeper's (2011a, 2015b) bottom-up model of impoliteness triggers with Forceville et al.'s (2014) stylistics of comics and Kukkonen's (2013a, p. 112) observation levels in comics to develop an analytical framework that could capture impoliteness behaviours in comics and guide their analysis. The resulting analytical framework had three overarching mode categories, characters' discourse, characters' bodies, and composition, which have sub-categories each (e.g. impoliteness triggers, gesture, typography). This grouping was intended to limit the potentially expansive and innumerable combinations of modes while still having the potential to capture occurrences of interest in the study of impoliteness in comics. Importantly too, it was sufficiently versatile to incorporate variations that arose because of the specific nature of the comic application field and the diverging cultural and linguistic contexts the data were collected in. A corresponding data collection instrument was devised to optimize the data collection and analysis processes. The data obtained were then examined through a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses, and interpretations were suggested. These are summarized in the sections below.

8.1 Research Questions Revisited

RQ1: What forms does impoliteness take in British and Lebanese comic anthologies?

The general impoliteness profile that emerged from the comic data (sections 5.2) was found to be strikingly similar in both the British and Lebanese comics, with highly comparable frequency and distribution patterns in linguistic impoliteness triggers in the two datasets. The resulting impoliteness profile broadly involves a predominance of CIF, followed closely by implicational impoliteness, and then by conventionalised

behavioural/non-verbal impoliteness. It was suggested that such a distribution caters to the nature of the comic genre. Indeed, CIF may owe their prevalence to their rather explicit, unambiguous, context-spanning nature (Culpeper, 2011a, p. 117), which allows them to better cater to the fragmented and relatively short narratives in comic anthologies. The next most frequent impoliteness category in comics, implicational impoliteness, is the more context-dependent, indirect and sophisticated form of impoliteness, and usually the site of considerable subtlety and creativity. The third and smallest category is taken up by conventionalised behavioural impoliteness, which accounts for about 10% of impoliteness in comics and rather reflects the action side of comics.

Departures from the seemingly established norm were carefully examined in the dissertation. Additionally, each of these three categories of impoliteness was looked closely into to further examine distinctive uses and patterns as well as idiosyncrasies. It was observed that the CIF recorded in both comic datasets were largely comparable in their constitutive categories. Among the CIF, insults were found to be predominant, followed by threats. Both fall under the coercive type of impoliteness and play an important part in the narrative line and character development. On the other hand, emerging thematic threads in the Lebanese CIF list, namely honour, religion, family, and violence were observed and discussed. Among the implicational impoliteness category, all three impoliteness trigger types were represented, with the form-driven type, mainly achieved through Gricean flouts, largely dominating. The context-driven type was unexpectedly found to be the second densest category, and it was suggested that its presence serves the nature of the comic narrative. In a similar vein, the lower density of convention-driven implicational impoliteness was mainly attributed to some genre-specific limitations of the comic medium.

In parallel, the multimodal contexts of the observed impoliteness behaviours were carefully examined for the non-verbal aspects that were believed to carry meaning potential in impoliteness contexts. This is a particular strength of the present research because while the linguistic and prosodic aspects of impoliteness have received some scholarly attention as previously pointed out, “the interaction of verbal, prosodic, and kinesic actions in context and the focus on cross-modal emotive behaviour as a means by

which politeness is negotiated” has been rather neglected (Arndt & Janney, 1987, pp. 248, 377 cited in Culpeper 2011a, pp. 14-5). Many salient non-verbal features were observed among the characters engaging in impoliteness behaviours following similar patterns in both datasets. These particularly include commonalities in the non-verbal features observed among the offenders as opposed to those observed among the offended or the target(s) of the impoliteness.

All the distinctive impoliteness-related non-verbal features were examined for frequency of occurrence to gauge whether any of them were dense enough (that is, whether they occur in more than 50% of the impoliteness behaviours recorded) to justify the suggestion that they have become conventionalised for impoliteness. The findings are summarised in Table 10.

Table 10
Density of the Categories of Distinctive Non-Verbal Features in the Panels Containing Impoliteness

Dataset		British comics Raw number (% in 137 panels)	Lebanese comics Raw number (% in 298 panels)
Facial expressions	Brows (contracted or raised)	128 (93.4%)	230 (77.2%)
	Eyes (wide open or down and close together)	70 (51.1%)	199 (66.8%)
	Mouth (wide open, one corner raised, or tightened lips)	97 (70.8%)	229 (76.8%)
Posture (head turned or tilted upwards, spine upright, forward movement, turning away, etc.)		81 (59.12%)	270 (90.6%)
Gestures (pointing, closed fists, hands on hips, hands in pockets, hands behind back, arms/hands raised or crossed, etc.)		82 (59.9%)	219 (73.5%)
Composition	Marked panels and balloons	20 (14.6%)	77 (25.8%)
	Marked frames and angles	14 (10.2%)	37 (12.4%)
	Marked typography	127 (92.7%)	142 (47.7%)
	Pictograms and pictorial runes	44 (32.1%)	121 (40.6%)

As can be seen in Table 10, all facial expressions categories, those involving brows, eyes and mouth movements occur in the context of impoliteness behaviours with a frequency

above the 50% adopted cut off point. So do postures and gestures and typography. Particularly dense (>70%) in the vicinity of impoliteness behaviours in both British and Lebanese comics are distinctive brow (93.4% and 77.2% respectively) and mouth movements (70.8% and 76.8%). These non-verbal features may then convincingly be said to have become conventionalised non-verbal indicators for impoliteness in comics. Among them, typography is in fact the only compositional comic-specific feature that made the cut-off point. This is probably so because of its capacity to suggest prosody and emotions (sections 3.3.3 & 3.3.7) – both of which are highly important in impoliteness contexts. The next most frequent compositional comic-specific features, pictograms and pictorial runes, were also frequently observed in the vicinity of impoliteness (with a density of 32.1% in the British data and 40.6% in the Lebanese data), but not with the same density as typography.

For the most part, that is, except for the behavioural category previously discussed, the non-verbal forms recorded in Table 10 were found to accompany the linguistic impoliteness triggers. They therefore seem to be part of the necessary contexts that constitute impoliteness behaviours. In fact, a number of impoliteness occurrences would have gone easily undetected had it not been for these non-verbal clues. One example can be seen in Figure 14 in the fourth panel: “SID MAN! DO YER NOT NAA NOWT?” ANY MORE THAN THREE SHAKES IS A WANK!” The question itself, “SID MAN! DO YER NOT NAA NOWT?” would be totally innocuous in a different context. However, in this particular antagonistic context and with the non-verbal clues accompanying its delivery (furrowed brows, glaring, and a gaping mouth), it clearly needs to be read as an unpalatable question with the offensive insinuation that Sid cannot possibly be that ignorant or naïve. This brief example further illustrates the importance of a multimodal study of impoliteness. It also lends support to Culpeper’s (2011a, pp. 136-7) position that while there are some context-spanning conventionalised behaviours which in and by themselves elicit an impoliteness evaluation in a given culture, other non-verbal behaviours that may be associated with impoliteness events rather have a rhetorical function that serves to anchor the impoliteness uptake of the verbal behaviour. In other words, non-verbal interactional resources, be they vocal, bodily or facial, contribute to, rather than produce the impoliteness effect. In fact, they aggravate, intensify, and/or

amplify it (Brown & Pioto, 2017; Calero, 2005; Culpeper, 2011a; Fein & Kasher, 1996), thereby often disambiguating the potentially equivocal reading of (the illocutionary force of) a given interaction. It is also important to reiterate that these non-verbal behaviours do not single-handedly achieve that effect, but rather occur in clusters and specific combinations that reinforce an impoliteness uptake.

On the other hand, some impoliteness-related features were found to occur particularly densely in only one of the two datasets and therefore seemed to invite a special impoliteness reading in light of the related socio-cultural context. These were discussed in detail in Chapter 5, particularly in sections 5.4 and 5.5. These rather distinctive non-verbal impoliteness aspects have been summarised in the table below (Table 11), along with the corresponding Fisher exact test p-value for a quick reminder of the scale of difference between the two datasets. A concise recapitulation of the potential significance of the main differences also follows Table 11.

Table 11

Distinctiveness in Impoliteness-Related Features and Aspects in Only One of the Two Countries' Datasets

British comics	Lebanese comics
More raised brows among the offended (p-value = 0.01)	More raised brows among the offenders (p-value = 0.008)
	More glares among the offenders (p-value = 0.000)
Rather more subtle open mouth depictions of offenders	Rather conspicuous open mouth depictions of offenders
No pictorial runes around/out of characters' mouth	Pictorial runes around/out of characters' mouth (p-value = 0.002)
Mouth movements come second	Mouth movements almost as dense as brow movements
More bold and bigger size in typeface (p-value = 0.000)	
More single mouth corner raised (p-value = 0.012)	More pictorial runes around characters' head/body (p-value = 0.031)
	More silencers (p-value = 0.010)
	More stiff/upright postures generally (p-value = 0.000)
	More stiff/upright postures among the offended (p-value = 0.029)
	More salient postures in total (p-value = 0.010)
More hands/arms raised or outstretched among the offended (p-value = 0.000)	More hands behind back among offenders (p-value = 0.000)
	Mockery most frequent among behavioural impoliteness
	More condescensions (p-value = 0.035)
	More gestures among the offenders (p-value = 0.032)
More pragmatic noises of surprise or shock among the offended	Pragmatic noises of surprise or shock among the offended almost as dense as noises of mockery and laughter
	More deviations in panels and balloons (p-value = 0.036)
Mainly lexical onomatopoeia, frequent	Mainly non-lexical onomatopoeia, infrequent

The discussion in sections 5.4 and 5.5 suggests that the distinctive frequency of non-verbal aspects that carry meaning potential in impoliteness contexts in only one of the countries' datasets (Table 11) may be particularly revealing of certain socio-cultural aspects and patterns in the related culture. For instance, the density of the rigid, upright

posture, particularly among the offended characters in the Lebanese data, may be seen as one particular sign of the attempt to preserve one's pride, which can be intimately linked to the prized value of honour in the Lebanese culture (Harb, 2010, p. 8). Also generally speaking, there seems to be more aggressiveness and expressive emotional intensity in the Lebanese contexts of impoliteness than in the British ones, especially among offenders. This can be seen among offending characters in a higher density of the following:

- glares, cueing aggressiveness and a dominant stance
- pictorial runes around a character's head, or body, cueing strong emotion, including extreme outrage and anger
- stiff postures, cueing a dominant, unbending stance
- hands behind the back, cueing intense emotions, typically anger
- gestures, cueing emotional agitation and expressiveness
- noises of mockery, cueing a dominant, condescending stance.

