IMPOLITENESS IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPLAINTS: EXPLORING ITS INTENTIONS AND MOTIVATING FACTORS

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated intentions and motivating factors of using impoliteness in interlanguage complaints by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Empirical data were elicited by means of oral discourse completion tasks and questionnaires from 42 Indonesian learners of English. Post-structured interviews were conducted to obtain the intentions and reasons of deploying impoliteness in the complaints. The results reveal that impoliteness is triggered by three general motivating factors; speaker-related factors, target person-related factors, and contextual factors. A number of intentions of deploying impoliteness are found, and they suggest that impoliteness is a mean to an end rather than an end itself.

Keywords: impoliteness, interlanguage, complaints, learner intention, learner motivation, face attack

INTRODUCTION

Complaining is a part of daily language use, for example when people express their annoyance or dissatisfaction towards unpleasant events or situations that get them into trouble. Categorized as expressive acts, complaints intrinsically convey negative evaluations toward complainees' behaviors or undertakings (Edwards, 2005; Traverso, 2009). Because of this, not only the complainees' negative and positive faces are often threatened (Kraft & Geluykens, 2002; Monzoni, 2009), but even the social relationships between them and the complainers can be harmed (Moon, 2001). Therefore, complainers have to consider politeness when they decide to make complaints (Wijayanto et al., 2013).

Owing to their intrinsically face threatening traits, complaints are challenging to be deployed politely by foreign language learners (L2) or non-native speakers. Studies have reported that instead of using polite complaints, L2 learners are apt to employ direct or harsh diction in their complaints. For example, Korean learners of English tend to produce aggressive and disrespectful criticisms when complaining in English (Murphy & Neu, 1996). Sudanese learners of English produce confrontational complaints and show a low level of courtesy (Umar, 2006). A study by Kraft and Geluykens (2002) has reported that L2 learners use explicit complaints more frequently than native speakers. Other studies have reported that Indonesian learners of English frequently use harsh and explicit complaints as well

(Pratiwi, 2013; Wijayanto, Prasetyarini, & Hikmat, 2014).

The studies have revealed inappropriate use of complaints by L2 learners. Nevertheless, they have only reported post hoc explanations on the directness levels of the complaints. The present study seeks to explore impoliteness used in interlanguage complaints by EFL learners. It particularly observes the intentions and reasons of using impoliteness. The results of the present study might provide crucial information for language teachers to help EFL learners understand impolite situations, for them to avoid engaging in potentially impolite interactions.

Compared to politeness that has been analyzed for almost five decades, impoliteness has only been explored quite recently. This could be because it has been ignored as it is considered an offensive linguistic behaviour, and is the 'parasite of politeness' (Culpeper, 1996). Nevertheless, scholars, e.g., Bousfield (2008); Culpeper, Bousfield, and Wichmann (2003) have argued that impoliteness is worth explaining in order to understand its functions and roles in social interactions. In relation to L2 learning, Mugford (2008) has averred that learners have the right to learn impoliteness because in real-life situations, social interactions may not always be polite. Importantly, Mugford (2008) has also underscored that L2 teachers should help language learners to identify potentially impolite practices and offer ways of dealing with impoliteness.

Unlike politeness that is commonly employed to maintain social harmony, impoliteness is considered a communicative strategy to promote social conflicts. Culpeper (2005) has defined impoliteness as a 'face attack'

which is intentionally deployed by speakers and/or perceived as such by the listeners. He has stated that impoliteness consists of binary parts, which are the offensive information being expressed by the utterance and the information being expressed intentionally. Similarly, Bousfield (2007b) has underscored that impoliteness constitutes the issuing of intentionally gratuitous and conflictive verbal face-threatening acts (FTAs) which are purposely performed. The contention highlights that impoliteness is intentional rather than accidental. Nonetheless, other literature claims that speakers' intentionality may not be relevant for judging whether some acts are polite or impolite. For example, Locher and Watts (2008) have argued that it is through the judgments of co-participants that utterances can be taken either as impolite or not, and they are dynamically negotiated by a variety of contextual factors. Amid such heated discussions, Locher and Bousfield (2008) have suggested some research on the role of intentions in the production and interpretation of impolite acts.