Another aspect which emerges from the distinctive frequency of certain non-verbal aspects of impoliteness in Table 11, which seems characteristic of the Lebanese impoliteness contexts is vocal intensity (section 5.5). Indeed, the exclusive pictorial runes around the offending characters' mouth, the more conspicuous depictions of the offenders' mouth, along with the fact that mouth movements are almost as dense as the leading brow movements in the Lebanese dataset, all help cue a certain vocal intensity that may suggest shouting or screaming. In fact, the presence of silencers in the Lebanese data in the exact same frequency as threats, the second most dense category among CIF in both datasets may be associated with this emerging tendency for emotionally charged, aggressive vocal intensity.

In contrast, the distinctive non-verbal aspects of impoliteness in the British data seem to suggest more reserve, subtlety, and poise in the realisation of impoliteness. Indeed, the depictions of open mouths in British comics are much more subtle compared to those in Lebanese comics, there are no pictorial runes around those mouths, and mouth movements rank a good 22.6% behind brow movements. Instead, prosodic emphasis and loudness are expressed in a bigger, bolder typeface. Though unmistakably cueing vocal and prosodic intensity and emphasis, this latter depiction mode is decidedly a more subtle

way of indicating greater volume than a gaping mouth with a prominent tongue and teeth and haloed droplets or spikes coming out of it. Additionally, as discussed in section 5.5, in the British data, feelings of disapproval or shocked outrage and of contempt are more frequently expressed in the rather subtle raised brows and the raised corner of the mouth. In a similar vein, prominent gestures and postures, typically cueing expressiveness, are significantly less frequent than in the Lebanese data. All these combined differences seem to be signs cueing greater reserve and restraint, which are important traditional British traits (Fox, 2004, pp. 52, 56) often associated with composure or poise, an important type of face-work according to Goffman (1967, pp. 12-13, 222). Lastly, two non-verbal aspects in the British impoliteness data reflect the apparent British inclination to avoid conflict among the offended. These are the frequent raised brows and raised/outstretched arms and/or hands. While both of these non-verbal features may indicate disbelief, outrage, shock or denial, they are also rather composed and subdued forms of reacting, rather suggestive of a desire to avoid confrontation.

On a different note, the answer to the first research question about the forms impoliteness takes in British and Lebanese comic anthologies cannot overlook the degree of creativity that was noted in the realisation of impoliteness in the comics observed (throughout the thesis but also more specifically in sections 6.4 & 7.4). This was found to be mainly achieved through multiple strategies such as layering, intertextuality, multimodal metaphors, translanguaging, marked semantic and graphological combinations, allusions, and puns. In fact, this creativity took on certain distinctiveness in its realisation in each of the British and Lebanese comics, particularly through the use of allusions and puns in the former and multimodal metaphors and multilingual amalgamations in the latter.

RQ2: What functions does impoliteness serve in British and Lebanese comic anthologies?

Key roles of impoliteness -- affective, power wielding, socially disruptive, and entertaining -- were discussed broadly in section 2.5 and further examined in depth in the comic contexts in Chapters 6 and 7. These functions were shown to be highly context-sensitive, overlapping and scalar. Particular focus was placed on the highly entertaining

creativity in impoliteness, which is enhanced by the greater affordances of the multiple modes in comics.

Also dominant in the data are the impoliteness functions related to power dynamics and social identities. This is mainly the result of the explicit as well as implicit social criticism, satire, and parody that abound in the comics examined, drawing attention to notions of appropriateness, dominant ideologies and social organisation. These are often exposed, challenged, and/or held up to ridicule through their exaggerated and subversive handling. Impoliteness in this context was shown to be a resource used to challenge social organisation and negotiate social identity and power relations within the existing dominant ideology and power hierarchy through the exercise of power (Locher & Bousfield, 2008, p. 8; section 2.5). At the same time, it provides entertainment and considerable affective comic relief since major socio-cultural issues that might affect the reader are mercilessly lampooned while often handled with wit and humour.

The study of Lebanese comics in particular gave a glimpse into the distinctive role impoliteness may play in multilingual contexts. More particularly, language choice was carefully looked into and analysed in the emotion-laden contexts of impoliteness (sections 5.3, 7.2 & 7.3). Particular analytical focus was also given to the type of impoliteness that involves a defiant or non-cooperative choice of language (section 7.2). Similarly, impoliteness brought about by sociolinguistic tensions that are highly revealing of deeper ideological conflicts was discussed (section 7.3). In fact, underpinning this whole complex interplay of language use and impoliteness in multilingual contexts is the role of language as a key marker of social identity, particularly with regard to indexing group membership.

An additional function of impoliteness that I would tentatively add at this final stage of the research is that, in addition to advancing the plot and contributing to character development (section 2.6), impoliteness may confer authenticity and credibility to fiction. The underlying assumption is that comic dialogue may convincingly be seen in the same way McIntyre (2016, pp. 436-7) sees dramatic dialogue, that is, “hardly ever realistic, but (it is) often credible; that is, it is often believable as a replica of non-fictional speech,” largely owing to the deployment of certain stylistic devices. It may therefore be suggested that impoliteness may be one of those pragma-stylistic strategies that help

achieve that illusion of realism and credibility and therefore authenticity in fictional prose. Indeed, Culpeper and Holmes (2013, p. 169) note that impoliteness is usually associated with “the use of language that is unscripted (not predictable), unstandardized (not conforming to prestige dialects or styles) and personal (not selected for a public audience),” which may also encourage a certain feel of authenticity. In fact, some of the observations made in comic impoliteness seem to reflect those aspects that confer authenticity to discourse. These include the dominant use of the spoken colloquial language for impoliteness in the Lebanese data (section 5.3), the unedited spelling mistakes in the British data (examples of which can be found in Figure 45 in section 6.4), and the use of vernacular and often vulgar language. Furthermore, Jefferson et al. (1987, p. 160) posit, “frankness, rudeness, crudeness, profanity, obscenity, etc., are indices of relaxed, unguarded, spontaneous, i.e. intimate interaction” (cited in Haugh & Bousfield, 2012, p. 1107). It is therefore suggested that by featuring these indices of authentic interaction, impoliteness brings to works of fiction the impression that the presented interaction is a genuine, credible (re)presentation, unfiltered and unrefined.

RQ3: To what extent does Culpeper’s impoliteness model (2011a/2015b) account for impoliteness in British and Lebanese comics?

A secondary objective of this research was to test the applicability and flexibility of Culpeper’s (2011a/2015b) impoliteness model in a different context of use and medium. In fact, this model has proved very reliable in its ability to account for impoliteness in the medium under discussion, the fictional multimodal genre of comics. Indeed, it has effectively contributed to capturing the impoliteness composition potentially characteristic of the comic genre as detailed in the thesis. Furthermore, it has also done so across two datasets from two different countries and cultures, knowing that one of these, the Lebanese context, is very different from the British one. In fact, this is not the first study that successfully builds on Culpeper’s (2011a/2015b) impoliteness model to study impoliteness in a different medium and in non-British contexts²¹. Even more notably, applying the rationale informing the adopted impoliteness model enabled

²¹ For instance, Kleinke and Bös (2015, p.53), who studied impoliteness in online discussion fora in both the UK and Germany, report no difficulty in using the impoliteness model in question.

the pinpointing of the distinctiveness in the realisation of impoliteness in the comics of the two countries. It has also incidentally resulted in the suggested addition of one sub-category under the CIF category of insults, that of personalised third-person negative assertions in the hearing of the target. Lastly, the richness of the data and interpretive leads that have emerged are a further strong indicator that the adopted impoliteness model, along with the theoretical and corresponding analytical frameworks that revolve around it, aptly captured and guided the analysis of the impoliteness behaviours in the comics of the two countries.

8.2 Limitations and Future Research

The present research has investigated impoliteness phenomena in six British and Lebanese comic anthologies. The observations, findings, and suggested interpretations have been made in relation to the comics examined. I have taken great care not to extrapolate findings to impoliteness phenomena in general. Nevertheless, it would seem reasonable to suppose that the regularities and patterns observed in five hundred and one comics may be suggestive of a broader impoliteness profile in comic anthologies. Similarly, it may be sensible to assume that impoliteness aspects that are found to be prevalent in five hundred and eighty-one impoliteness behaviours in the comics examined may also be indicative of a larger pattern in the realisation of impoliteness in comics. This is why the observations and findings discussed in this research may be suggestive of similar phenomena in comic impoliteness and of certain cultural preferences in each of the comics of Britain and Lebanon. Additionally, on the bases laid out in the discussion of impoliteness in fiction (section 2.6), there are likely to be significant degrees of similarity between the impoliteness contexts, forms and functions observed in the data and those that inspire them in real life.

Certain limitations encountered in the course of this research need to be taken into consideration. One such limitation is linked to the artwork and composition in comics. On the one hand, comic authors may opt for artistic and compositional choices that may not clearly expose a character's facial features, gestures and body postures (as in Blann's "Things We Had," for instance). On the other hand, comic writers and artists necessarily have individual styles and varying degrees of craftsmanship. Individual works

cannot therefore be the basis for broad generalization, nor do existing hypotheses and claims apply to all comic works. For instance, while the depiction of the aggressive open mouth is reported to be generally conspicuous in Lebanese comics, it is not so in Lebanese comic writer Standjofski's more subtle style. However, the number of comics this research builds upon enables the observation of patterns and distinctive features over a large set of data, and so it may help bypass this limitation.

Another limitation is related to the limited scope of the present dissertation. This necessarily entailed leaving out further analytical glimpses into aspects of impoliteness, which, though quite revealing, did not have an immediate bearing on the study's aims. These include the qualitative analysis of examples of non-impoliteness in comics, particularly that of banter, and the analysis of further noticeable examples of creativity in the realisation of impoliteness. Similarly left out, also for reasons of scope, were an analysis of the impoliteness metalanguage in Lebanese as well as an analysis of a case of pragmatic failure resulting from the transfer of the analyst's own cultural norms in the impoliteness interpretation of a particular communicative event.

This last point is in fact tied to yet another limitation of the present study, the one that has to do with my own cultural background and personal sensibilities, which, no matter the precautions, are inevitably bound to have some bearing on my impoliteness data interpretation. Nevertheless, I went to great lengths to limit the effect of my personal assumptions and biases, including an extremely thorough scrutiny of the comics' background, the background of the events mentioned in them, and the terms used. As explained in section 3.5, I also interviewed Lebanese comic writers to gauge their own take on the realisation of impoliteness in comics. Finally, I also double-checked ambiguous cases with colleagues and a number of young people (sections 4.5 & 4.6).

An additional partial limitation of this research is in fact tied to the translation and analysis of impoliteness in Lebanese. Despite all the care that was taken in providing literal and communicative translations as well as clarifying descriptions after double-checking all translations and interpretations with a translator, an Arabic teacher, and young Lebanese people (section 4.4.3), part of the vigour and impact of the impoliteness in the Lebanese language and in the multilingual combinations was necessarily lost in the translation. Indeed the nuances, cultural connotations and subtleties, and humorous

undertones are very hard to replicate with the same vitality, zest, and pragmatic effect in a different language and cultural context.

One last identified limitation of this study is related to a certain degree of circularity and redundancy in both the impoliteness model adopted (section 2.4.2) and the multimodal approach more generally (Thomas, 2014). However, as discussed in that section, these actually contribute towards achieving multimodal cohesion, disambiguating meaning, and enhancing the cognitive and pragma-stylistic uptake of the message.

On the other hand, areas for future investigation may include further investigation of the relationship between language use and impoliteness among multilinguals and more particularly in translanguaging practices. Another research lead that emerges from this study and that may be promising in the richness of conceptual mappings it may involve would be a broader study of impoliteness realisation in multimodal metaphors. Additionally, an exploration of impoliteness patterns in longer comic narratives may provide room for comparison with those in the shorter comic entries explored in this study. Furthermore, the role of impoliteness in conferring authenticity and credibility to fiction may be another avenue for future research. Lastly, a more thorough and broader exploration of conventionalised non-verbal or behavioural impoliteness would undoubtedly greatly benefit impoliteness studies, especially if these are done across cultures. This would entail the possibility of broadening the concept and corresponding list of CIF to include conventionalized non-verbal impoliteness, very much in line with Culpeper et al. (2017, p.9) definition of a conventionalized impoliteness formula as “a regularly occurring bundle of language or a non-verbal sign in which context-specific offensive effects are encoded to a degree.”

8.3 Final Word

Very little work has looked at the non-verbal aspect of impoliteness so far, hence the originality of what I have attempted. McIntyre and Bousfield (2016, p. 78) have recently noted the likeliness that “the development of (im)politeness theory from a stylistic perspective will involve adapting analytical methods to take account of multimodal texts.” This is exactly what I have proposed in this study. The analytical framework adopted, which builds on Culpeper’s (2011a, 2015b) seminal impoliteness

model and comic stylistics, had a multimodal sweep that enabled it to take on board both the linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of the interactional behaviours examined, while accommodating the comic-specific stylistic devices potentially important in a presentation of impoliteness. Additionally, the mixed-methods approach adopted made it possible to obtain a sense of the regularity as well as of the variation in impoliteness realisation in comics. This has led to rich, detailed, and informed interpretations.

The data collected and analysed have revealed an impoliteness pattern potentially characteristic of comic anthologies. They have also revealed which non-verbal aspects, both embodied and compositional, occur with a density that may suggest that they have become conventionalised for impoliteness. It is therefore suggested that there is a strong possibility that in the appropriate context and with the proper combination these salient visual features could be considered strong non-verbal impoliteness indicators. In fact, the combination of these meaning carrying non-verbal aspects contributes toward a multimodal cohesion that pieces the contextual clues together and invites a clearer pragmatic reading of the utterances, potentially bolstering an impoliteness interpretation.

In addition to a better understanding of the multimodal realisation of impoliteness in comics, this study has also provided the opportunity to explore in detail the more sophisticated and context-tied forms of impoliteness that make up implicational impoliteness, including mimicry. Moreover, it has enabled the exploration of certain aspects of impoliteness theory that were flagged for further exploration in the literature, notably the interplay between impoliteness, aggression, and identity construction and impoliteness patterning. The rich, multifaceted creativity in impoliteness realisation in comics was also discussed. Also as previously discussed, a noteworthy aspect that emerged from this study, one that is certainly deserving of further exploration, is the link between language use and impoliteness in multilingual contexts.

Equally revealing was the probing into the functions impoliteness seems to serve in the examined comics. And so, besides its contribution to character and plot development in the comic narratives, impoliteness has been proven to play affective, power wielding, socially disruptive, and entertaining roles – all highly context-sensitive, interconnected and scalar functions. Power dynamics were found to be particularly

prevalent in impoliteness events, with an inevitably direct bearing on the power wielding, socially disruptive, and exploitative entertaining functions of impoliteness in comics.

The discussion above suggests that the approach adopted was valuable in revealing the richness and complexity of the impoliteness events studied. While this may not be totally surprising for impoliteness in British comics, it is more of a revelation for impoliteness in the Lebanese context. While it is true that Culpeper's impoliteness framework has been applied successfully in the study of impoliteness in several non-British cultures, this was the first attempt of its kind to apply it to the Lebanese context. And it did reveal a wealth of information on the Lebanese culture and the sociocultural and linguistic interactional dynamics at play in it.

Like many others before me, I hope to have shown "just how complex, multi-layered, and multifaceted language, and especially impoliteness, can be" (Culpeper & Hardaker, 2017, p. 220). Of course, much remains to be studied and uncovered. Nonetheless, it is hoped that this research has contributed to a better understanding of impoliteness in British and Lebanese comics, and that it has offered a glimpse into cross-cultural understandings and the broader evolving views of impoliteness.

Appendix A

The Linguistic Landscape in Lebanon

Lebanon has a multilingual linguistic landscape where Standard Arabic, the vernacular Lebanese, French, and English intermingle. Armenian is spoken too, but its use is generally restricted to the Armenian community.

Standard Arabic is a classical written language whose oral use in Lebanon is restricted to news bulletins, formal political speeches, and certain TV programmes (mainly addressed to an Arab audience). By contrast, Lebanese is the colloquial spoken dialect, also referred to as “dérij”. Some Lebanese nationalists like Said Akl vehemently reject the notion that Lebanese is an Arabic dialect, calling it “a scandalous misconception and a hackneyed oversimplification concocted to serve Arabism” (Salameh, 2010, p. 198). In fact, up until the Islamic conquest in the 7th century, the Lebanese spoke an Aramaic dialect (a Semitic language) whose imprint remains in the lexis, morphology, and mostly the syntax of the modern dialect of Lebanon (Frayha, 1973/1995, p. b-c). Nevertheless, the fact remains that today Lebanese and most other local Arabic dialects are for the most part mutually intelligible, mainly in their lexis. Therefore, though they do considerably differ, colloquial Lebanese and Arabic still have a lot in common. A moderate, yet authoritative professor of Semitic languages, Anis Frayha (1973/1995), refers to Lebanese as a distinctive local modern Arabic dialect in the introduction to his 195-page “*A Dictionary of Non-Classical Vocables in the Spoken Arabic of Lebanon.*” Still, the very existence of the need for a dictionary of Lebanese testifies to the divergence between these two language varieties.

An important aspect of vernacular Lebanese is the fact that for a long time, it was merely a spoken language. Attempts to encode it in writing have recently been on the rise and are done in either Arabic or Roman script, but they have been idiosyncratic rather than conventionalised. The Arabic script encoding includes an attempt at approximating the spoken sounds, which cannot be fully replicated in Standard Arabic, and so the decoding is often a laborious playing out of sounds to decipher the intended spoken words.

Conversely, the use of the Roman script could be likened to a transliteration process, which also has its challenges because of the lack of agreement on a convention¹ to reproduce some distinctive Arabic sounds (e.g. ح/h, خ/x, ز/z, ق/q) and some defining sound qualities that cannot be easily replicated in the common Roman alphabet (e.g. dark versus clear consonants and vowel length). Consequently, this type of encoding is rendered rather freely, often by substituting the distinctive Arabic letter sounds with similar-looking numbers (e.g. 7 for ح, 5 for خ, 3 for ز and 2 for ء).

French was introduced in Lebanon in the wake of the protective role of the French towards the Christians of Lebanon under Ottoman rule as early as the 16th century. The importance of French grew with the religious and education missionaries in the 19th century and then under the French mandate, when it was established as a national official language alongside Arabic. Though this official status was dropped at Lebanon's independence in 1943, French is still an integral part of the Lebanese linguistic landscape. Moreover, "French in Lebanon is endowed with political, religious and cultural connotations that bear directly on questions of the conceptualisation of national identity" (Suleiman, 2003, pp. 205-206). These attitudes seem to be still deeply ingrained among the Lebanese as research conducted by Ghaleb and Joseph in 1998 in the Greater Beirut area revealed that about half the respondents still closely associate French with the Christians (Joseph, 2004, pp. 205-6). Lastly, speaking French in Lebanon still reeks of a certain privileged socio-cultural upbringing or background, as it is still perceived by some as the prerogative of the "local socio-political elites" (Albirini, 2016, p. 41; Joseph, 2004).