As a communicative strategy, impoliteness is not used without reasons. Bousfield (2007a) has argued that impoliteness does not exist in a vacuum and that the interactants must have felt sufficiently provoked at some point prior to delivering the utterance containing impoliteness. Based on the data taken from the TV show, *Soldiers to be*, Bousfield has reported that offensive situations are common triggers to impoliteness, such as behaviours that could not meet the expectation of other interlocutors. Another trigger reported by Bousfield is a combination of behaviours and physical appearance. In this case, irrelevant behaviours and unacceptable physical appearance which are unexpected by an institution become offensive situations which then provokes face attacks. Based on the data elicited from the TV series, *The Clampers and Parking Wars*, Bousfield has found other triggers to impoliteness such as speakers' getting a parking ticket and their vehicle getting clamped. These findings have shed light that impoliteness can be generated by a number of different reasons.

Other factors, such as social power, intimacy, and conflict of interest, can induce the occurrences of impoliteness. When collocutors have unequal social power, those with more social power tend to do impoliteness. This claim is supported by the data from the study by Culpeper (1996). For example, non-commissioned officers deploy face attacks regularly towards an army recruit who has less power than them. A study by Kantara (2010) has reported similarly that impoliteness could be achieved through legitimate and/or expert power. Furthermore, Culpeper (1996) has stated that in the situations in which collocutors have close relationships, impoliteness tends to occur because they lack a mechanism to achieve their dominance. Impoliteness will also occur commonly when collocutors have a conflict of interest.

A growing body of research has analyzed impoliteness in a number of social situations. For example, Culpeper (1996) has studied impoliteness in army recruit training. Culpeper has examined latent impolite intentions of non-commissioned officers (NCOs) towards a female army recruit. Culpeper has reported that the NCOs deploy impoliteness by attacking the recruit's capability, self-worth, and mental sanity. Face attacks are also observed based on the abusive language directed toward the recruit's social role as an American citizen, a soldier, and a potential mother. Non-verbal cues of the NCOs such as their sitting positions and the distance of speaking also prompt impoliteness.

In a follow-up study, Culpeper, Bousfield, and Wichmann (2003) have reported that both linguistic and prosodic aspects could provoke impoliteness. The researchers employ data from the BBC's documentary TV series, *The Clampers*. They reconstruct the intentions of impoliteness based on the utterances spoken by traffic wardens and drivers who dispute over penalties for illegally parked cars. In addition, Culpeper, Bousfield, and Wichmann (2003) have analyzed the data records from tribunal appeals, and they report that impoliteness could be conveyed via prosodies such as intonation, loudness, and speed of utterances. In this regard, high intonation with particular loudness and speed could also convey impoliteness.

The subsequent study by Culpeper (2005) has investigated impoliteness in a TV quiz show, The Weakest Link. In this study, he has reformulated his previous concept of impoliteness by considering both speakers' intentionality and hearers' perceptions of the speakers' behaviours as intentional face attacks. He has found that impoliteness could be achieved by impolite intentions implied in wh-questions and yes/no questions. Based on the findings, Culpeper has added off-record impoliteness to his previous model.

A study by Kryk-Kastovsky (2006) has examined impolite acts in courtroom discourse. In this study, he has found two types of impoliteness; overt and covert impoliteness. The former is conveyed via surface representations of utterances, for example, it is expressed through derogatory address terms, name-calling, and sarcasm. The latter is expressed through implicatures, for example, it is implied through questions which intimidate witnesses, interrupted their statements, and cast doubt on the truth of their statements.

A study by Bousfield (2007b) has analyzed impoliteness in relation to the organization and conductivity of utterances. The study uses three TV series as the data source; *The Clampers, The Soldiers to be,* and *Boiling Point.* Bousfield (2007b) has found a number of conversation strategies deliberately that is organized by speakers to entrap the target interlocutors into impolite situations. For example, the usage of rhetorical challenges or unpalatable questions to compel addressees to be in the position of getting blames. A strategy of the response-seeking challenge is applied as a verbal trap to provoke further face attacks or impoliteness.