In contrast, speaking English is devoid of such historical and ideological associations in Lebanon and is mainly motivated by its global status and role in the economic, scientific, communication and political world (Albirini, 2016, p. 41). In fact, the post-war introduction of trilingualism (Arabic, French, and English) in the national curricula means that Arabic-French bilingualism may no longer be a Christian identity marker the way it used to be for the Lebanese since the Ottoman period (Joseph, 2004, pp. 194, 197). Joseph (2004, p. 204) even talks about "a linguistic realignment" in recent language identity patterns in Lebanon with the rise of English and parallel decline of French. Research by Harb (2010, p. 13) does indeed prove that English has generally overtaken French among the Lebanese youth.

¹ For instance, by following the transliteration format proposed by the International Journal of

Appendix B
Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Interview Guide		
<p>Interviewer: Me (L. Mourad Sakr) Respondents: TBC Timing: TBC Expected duration: 30-45 min Location: TBC Conditions: The interview will be recorded (provided the respondent gives her/his consent)</p>		
Aims		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To gain a better understanding of the Lebanese comics scene in its publications, genres and sub-genres, distinctive features, development phases, and public perception/reception ▪ To gain some insights into the distinctiveness of the Lebanese comics (if any) in comparison to European (specifically the British), American as well as Arabic comics ▪ To be more aware of the present Lebanese comics scene and the opportunities for data collection ▪ To gauge the respondents' perception of the representation of interpersonal dynamics and impoliteness in Lebanese comics 		
Interview		
Introduction to the interview	Ethical considerations	Introducing myself and my research
		Reminder of the purpose of the interview and information about the interview itself
		Confirmation of consent to record the interview and use the data in my research
	Information about the interviewee	Nationality, mother tongue, reason/origin of interest in comics (warm-up)
Topic 1	Subtopics	
Lebanese comics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief overview of the history of Lebanese comics • State of Lebanese comics today • Particular Lebanese sub-genres – if any – and what they are • Distinctiveness (if any) compared to Arab comics and European and American ones • Current publications • Local talent • Your own niche/contribution 	
	<p>Translations versus originals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Originality (even of translations) • Perception / Value • Impact (To what extent can translations of comics be considered to reflect and shape social practices and interactions in the Lebanese society?) 	

Topic 2	Subtopics	
Readership/ Audience	Children’s comics versus adult comics. Important distinction or blurry lines? Where do Lebanese comics tend to stand? Why does that seem to be the case?	
Topic 3	Subtopics	
Representati on of interactions in comics	How truly reflective of existing practices do you consider the representation of social interactions in Lebanese comics? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do dialogues in comics mirror what is going on/what might plausibly be expected to go on in real life in Lebanon? Do some of the key constructs that govern social interactions (e.g. identity, power, ideology) seem to somehow surface in comics? Why or why not? And if yes, then how so? 	
	What are the opportunities for these representations in comics? Their limitations?	
	In your view, how are these representations different from representations of social interactions in other literary forms?	
	What does that imply both in terms of opportunities and limitations?	
	Do you feel that comics have a higher incidence of “impoliteness” in them than other literary forms? What could this be due to in your opinion?	
	Does this seem to be the case in Lebanese comics? Why or why not?	
	If this is the case, then what form does this impoliteness tend to appear in?	
	In your opinion, what role(s) does it play?	
In your view, how might this “impoliteness” compare to its Arabic, European, and American counterparts?		
Additional topics	Subtopics	Questions
	Clarifications	Any points that might still need clarification
	Elaboration/additions	Is there anything else about Lebanese comics which you consider meaningful and which we haven’t talked about?
		Would you like to add anything?
Remaining concerns	Do you have any questions or concerns?	
Thank you		
Post Interview		
Fill out the cover sheet designed for that purpose		

Appendix C

Details of the Selection Rationale From Within the *Viz* Annuals

A close reading of the literature around *Viz*, namely in Gravett and Standbury's (2006) *Great British Comics*, Chapman's (2011) *British Comics*, Sabin's (2003) *Adult Comics*, Donald's (2005) *Rude Kids: The Inside Story of Viz*, and Tait's essay on *Viz* in *Rude Britannia* (2007), reveals two potentially important selection criteria.

The first selection criterion that emerges from the literature around *Viz* is character-related and can mainly be attributed to *Viz* creator, Chris Donald (2005, p. 130) himself. He identifies two character types within the *Viz* comics: Parodies of recognizable social types/stereotypes that he refers to as Category A characters (The category with the biggest number and most enduring titles), and parodies of British children's comics that he refers to as Category B characters. Tait (2007, p. 86) further identifies a third category in between those two, with "a character whose primary role is to be incongruously rude, by behaving badly in a way that ill befits his or her status, particularly by swearing." I will be referring to this last category as Category C. So the first argument is that, for a fairly representative sample, comics spanning the three character types should be selected from the two *Viz* annuals.

In parallel, these same readings reveal that there are characters that have come to be tightly linked to *Viz* in people's minds. For example, Roger Mellie – The Man on the Telly – is described by Chapman (2011, p. 218) as "a regular favourite", and Sid the Sexist and The Fat Slags as "perhaps the definitive *Viz* characters" (ibid., p. 219). This seems to echo *Viz* creator Chris Donald (2005, p. 137), who, upon recalling the introduction of The Fat Slags in his book, says that these two characters, Sandra Burke and Tracey Tustall, "were soon to become household names, as well as popular playground insults (...) [and] over the years San and Tray have become arguably the comic's most popular characters. Their name has certainly become synonymous with *Viz*."

To Sid the Sexist and the Fat Slags, Tait (2007, p. 82) also adds Roger Mellie the Man on the Telly and Buster Gonad and His Unfeasibly Large Testicles, as “*Viz*’s best known characters.” He also mentions Johnny Fartpants alongside Buster Gonad as “the classic examples” of Category B comics (Tait, 2007, p. 84). Lastly, he states that the expression “Fnarr! Fnarr!” that became popular in *Viz*’s Finbarr Saunders and His Double Entendres “has entered the national consciousness” (ibid., p. 82). This is indeed true as *Fnarr Fnarr* figures among the “colourful slang and colloquial terms” in the *Oxford English Dictionary* March 2011 update, which includes an explicit reference to *Viz*: “*fnarr fnarr* int. and adj (a representation of a lecherous snigger popularized in the comic magazine *Viz* and used adjectivally to denote crude sexual innuendo)” (Martin, 2011).

In my selection rationale from within *Viz*, I therefore propose to select the comics at the intersection between popularity as documented in the literature and character representativeness, that is, spanning the three category types.

Appendix D

Reference Indicators for the Non-Verbal Modes in the Adopted Framework

BODY MOVEMENTS

EMBLEMS

The "OK" sign - the "thumbs up/down" gesture for good and bad respectively - the "hello", "goodbye" hand gestures/movements - the head nods for "yes" and "no" - The eye-wink signal for the message of agreement ("right on," "sure") - flirtation ("will you?")

- Emblems or gestural emblems (McNeill, 2014, pp.76-7) (McNeill, 2014, pp. 76-7)
- A gestural emblem is "like a word of spoken language in that it is *repeatable, listable, and reportable*"; it is also "**culturally defined and maintained**" (McNeill, 2014, p. 77, italics as in original).
- A number of gestural emblems (but not all) are **metaphoric**, as like in thumbs up/down gesture where up is good and down is bad. (McNeill, 2014, p. 93)
- Emblems are highly revealing of the normative practices in place in a given community, thereby providing "**a window onto value**" (McNeill, 2014, p. 93)
- For the bird gesture cross-culturally, see Bergen (2016, pp. 54, 60-1)
- Some **facial signals** are **emblematic** (Ekman and Friesen, 2003, p. 12) "we utilize the term *emblem* to describe signals the meaning of which is very specific, the **nonverbal equivalent of a common word or phrase** . . . The meaning is understood by everyone in a culture or subculture" (Ekman and Friesen, 2003, p. 12)

SYMBOLS: Symbolic postures (pleading, worshipping...) & symbolic gestures may be subject to regional differences (McCloud, 2006, p. 112)

EMOTIONS AND RELATED BODY/FACE MOVEMENT PREDICTORS

[Physiognomy → "the theory that what you look like represents your character" (Gravett, 2005, p. 11)]

Sadness → Inner Brow Raise/Brow Furrow/Lip Corner Depressor ("Mapping expressions to emotions," n.d.) / [Drooping upper eyelids/losing focus in eyes/slight pulling down of lip corners] ("Facial expression pictures chart," 2016)

Surprise → Inner Brow Raise/Brow Raise/Eye Widen/Jaw Drop ("Mapping expressions to emotions," n.d.) / [eyebrows raised/eyes widened/mouth open] ("Facial expression pictures chart," 2016)

→ "There is a distinctive appearance in each of the three facial areas during surprise. The eyebrows are raised, the eyes are opened wide, and the jaw drops open, parting the lips" (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p.37)

→ "Jaw drops, eyebrows shoot up and eyes widen. Wrinkles would be formed in the middle of the forehead and the mouth would be open" (Raah, 2015, p. 67)

Embarrassment → Non-verbal displays of embarrassment include gaze aversion; shifty eyes; speech disturbances; face touches; nervous/controlled smile; downward gaze and head movements; rigid, slouched, forward leaning posture; and blushing (Keltner, 1997/2005, p. 134).

- Shame** → clenched teeth, closed fists, arms hugging the body, spine upright, and rigid neck muscles “to deal with disapproval” (Eisner, 2008, p. 62)
 → “defeat or shame features the body bent downward” (Frank & Shaw, 2016, p. 51)
- Resentment** → “averted, angry gaze, mouth closed tightly” (McCloud, 2006, p. 90)
- Disgust** → Nose Wrinkle/Upper Lip Raise (“Mapping expressions to emotions,” n.d.)
 → “The upper lip is raised, while the lower lip may be raised or lowered; the nose is wrinkled; the lower eyelids are pushed up, and the eyebrow is lowered” (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 68)
- Contempt** → “Contempt is shown by a variation on the closed-lips disgust mouth. . . slight pressing of the lips and a raising of the corners on one side/upper lip is raised on one side, exposing the teeth. This adds the scornful, sneering note to the expression/a milder form of contempt, with a barely noticeable lifting of the upper lip on one side of her face... (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 71)
 “Contempt is a close relative of disgust, but it differs in some ways. . . in contempt there is an element of condescension toward the object of contempt. Disdainful in disliking the persons or their actions, you feel superior (usually morally) to them” (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 67)
- Scorn** → “a variant of contempt, in which the object of contempt is derided for his failings, often with some element of humour which amuses the person showing the scorn and hurts the recipient” (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 67)
- Anger** → “Blood pressure increases, the face may redden, the veins on the forehead and neck may become more apparent. Breathing changes, the body may become more erect, the muscles tense, and there may be a slight movement forward toward the offender” (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 80)
 → Brow furrow/Lid Tighten/Eye Widen/Chin Raise/Mouth Open/Lip Suck (“Mapping expressions to emotions,” n.d.) / [eyebrows down and together/eyes glare/narrowing of the lips] (“Facial expression pictures chart,” 2016)
 → “The eyebrows are lowered and drawn together, the eyelids are tensed, and the eye appears to stare in a hard fashion. The lips are either tightly pressed together or parted in a square shape” (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 82)
 → “One of the most important clues to anger is (the thinning of the lips)... the lips become thinner in anger” (Ekman, 2003, p. 146).
 → eyebrows down and together, glaring, parted lips, jaw thrust forward → (Ekman, 2003, p. 144).
 → “This action of narrowing the lips is a very reliable sign of anger; it is often a very early sign of anger, or it may be highly controlled anger” (Ekman, 2003, pp. 150-1)
 → “In bodily postures, the arm/hand position in comics is usually significant: we see a lot of clenched fists, hands hidden in pockets or behind backs, and fingers pointed at wrongdoers . . . Another feature that is typical of anger is excessive shaking and jumping, whether depicted as overlapping images or showing a character seemingly floating above the ground” (Forceville, 2012)
 → contracted muscles + violent movement or altered body posture (Eisner, 2008, p.68)
 → frown, narrowed eyelids, tight lips often in a straight line and flaring nostrils (Raah, 2015, p. 65)
 → “anger is associated with more forward body lean and greater arm swing (attack)” (Frank & Shaw, 2016, p. 51)

Suppressed anger → “Spirals, a pink or red face, and fisted hands, on the other hand, can equally well co-occur with expressed and controlled anger” An emotion that is arguably a subtype of controlled anger is “indignation,” . . . Apart from a closed mouth, closed eyes, and “jaggedness,” another element appears to play a role here: a head tilted upward. This subtype requires more extensive research to reveal how it interacts with the emotion of “pride.”” (Forceville, 2005, p. 84)

“Anger varies in intensity, from slight irritation or annoyance to rage or fury. Anger may build gradually, starting with irritation and slowly accumulating, or it may occur suddenly, full-blown. Anger can blend with any of the other emotions” (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 81)

Aggression → Clenched teeth + the brows and neck muscles contract (Eisner, 2008, p. 32)

Threat gesture → “the threat gesture which consists of folding the arms and turning the head and the upper part of the body forward, is not too often seen under ordinary circumstances. However, it is common in comics” (Fein & Kasher, 1996, p. 795)

Indignation → “An emotion that is arguably a subtype of controlled anger . . . Apart from a closed mouth, closed eyes, and “jaggedness,” another element appears to play a role here: a head tilted upward. This subtype requires more extensive research to reveal how it interacts with the emotion of “pride”” (Forceville, 2005, p. 84)
 “Indignation is self-righteous anger” (Ekman, 2003, p. 120).

Sneers → “A sneer: The cheek muscle contracts and pulls the upper lip” (Eisner, 2008, p. 32)

Smirks and Sneers → “Smirks and sneers twist symmetrical smiles out of shape” (LaFrance, 2011, p. 119)

Pride → “upward body posture and arms/hands upward” (Frank & Shaw, 2016, p. 51)
 → “expanded posture with head tilted back, arms akimbo, and a low intensity smile on the face” (Matsumoto, Hwang, and Frank, 2016, p. 389)

SOUNDS & PROSODY INDICATORS

pitch/intonation – loudness – duration – (syllable) stress – intensity (volume, syllable stress, duration – pause – hesitations – dysfluency –

- **Pragmatic noises/ Non-speech vocalizations:** [Non-speech vocalizations, “involuntary utterances *produced* rather than *said* by characters (e.g. ‘Pfouah!’, ‘Hic!’, ‘Snif’)” (Forceville et al. 2010, p.9)]
- AH, HA, HAH, O, OH, HO, UM, HUM, laughter (e.g. HA, HA, HA), pause-fillers (e.g. UM, HUM)
- Lexical onomatopoeia (e.g. thud, crack, slurp, buzz)
- Nonlexical onomatopoeia (e.g. vroom vroom, brrrrm brrrrm) (Attridge, 2004 in Simpson, 2004/2014, p. 69)
- “One onomatopoeia that appears to be a reliable signal for anger is “Grrrr!” (Forceville, 2012)

GRAPHICS/COMPOSITION

Note: Deviant forms generally have a more marked meaning potential, notably with regard to the emotional state of a character. Moreover, “many deviations from the norm occur in specific combinations” (Forceville et al., 2010, p. 17), resulting in an amplified effect.

“braiding” (Gravett, 2013, pp. 31) . . . clues inviting associations and pattern making

SIZE

- Size matters because “it is the medium where time equals space” (Gravett, 2013, p. 56) . . .
- “The non-frame speaks to unlimited space” (p. 44)
- “When an image is allowed to bleed off the outer edges of the paper, the reader’s frames of reference are gone; there are no borders. . . translates into temporal expansion” (Gravett, 2013, p. 61)
- Narrow panel → sense of confinement (Eisner 1985/2008, p. 92)
- “The illusion of power and threat is displayed by allowing the actor to burst out of the confines of the panel. Since the panel border is assumed to be inviolate in a comic page, this adds to the sense of unleashed action” (Eisner 1985/2008, p. 48)

ANGLE OF FRAME & POSITIONING OF CHARACTERS

- A **high angle perspective or bird’s eye view** tends to shrink a character, crushing him, and so it is used when the protagonist is in a position of weakness (Standjofski, 1983, p. 28)
- A **low angle perspective or worm’s eye view** tends to make characters look imposing, in either a threatening or comforting way, depending on the situation. (Standjofski, 1983, p. 28)
- “**Elevation, distance, and imbalance** are just a few of the ways our bodies let others know how we feel about **ourselves, each other, and the world**” (McCloud, 2006, p. 111) [→ power/dominance, social distance vs. intimacy, equilibrium. . .]

SALIENCE (“placement in the background or foreground, relative size, contrasts in tonal value, differences in sharpness”) (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 177)

BALLOONS

form, colour, tail-use, fonts, non-verbal materials

- “Any deviations from a given standard may be meaningful within an album or artistic oeuvre” (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 490)
- Angularity & asymmetry → more negative connotations than regularity & symmetry (Forceville et al., 2010, p. 17)
- Spiky contour/jagged edge/sharp zigzag or jagged tail/red → anger (Forceville, 2012)
- “The situation wherein a balloon ‘**bursts**’ and **extrudes** beyond the panels in which it belongs. This device, when combined with other visual features such as non-standard balloon form or bold face, tends to suggest **excessive emotion**” (Forceville et al., 2010, p. 12)

COLOUR

- Panel background colour meaningful (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 487).
 - Colour modulation: “The more that is taken away, abstracted from the colours of the representation, the more colour is *reduced*, the lower the modality” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 159) [continuum from full colour naturalistic saturation to desaturation/colour shades to absence of colour]
 - Low modality: “the greater the abstraction (away from *saturation, differentiation, and modulation*), the lower the modality” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 160)
- Connotation/metaphor: The constituting features of colour have “connotative and/or metaphoric meaning potential” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001) [colour saturation → strength/boldness (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 133) + reverse holds]

TYPOGRAPHY

Weight - expansion [condensed, narrow, expanded, wide] – slope – curvature – connectivity - orientation - regularity (van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 139),

- “Through the character of the lines themselves, comics represent the invisible world of emotion” (McCloud, 1993, p. 2).
- Through **connotation** and **metaphor** lettering/typography may acquire new (culture-dependent) meaning potentials in a given context (van Leeuwen, 2005, p. 139)
- Increased weight → increased salience + bold may mean ‘daring’, ‘assertive’, ‘solid’, ‘substantial’ or ‘domineering’, ‘overbearing’ – with the reverse potentially signifying ‘timid’, ‘insubstantial’... (van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 148) [See van Leeuwen, 2006, for more detail]
- Larger, bolder font → greater volume (Eisner, 1996/2008, p. 61)
- Bigger fonts, capitals or bold face → emphatic pronunciation or shouting / smaller font → (may suggest) whispering or fear (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 491)
- **Anger & loudness** → “the aspect of loud verbal expression of anger . . . large-sized bold face generally connotes loudness” (Forceville et al., 2010, p. 10)

GRAPHIC STRATEGIES (McCloud, 2006, p. 94)

- **Realism**: “Reproducing the real-life appearance of expressions with realistic tones and details”
- **Simplification**: “Searching for a few key lines and shapes which clearly convey an expression”
- **Exaggeration**: “Amplifying the key features that make an expression recognizable”
- **Symbolism**: “Images that depict emotions symbolically rather than with real-world resemblance” (like in putting werewolf teeth and horns to a human face)
- **Cartooning** [as opposed to **realism**] “cartooning as a form of amplification through simplification” (McCloud, 1994, p. 30) - The universality of cartoon imagery - “The more cartoony a face is, for instance, the more people it could be said to describe” (McCloud, 1994, p. 31)