Most of the studies have assumed that the speakers' intentionality to attack others' face is what generates impoliteness. However, the intentionality of attacking the other's face is interpreted on the basis of linguistic, prosodic, and non-linguistic data. In other words, it is not informed directly by the speakers. Although the literature has paid attention to speakers' intentionality in the production of impolite acts, however, little has been discussed about intentions and reasons of employing impoliteness. This might be because intentions are discursive and hard to access directly from speakers' mind (Haugh, 2010). In addition, recognizing intentions of impoliteness is highly problematic as they have to be inferred in communication (Culpeper, 2005). Thus, what has been viewed as the intentions of attacking others' face is the perception of intention that could be rather hypothetical. Therefore, more research is needed to ascertain the role of intention in the production and interpretation of impolite or rude behavior (Bousfield, 2008).

To the best of the knowledge, Bousfield's (2007a) study is the first that discusses triggers of impoliteness. Nonetheless, little is known about the intentions and reasons of using impoliteness. The purpose of the present study is to

investigate the intentions and reasons of using impoliteness in interlanguage complaints by Indonesian EFL learners. Studies done prior to this have scrutinized the intentions of using impoliteness by interpreting linguistic, prosodic, and non-linguistic data. Differently, the present study elicits intentions and reasons of using impoliteness directly from the speakers (in this case the Indonesian EFL learners). For this purpose, the study has raised the following research questions: What are the EFL learners' intentions of using impoliteness in their complaints?, What are the reasons or motivating factors for employing the impoliteness?

METHODS

Initially, 50 Indonesian learners of English have participated in the study and provided the data of complaints through oral discourse completion tasks (ODCTs). However, only 42 learners comprising males (N=20) and females (N=22) are willing to provide research data through questionnaires and interviews at the next stage of data elicitation. The EFL learners are third-year undergraduate students studying at the English department of a university in Central Java, Indonesia. Their ages range from 21 to 24 years old, with the average age of 22,5 years old. They report that they have studied English for six years at the secondary schools and three years at the English department. Their English proficiency is at the lower advanced level.

Oral discourse completion tasks (ODCTs) are employed to elicit the data of EFL complaints. The ODCT consists of scenario descriptions that provide the research participants with specific social situations, settings, speaker's roles, familiarities between interlocutors, and their relative status levels. The scenarios of the ODCTs are set according to nine interpersonal communication contexts, each of which presents collocutors with different seniority or occupations (lower, equal, and higher) and social distances or familiarities (close, familiar, and unfamiliar). Four ODCT scenarios; i.e., situation 2, 4, 5, and 9 are adopted from Wijayanto et al. (2013). They are summarized in Table 1.

To answer the ODCT, the learners have to imagine being in the situations, and they have to respond to each situation in the scenario as spontaneously as they would do in real life. The researchers have recorded their responses digitally and transcribed them. At the next stage of data elicitation, the responses are made as prompts of a written questionnaire. Each participant receives a questionnaire containing nine complaints that they have previously made through the ODCT. Each complaint is provided with three scales by which they have to assess whether the complaint is polite, impolite, or I am not sure. For example:

ODCT situation 1: Your close friend borrows your laptop to type his/her assignment. When it is returned, you find that its screen is broken. You complain to your friend about it.

You say: "Oh, what did you do with my laptop? Why the screen is broken?"

What do you think of your complaint above? Please circle your choice of the following options:

1. Polite   2. Impolite   3. I am not sure

The participants who assess that their complaints are impolite will engage in an interview. Through the interview, the researchers elicit the intentions and reasons of using the impoliteness. In order to obtain the intentions of using the impoliteness, the study has adopted Culpeper's (2008) concept of impoliteness; communicative behaviour and intent to cause 'face loss' of a target. Based on the concept, the EFL learners are asked the following question; 'what is your intention of using the impoliteness in your complaint?' Furthermore, Bousfield's (2007a) notion of offending situations has been adopted to elicit the reasons for using the impoliteness. The EFL learners are asked the following question; 'what is your reason for using the impoliteness in your complaint?' To anticipate their limited command of English, the study has interviewed in their national language (Indonesian). Based on their responses, the metapragmatic knowledge of using the impoliteness is analyzed. The study thoroughly examines their comments regarding the effects of contexts or situations, social power, and social distances between interlocutors on the use of impoliteness.