BACKGROUND REPRESENTATION

- **Contextualization** [continuum from absence of background, to an out of focus background, to decontextualization through ‘ellipsis’ via a few ‘props’ suggestive of a setting, to a fully articulated and detailed background]
- Absence of setting → low modality “By being ‘decontextualized’, shown in a void, represented participants become generic, a ‘typical example’, rather than particular, and connected with a particular location and a specific moment in time” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 161).
- Detail representation: “**Representation**, a scale running from maximum abstraction to maximum representation of pictorial detail” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 161)
- “Background art is more than mere stage setting; it is a part of narration” (Eisner 1985/2008, p. 17)

PICTOGRAMS & PICTORIAL RUNES

- Iconic/indexical/mimetic/ metonymically or metaphorically motivated signs (e.g. sweat beads, metaphorical smoke clouds, or stars and pictographs)
- Arbitrary/symbolic pictorial runes accumulated and conventionalized through their repeated use over the year

Pictograms: e.g. \$ ♥ ♫ ♡ + possibility of creative variations: ♡/torch/spotlight/campfire... (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 492)

- “visual representations with a fixed, context-independent meaning” (Forceville et al., 2010, p. 9)
- “Pictograms are used to convey emotions and states of mind” (Forceville, 2012)
- “Typical pictograms used for anger are skulls, stars, Chinese characters, and lightning. Often a number of them occur together” (Forceville, 2012)

Pictorial runes:

- “speed lines, movement lines and emotion-enhancing flourishes (“pictorial runes”)” (Forceville, 2011, p. 875) Speed lines, movement lines, droplets, spikes, spiral, twirl, popped-up vein... (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 492)
- “(Fom Kennedy, 1982) ‘non-mimetic graphic elements that contribute narratively salient information’” (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 492)
- They “help convey characters’ emotions and mental states” (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 493)
- Around a character’s head → “emotional affect, dizziness, drunkenness, and confusion . . . ‘pain’” (Forceville et al., 2014, p. 493)
- “Haloed droplets appear to be a clear indication of strong emotion. Haloed spirals are associated with negative emotions specifically anger, but by extension with negativity in a more general sense” (Forceville, 2011, p. 889)



Figure 1: the *spiral*, a pictorial rune cueing anger.



Figure 2: the *twirl*, a pictorial rune cueing movement as well as confusion.



Figure 3: Two varieties of the popped-up vein, a rune used in manga to convey anger (Shinohara and Matsunaka 2009).

(Forceville, 2012)

- “There is one rune that is associated specifically with **anger**: the “**spiral**”, which may occur both on its own, or as a “multiple” of two or more, arranged as a halo around a character’s head” (Forceville, 2012)
- “The “**popped-up vein**” . . . seems to have evolved from a hyperbolic version of an embodied feature conveying **anger** (much like the lobster-red face) into a signal that has increasingly lost its link to the body, since it appears also in places where a popped-up vein could never appear realistically: in a character’s cheeks or hair, or in text balloons” (Forceville, 2012)

FRAMING, ANGLES AND READER INVOLVEMENT

Distance

Close shot/close-up [head and shoulders of the subject – extreme close-up: anything less than that] → intimate/personal relationship (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 124, 148-9)

Medium shot [subject shown up to the waist or knee] → social relationship [a certain distancing] (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. [124], 148-9)

Long shot [full figure of subject] → impersonal relationship (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 124, 148-9)

Point of view (Horizontal angle)

Frontal angle → involvement

Oblique angle → detachment (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 124, 148-9)

Power (vertical angle)

High angle/Top down/showing the subject from above → viewer power (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 124, 148-9)

Low angle/Bottom up/Showing the subject from below → represented participant power


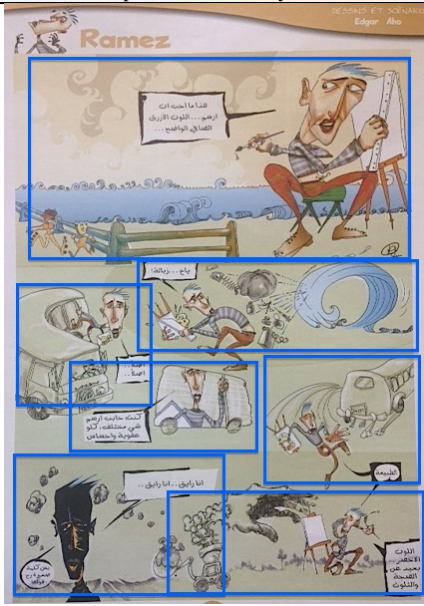
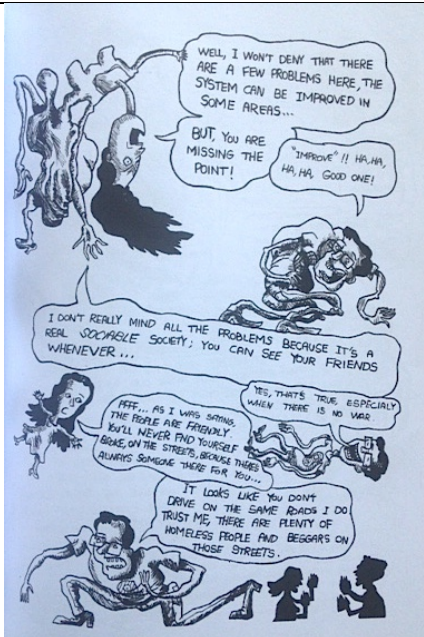
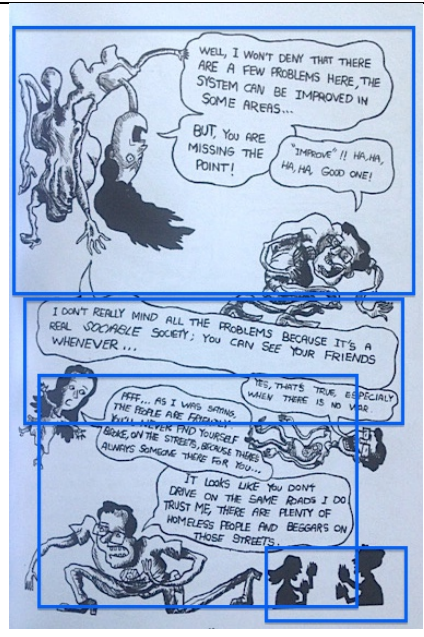
Eye-level angle → equality (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 124, 148-9)

Overhead view or bird's eye view → “to give the reader a clear, uninvolved view of the setting,” (Eisner 1985/2008, p. 90) - “a sense of detachment” (Eisner 1985/2008, p. 92)

Worm's eye view from below → “for an ominous involvement in the action,” (Eisner 1985/2008, p. 90)

→ a sense of smallness, fear, threat (Eisner 1985/2008, p. 92)

Appendix E
Panel Division

Division into panel units as discussed in the introduction to Chapter 5	
Comic page as in original	Comic page divided into panel units for the quantitative analysis
 <p>The original comic page from Ramez magazine shows a man sitting on a chair, painting a scene of social issues. The scene includes a car, a person on a bicycle, and a person on a horse. The man is holding a paintbrush and a palette. The background is a landscape with a fence and a sky with clouds. The text in the comic is in Arabic.</p>	 <p>The same comic page from Ramez magazine is shown, but with blue boxes around individual panels. This is done to facilitate quantitative analysis of the comic's structure.</p>
Aho (2000). Ramez. Zeroo 0, p. 22	
 <p>The original comic page from Ghosn's adventures of Fakhireldin shows a man talking to a group of people. The man is standing and talking to a group of people who are sitting on the ground. The background is a simple landscape. The text in the comic is in English.</p>	 <p>The same comic page from Ghosn's adventures of Fakhireldin is shown, but with blue boxes around individual panels. This is done to facilitate quantitative analysis of the comic's structure.</p>
Ghosn (2010). The adventures of Fakhireldin. Samandal 10, p. 93	

Appendix F

Overview of the Impoliteness Data in the Comics Examined

Overview of the comics and impoliteness behaviours examined									
Comic anthology	British comics				Lebanese comics				Total
	<i>Viz</i>	<i>The Comix Reader</i>	<i>Solipsistic Pop</i>	Total	<i>Zerooo</i>	<i>La Furie des Glandeurs</i>	<i>Saman dal</i>	Total	
Total number of comics examined	19	114	79	212	72	35	182	289	501
Number of comics with impoliteness	13	22	12	47	29	9	40	78	125
Total number of panels in the comics	314	2,109	1,897	4,320	1,050	440	6,468	7,958	12,278
Number of panels containing impoliteness behaviours	48	48	41	137	123	35	140	298	435
Total number of impoliteness behaviours	80	62	51	193	157	58	173	388	581
Average number of impoliteness behaviours per panel	25.48%	2.94%	2.69%	4.47%	14.95%	13.18%	2.67%	4.88%	4.73%

Appendix G
Detailed Data Collection Tables

Impoliteness triggers in the British dataset

	Conventionalised Impoliteness Formulae													Implicational Impoliteness										Other			Total	
	Insults					Pointed criticism s/compl aints	unpalatab le questions and/or presuppositions	Condesc ensions	Messag e enforce rs	Dismiss als	Silencer s	Threats	Negativ e expressi ves	Total CIF	Conventio n-driven	Form-driven						Context-driven	Total implicati onal impolite ness	Indeter minate	Behaviour al	Variation s on existing triggers		
	PNV	PNA	PNR	P3NR	Total											Quality	Quantit y	Manner	Relation	Convent ional implicat ure	Total							
<i>Vir</i>	6	1	3	2	12	3	2	0	0	2	0	1	1	21.00	6	2	10	3	4	2	21	13	40.00	0	14	5	19	
<i>The Comix Reader</i>	19	10	0	3	32	1	1	0	2	1	1	3	3	44.00	0	3	6	1	1	0	11	2	13.00	1	3	1	4	
<i>Solipsistic Pop</i>	6	7	2	3	18	0	3	0	0	1	0	4	1	27.00	3	4	7	2	3	0	16	1	20.00	0	3	1	4	
Total	31	18	5	8	62	4	6	0	2	4	1	8	5	92.00	9	9	23	6	8	2	48	16	73.00	1	20	7	27	193
% as a proportion of 193 impoliteness behaviours	16.06	9.33	2.59	4.15	32.12	2.07	3.11	0.00	1.04	2.07	0.52	4.15	2.59	47.67	4.66	4.66	11.92	3.11	4.15	1.04	24.87	8.29	37.82	0.52	10.36	3.63	13.99	100.00