Table 1 ODCT Scenarios

Situations	Description	Speakers' status	
		Power	**Distance**
Situation 1	A close friend broke your laptop.	Equal	Close
Situation 2	Your younger brother returns your motorcycle late.	Higher	Close
Situation 3	Your lecturer has been lazy to give feedback to your thesis draft.	Lower	Close
Situation 4	Your next door neighbour turns on rock music too loudly.	Equal	Familiar
Situation 5	Your employee has not finished the report you ordered.	Higher	Familiar
Situation 6	Your lecturer gave you a bad mark.	Lower	Familiar
Situation 7	A stranger's car hits your motorcycle from the back.	Equal	Unfamiliar
Situation 8	A recycler scatters rubbish in front of your house.	Higher	Unfamiliar
Situation 9	Administrative staffs ignore your presence.	Lower	Unfamiliar

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study has obtained 450 set of complaint strategies as data. Out of the total number of the data set, 239 (53%) complaints contain impoliteness as proposed by Culpeper (1996). The following discusses the intentions and reasons or motivating factors of using impoliteness.

The first aspect to be discussed is the intentions of using impoliteness. Due to space constraints, only several extracts from the interviews are presented. The following are several examples found in the complaints to the speaker's younger brother who returns a motorcycle late (ODCT situation 2). The excerpts show that the EFL learners (henceforth: the complainers) use impoliteness with different intentions. In (1), the complainer states that he wants his brother to know how to behave and learn how to take responsibility. He also suggests that he uses the impoliteness as a teaching strategy.

(1) *Biar adik saya tahu diri saja, biar dia belajar tanggung jawab. Mengajari itu kan nggak hanya dengan cara halus, cara kasar juga perlu.*
(I want my younger brother to understand how to behave; I want him to learn how to take responsibility. Teaching could be done not only through refined ways but also through harsh ways).

In (2), the complainer uses the impoliteness to quip her brother, while the complainer in (3) uses it to counsel.

(2) *Ya karena untuk menyindir adik saya.*
(I do it to quip my younger brother).

(3) *Saya menggunakan kata tersebut untuk mengingatkan adik saya.*
(I employ the [impolite] word to counsel my younger brother).

The next extracts present the intentions of using the impoliteness in the complaints to a supervisor who is lazy to give feedback to the complainer's thesis draft (ODCT situation 3). In (4), the complainer states that he might have held a grudge against his supervisor since the beginning.

(4) *Mungkin saya sudah dendam dari semester awal.*
(Possibly, I have held a grudge against him/her since the first semester).

The complainer in (5) confesses that he has complained to his supervisor impolitely. With the impoliteness, he wants his supervisor to give feedback to his thesis draft immediately.

(5) *Ya memang tidak sopan, tetapi harus saya lakukan agar skripsi saya cepat selesai.*
(Yes, I am indeed impolite to him/her, but I have to do that if I want him/her to give feedback to my thesis immediately).

In (6), the complainer has some intentions of employing the impoliteness. For example, he wants his supervisor to give feedback on his thesis draft immediately. He also explains that he has no more time to extend his study. In addition, he intends to warn his supervisor who

has not done his job well. Finally, he also wants to graduate soon.

(6) *Di sini saya memaki dia supaya dia bisa segera menyelesaikan skripsi saya. Karena sudah kepepet ini. Agar dosen itu juga tahu kalau dia salah dan saya ingin cepat lulus.*
(I scold him/her so that he/she would give feedback to my thesis draft immediately. I have no time. I want him/her to know that he/she is wrong, and I want to graduate immediately).

Other intentions of using the impoliteness are explained by the complainers regarding situation 5 (your employee has not finished the report that you ordered). For example, the complainer in (7) uses impoliteness to uphold discipline.

(7) *Iya karena bos. Jadi prinsip saya semua karyawan saya harus disiplin, kalau janji hari ini ya hari ini.*
(Because I am the boss, my principle is for my staffs to be well-disciplined. If they promise to finish their tasks today, they have to finish it today).

Similarly, the complainer in (8) explains that the intention of using the impoliteness is to give the staff a lesson for him/her to learn self-discipline.