Impoliteness triggers in the Lebanese dataset

	Conventionalised Impoliteness Formulae													Implicational Impoliteness										Other			Total	
	Insults					Pointed criticism s/compl aints	unpalatab le questions and/or presuppositions	Condesc ensions	Messag e enforce rs	Dismiss als	Silencer s	Threats	Negativ e expressi ves	Total CIF	Conventio n-driven	Form-driven						Context-driven	Total implicati onal impolite ness	Indeter minate	Behaviour al	Variation s on existing triggers		
	PNV	PNA	PNR	P3NR	Total											Quality	Quantit y	Manner	Relation	Convent ional implicat ure	Total							
<i>Zerooo</i>	32	9	3	2	46	4	3	3	0	3	12	7	5	83.00	10	10	10	2	2	0	24	12	46.00	0	21	7	28	
<i>La Furie des Glandeurs</i>	12	1	0	0	13	3	0	3	1	1	0	2	0	23.00	0	2	8	0	1	1	12	12	24.00	1	6	4	10	
<i>Samondal</i>	29	12	1	4	46	6	9	4	4	5	6	9	7	96.00	16	15	10	1	13	0	39	11	66.00	0	9	2	11	
Total	73	22	4	6	105	13	12	10	5	9	18	18	12	202.00	26	27	28	3	16	1	75	35	136.00	1	36	13	49	388
% as a proportion of 388 impoliteness behaviours	18.81	5.67	1.03	1.55	27.06	3.35	3.09	2.58	1.29	2.32	4.64	4.64	3.09	52.06	6.70	6.96	7.22	0.77	4.12	0.26	19.33	9.02	35.05	0.26	9.28	3.35	12.63	100.00

Appendix H

Lebanese Conventionalised Impoliteness Formulae in the Data

Insults

(1) Personalised negative vocatives

Lebanese expressions ----- Literal translation	Communicative translation
وله / ولا / ولي ----- yo/ hey	(yo / hey) (boy/piece of shit/shithead)
(يا) وسخ / حيوان / شرموطة / أزعر / بلا أخلاق / ايري ----- (you/oh/hey) dirty / animal / slut / yob/ with no manners/ my dick	(you/oh/hey) sleazy/animal/slut ¹ / yob/ill-mannered/dick
(يا) مسطول / بهيم / نكرة / جبان / حوش / جاهل / قريع ----- (you/oh/hey) idiot ² /animal/squirt ³ / coward/beasts/ignorant/little dick	(you/oh/hey) idiot ² /animal/squirt ³ / coward/beasts/ignorant/little dick
(يا) كلب / حمار / إرهابي / مجدوب / أحمق / زب / خاين ----- (you/oh/hey) dog / donkey / terrorist / stupid / fool / dick / traitor	(you/oh/hey) dog/ass ⁴ /terrorist/stupid/ fool/dick/traitor
(يا) مؤزه / كذابة / صفر عالشمال / إخوان إل... ----- (you/oh/hey) injurious / liar / zero to the left / sisters of...	(you/oh/hey) evil/liar/cipher/son(s) of a ...
يا إمر قرون ----- (you/oh/hey) mother of horns	(you/oh/hey) bitch

**In fact the personalised negative vocatives category is really only made up of 2 different conventionalised formulae, the first entry and the second one. All the other entries are variations on the vocative in the second formula. They have been separated into different entries to better serve the purposes of transcription and translation.*

(2) Personalised negative assertions

¹ Possible variations: trollop, whore, prostitute, slag

² Possible variations: plonker, stupid, moron, twit, wanker, knob head, dickhead

³ Possible variation: gnat

⁴ Possible variations: donkey, dolt, dimwit, plonker, dork

(3) Personalised negative references

Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation
----- Literal translation	
<p>إنت وهل (عيلة) الطز</p> <p>-----</p> <p>you and this (family) the fart</p>	<p>you and this (/your) shitty/fucking (family)</p>

(4) Personalised third-person negative references (in the hearing of the target)

(5) Personalised third-person negative assertions (in the hearing of the target)

Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation
----- Literal translation	
<p>شو ها(بتران)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>what an insatiable/spoiled (person)</p>	<p>what a spoiled/insatiable/rotten (brat)</p>
<p>بيفهموا ب (التمثيل) قد أيري</p> <p>-----</p> <p>they understand about (acting) as much as my dick</p>	<p>they know dick about (acting)</p>
<p>خرفان النحس</p> <p>-----</p> <p>the senile jinx</p>	<p>the senile jinx</p>
<p>وظاوظ</p> <p>-----</p> <p>vulgar (people)</p>	<p>chavs/naffs</p>

**The last two entries are actually the same formula in terms of structure.*

Pointed criticisms/complaints

Lebanese expressions <hr/> Literal translation	Communicative translation
<p>مش معقول</p> <hr/> <p>this is unthinkable</p> <p>عيب على هيك (تمثيل)</p> <hr/> <p>Shame on such an (acting)</p> <p>شو هل (قانون) السرماية هيدا</p> <hr/> <p>What this law shoe this</p> <p>(مدينة) مأيرة (وشعب) زير</p> <hr/> <p>fucked up (city) and (people/nation) dick</p>	<p>this is unthinkable</p> <p>(this is) such disgraceful/shameful (acting)</p> <p>what a crappy/shitty/lousy (law)</p> <p>a fucked up (city) and a dick of a nation</p>

Unpalatable questions and/or presuppositions

Lebanese expressions <hr/> Literal translation	Communicative translation
<p>بعد نائص (إنت)</p> <hr/> <p>still lacking (you)</p> <p>شو عم نبيع بطاطا؟</p> <hr/> <p>what are we selling potatoes?</p> <p>تعلم كيف (تمشي) قبل ما تبقى (تقرر تضر من بيتك)</p> <hr/> <p>learn how to (walk) before you decide to leave your house</p>	<p>that's all I needed! Someone like you (to waste my time/add to my trouble...)</p> <p>do you think we're playing here?</p> <p>you should learn how to (walk) before you decide to leave your house</p>

Condescensions

Lebanese expressions <hr/> Literal translation	Communicative translation
<p>(يا) ابني*</p> <hr/> <p>(you/hey/oh) son</p> <p><i>*Highly dependent on context for such an impoliteness effect</i></p>	<p>(you/oh/hey) boy / who's your daddy?</p>
<p>حش تعيشا</p> <hr/> <p>stop living it</p>	<p>chill / don't get too excited/chow down</p>
<p>ما عندي وقت لضيعو معك</p> <hr/> <p>I have no time to waste on you</p>	<p>my time is too precious to waste on you</p>
<p>الحس صباطي</p> <hr/> <p>lick my boots</p>	<p>kiss my ass</p>

Message enforcers

Lebanese expressions <hr/> Literal translation	Communicative translation
<p>شو ما بتفهم؟</p> <hr/> <p>don't you understand?</p>	<p>don't you understand/get it?</p>
<p>فاهم؟</p> <hr/> <p>(do you) get it?</p>	<p>(you) get it?</p>

Dismissals

Lebanese expressions <hr/> Literal translation	Communicative translation
شو خصك؟ <hr/> what is it to do with you?	who pulled your string?* / who rattled your cage?***
روح (وله) <hr/> go (yo)	go away/get out (shitface/...)
زحط <hr/> slide/slip	beat it/fuck off/piss off/get lost/shove off
هلاً وأتك؟ <hr/> now is your time?	fuck off/piss off/...
إنقبر <hr/> be buried	fuck off/piss off

* Meaning "Why are you talking?"

([https://www.phrases.org.uk/bulletin board/32/messages/1442.html](https://www.phrases.org.uk/bulletin_board/32/messages/1442.html))

*** Said when somebody makes an unwelcome interruption

(<https://www.phrases.org.uk/bulletin board/32/messages/1442.html>)

Silencers

Lebanese expressions <hr/> Literal translation	Communicative translation
كلي خرا / كل خرا <hr/> eat shit	eat shit
سد بورك <hr/> shut your muzzle	shut your trap
سدو <hr/> shut it	shut it
خرس <hr/> be dumb/mute	shut up
(إنت) سكتي <hr/> (you) shut up	(you) shut up

Threats

Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation
<u>Literal translation</u>	
<p>بدي كسرلك راسك</p> <hr/> <p>I want to break your head</p>	I'm going to bust your head off
<p>لأنشر عرضك</p> <hr/> <p>I will expose/spread out your honour</p>	I will shame you
<p>رح فرجيك بالمرة الجاية</p> <hr/> <p>I will show you next time</p>	I will show you next time / (you) just wait and see
<p>بحسب الله ما خلقكن</p> <hr/> <p>I will consider that God did not create you</p>	I will kill you and forget you have ever existed (?)/I'll wipe you away from the existence
<p>لخلص العالم من أمثالك</p> <hr/> <p>I will save the world from the likes of you</p>	I will rid the world of the likes of you*
<p>(تا / ل / رح) إقصفلك عمرك</p> <hr/> <p>I will break/smash/decimate your life</p>	I will kill you
<p>(تا / ل / رح) إحرق دينك</p> <hr/> <p>I will burn your religion</p>	I will make your life a living hell
<p>زحط قبل ما جيب أجلك</p> <hr/> <p>slide before I bring your time of death</p>	Beat it before I fuck the life out of you

* This CIF also has a condescending derogatory undertone in its use of "the likes of you."

Negative expressives (e.g. curses, ill-wishes)

Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation
<p><u>Literal translation</u></p> <p>العمى بعيونك (شو احوول)</p> <p>blindness in your eyes (what a cross-eye⁵)</p>	damn you (what a cockeye)
<p>يحرق (دينك)</p> <p>burn your religion</p>	damn you/screw you
<p>يلعن دينك</p> <p>damn/curse your religion</p>	damn you/screw you
<p>الله ياخذك</p> <p>god take you</p>	drop dead/die
<p>يلعن الساعة اللي...</p> <p>curse/damn the hour that...</p>	curse/damn/blast the moment that...
<p>خود</p> <p>take that</p>	take that
<p>أكله تاكلك</p> <p>let an organ-eating disease (like cancer or gangrene) eat you</p>	⁶ die of cancer/gangrene
<p>بقطة نشالله</p> <p>unpleasurable food (experience) if God wills</p>	hope you choke on it/your food
<p>يلعن (لسانك)</p> <p>curse/damn your tongue</p>	damn (your big mouth)

⁵ The “crosseye” example is purely incidental in its reference to the eyes here. Though literally invoking blindness on the addressee, the negative expressive itself (العمى بعيونك (شو...)) is not really related to blindness in its communicative meaning and may be used with any other negative vocative.

⁶ I could not find a communicative cultural equivalent

Negative expressives (e.g. curses, ill-wishes)

Lebanese expressions	Communicative translation
Literal translation	
<p>ايري بهيك (بلد/شغل...)</p> <hr/> <p>my dick in such a (country/work...)</p>	<p>fuck/screw this shitty (country/work)</p>
<p>ايري فيك/فيكي</p> <hr/> <p>my dick in you</p>	<p>fuck you</p>
<p>اخت (هالحياة) على اخت حظي الخرى بهيك (جيزة)</p> <hr/> <p>the sister (of this life) on the sister of my shitty luck in such a (marriage)</p>	<p>fuck this life and my shitty luck in such a (marriage)</p>
<p>تيزي ف (توني/فيك / فيكي...)</p> <hr/> <p>my ass in (Tony/you...)</p>	<p>fuck (tony/you...)</p>
<p>الحس طيزي</p> <hr/> <p>lick my ass</p>	<p>kiss my ass</p>
<p>(يا) عيب الشوم عليك/عليكي</p> <hr/> <p>(oh) the shame of gloom on you</p>	<p>shame on you</p>
<p>شو دبي</p> <hr/> <p>what/such a (female) bear</p>	<p>what a daft cow/heifer</p>
<p>كل/كلو خرى ع هل(التمثيل) / كل/كلو هوا ع هل(التمثيل)</p> <hr/> <p>eat wind for this (acting) / eat shit for this (acting)</p>	<p>eat shit for such lousy (acting)/eat dirt for such lousy (acting)</p>
<p>(ولك) ذحتونا ب...</p> <hr/> <p>(...) you shoved us aside with your...</p>	<p>you're such a pain in the neck with your...</p>
<p>حاج عامللي حالك (فنان)</p> <hr/> <p>stop pretending you're (an artist)</p>	<p>quit masquerading as (an artist)</p>

Appendix I

Communicative English Translation of Maouad's (2011) "Les Bobos"

1. **THE LITTLE INVESTIGATION/SURVEY OF THE DAY!** WITH OUR HOST MARCEL DURACEL
A LITTLE STORY BY WASSIM MAOUAD
HOST: {TEST! YES. MAROUN YES I CAN HEAR YOU. PERFECT! PERFECT!}
{GREAT OK GREAT} {HERE WE GO}
- GOOD MORNING STUPID JERKS! WELCOME TO OUR LUBRICATED CHANNEL,
WITH A NEW INVESTIGATIVE PROGRAMME. OUR TOPIC: THE BOBOS! YES I
KNOW, THE TOPIC IS QUITE SILLY, BUT THE AUDIENCE IS EVEN MORE SO. THIS
SUITS EVERYONE. WE DON'T WANT TO EXHAUST YOU MUCH, WE HAVE OUR
LIMITS.
- SO, MY CLOTHES ARE DONATED BY ¹ OÜSHTÍ, MY BEAUTIFUL WATCH,
HOWEVER, BELONGS TO ME FOR REAL.
- WE HOPE TO MAKE A LOT OF ADVERTISING REVENUES TONIGHT! THANKS FOR
TUNING IN!
2. **THE BOBOS: WHO ARE THEY? WHAT ARE THEY? WHERE CAN WE OBSERVE THEM? WHAT IS
THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THE ECOSYSTEM THAT CONTAINS THEM? AND LOTS OF OTHER
EXCITING QUESTIONS!**
3. **MAN 1:** NO LOVE, THIS WORD MEANS NOTHING TO ME, BUT I DON'T LIKE YOU, SO BEAT
IT BEFORE I FUCK THE LIFE OUT OF YOU. DO YOU GET IT?
4. **WOMAN 1:** HEYYY? JUST WHAT I NEEDED! SOMEONE LIKE YOU I DON'T KNOW WHAT
YOU SCOUNDREL/YOB YOU ILL-MANNERED (/WITHOUT MORALS)!!
5. **MAN 2:** BO-BO? NO, I DON'T SEE... NO, REALLY...
6. **MAN 3:** NOW IS THIS A GOVERNMENT? THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION SON!
YOUR QUESTION ISN'T OF ANY INTEREST TO ANYONE FRANKLY.
7. **MAN 4:** HUH? [pragmatic noise roughly equivalent to "What?"]
8. **MAN 5:** BY GOD SIR I DON'T UNDERSTAND LEBANESE THAT MUCH REALLY, AND
ACTUALLY I DON'T NEED TO UNDERSTAND ANYTHING IN THIS COUNTRY... DO
YOU UNDERSTAND ME YOUR EXCELLENCY?

¹ The name Oüshtī is fictitious but quite close to Aishti, a Lebanese luxury department store

9. **WOMAN 2:** YES MISTER WHEN MADAM HIT ME I, I ¹WAWA ²BOBO!
EMPLOYER: I HIT YOU YOU BITCH?
10. **MAN 1:** WLA (informal offensive form of "hey/you") WHAT DID I TELL YOU YOU ANIMAL?
11. *BAM!*
12. **MAN 6:** - USUALLY I DEAL WITH MULLET AND GROUPER AND RED MULLET...
 - IS IT A FRESWATER OR SALTWATER FISH YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT?
13. **HOST:** - THE MAN IN THE STREET (/THE COMMON MAN) PROVES THE ABYSMAL
 EXTENT OF HIS IGNORANCE, AT EVERY MOMENT!
 - DEPLORABLE/DISTRESSING!
 - OK WE'RE GOING TO MY PLACE TO CHANGE THE CAMERA...
 - AND HAVE A BITE...
 - AND JERK OFF...
 - WE WILL ASK MY GRANDPA ABOUT THE BOBOS! LIKE A GOOD SON OF THE
³MANDATE, HE SHOULD BE ABLE TO ENLIGHTEN US!
14. **HOST:** HELLO GRANDPA FOR THE GOOD OF THE PUBLIC/SPECTATORS, CAN YOU
 TELL US WHAT BOBOS ARE?
15. **GRANDPA:** HAVE YOU ASKED... HOW... THE INTERNET?
HOST: YES... 1,735,542,368,321 RESULTS!...
{THAT'S A LOT}...
GRANDPA: YOU WANT ME TO TRY? YOUR PIMP OF A SON (⁴MAY HE BURY ME IF GOD
 SO WISHES) TAUGHT ME
{LET'S SEE BO BO MMMH... CLICK}
16. **GRANDPA:** AAAH THE EXCITEMENT OF RESEARCH!
*{BO-BO... "HIPSTER"?... NO... BOURGEOIS-BOHEME? NO... AH! HERE: GIANT
 PENIS! TUSHY BOBO! MHMH YES! AH... OOH BOBO IN MY VAGINA! MMMH
 "BOBO} IN MY LITTLE ASS OF LESS THAN 13 YEARS OLD AAAAAAAAAAH!
 YES!!! MMMMH! OH YEAH MMMAH}*
- HOST:** - THERE YOU GO, ROUGHLY SPEAKING, NO ONE HAS A CLEAR DEFINITION
 OF THE WORD "BO-BO".
 - THANKS FOR TUNING IN, YOU ARE A BUNCH OF JERKS/ ASSHOLES.
 - SEE YOU!

¹ WAWA is Lebanese baby talk (/cluster of sounds) used to refer to something that is hurting.

² BOBO here is French colloquial (baby) talk that refers to a small cut or scratch

³ The French mandate when in 1923 the League of Nations placed Lebanon under a French military administration which lasted 20 years

⁴ A ridiculous literal translation of a common Lebanese informal endearment

Appendix J

Forms of Direct Address in Lebanese Aimed at a Male Interlocutor in the Man's Response in Panel 3 in Maouad's (2011) "Les Bobos"

In Panel 3, the first panel featuring the respondents, the respondent is clearly directly addressing the reporter through his use of the following:

- (1) the vocative "ʔABIBÉ" ('Love'), where the inflectional¹ ending corresponds to a 2nd person masculine addressee
- (2) the second person object pronoun which has undergone vowel elision, *t'*, in "JE NE T'AIME PAS" ('I don't like you')
- (3) the verb "ZAZZET" (literal translation: 'slide' or 'slip'; fluent translation: 'beat it') which has the 2nd person masculine singular imperative inflection
- (4) "AJALAK" (literal translation: 'your time'), an object/accusative with the 2nd person masculine singular inflection
- (5) and Lastly, "FÊHEM?" ('(Do) you understand/get it?'), another 2nd person masculine singular imperative verb.

It is clear from this example in Panel 3 that MAN 1 is directly responding to the reporter's question(s). It can similarly be argued that this is also the case for the other interviewed characters in the rest of the panels. Therefore, the respondents' utterances analysed in "Les Bobos" can indeed be classed as inter-character interactions.

¹ The inflectional morphology of Arabic and Lebanese is briefly explained in section 3.6.1

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