(8) *Menurut saya kondisinya sangat penting. Walaupun tidak sopan tapi di situ juga biar memberi pelajaran kepada dia biar lebih tertib.*
(In my opinion, the condition is very important. Although it is impolite, I am giving him/her a lesson so that he/she would be more disciplined).

Unlike the previous ones, the complainer in (9) states that the intention of using the impoliteness is to develop the personality of the staff.

(9) *Saya ingin membentuk kepribadian bawahan saya sebagai pribadi yang disiplin, tangguh dan bertanggung jawab.*
(I want to develop the personality of my staff into one who is well-disciplined, persevering, and responsible).

In (10), the complainer intends to show his superiority and teaches the staff a sense of responsibility.

(10) *Karena yang pertama saya sebagai atasan harus tegas. Kedua agar karyawannya lebih bertanggug jawab.*
(Firstly, I have to be assertive as a superior. Secondly, I want my staff to become a responsible person).

Regarding situation 7 (a car hits your motorcycle from the back), some complainers state that the intention of using impoliteness is to appeal to the driver's responsibility for the accident. It can be seen in example (11).

(11) *Karena dia melakukan kesalahan tapi dia acuh, jadi disini saya seperti*

menuntut tanggung jawab dia agar dia tidak sembarangan dengan orang lain. (Because he has made a mistake, but he is indifferent. Therefore, I demand him to take responsibility for the accident in order not to be inconsiderate to others).

The classical definitions of impoliteness tend to view that impoliteness concerns communication strategies of which the goal is to attack others' face or to stir social conflicts. However, these excerpts have shown different information; impoliteness can be used to achieve constructive goals ranging from counseling others on what to do to teach others to uphold self-discipline. For example, the complainer in (1), (7), (8), (9), and (10) employ impoliteness to make the complainees be more responsible and develop their self-discipline. The finding supports Culpeper's (1996) claim that face attacks can be used to achieve long-term goals such as developing self-discipline. More importantly, the finding suggests that impoliteness can be employed as a means to an end rather than an end per se. This might explain the intentions of using impoliteness in the previous studies. For example, Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness intentions' long-term objectives are not only to develop the army recruits' discipline but also to enhance their alertness and develop their habit of fulfilling commands. In Culpeper, Bousfield, and Wichmann's (2003) study, the impoliteness might be employed by the drivers as verbal self-defense to avoid getting a ticket from the traffic wardens.

In line with the claims of some scholars (Bousfield, 2008; Locher & Bousfield, 2008; Locher & Watts, 2008), the finding of the present study indicates that impoliteness can be applied as a strategy to exercise social power and get power over actions of other interlocutors. However, it does not mean that only those with more social power can exercise impoliteness; collocutors with less power can also perform it, such as the speaker in (5) and (6). This lends support to Locher and Bousfield's (2008) claim that social power is highly dynamic and negotiable. Thus, collocutors with higher status levels (e.g., excerpt 7, 8, 9, and 10) or lower status levels (e.g., excerpt 5 and 6) can similarly exercise their power through impoliteness. Interestingly, excerpt (5) and (6) indicate that impoliteness can be triggered by the complainees' negligence of performing obligations. In this case, the complainers use the impoliteness to gain the rights of having good supervision from the supervisor, who has neglected his/her duties.

In other words, they use impoliteness to gain the rights of fair treatment, which in Spencer-Oatey's (2002) concept is referred to as 'sociality rights'. Excerpt (11) shows that impoliteness is prompted by complainees' avoidance of taking responsibility. Excerpt (4) is interesting to note because it not only confirms Culpeper's (1996) claim that a conflict of interest could induce impoliteness but also shows that long-term psychological warfare between collocutors can prompt the inception of impoliteness. In such a circumstance, impoliteness has evolved out of long-term conflictive interactions.

The next aspect to analyze is the reasons for using impoliteness. The present study has found three categories of impoliteness' triggers; (1) Speaker-related Factors (henceforth SRFs) such as their negative emotions, wants, and desires, etc. (2) Target Person-related Factors (henceforth TRFs) such as their attitude, behaviour, character, what they have done, etc. (3) Contextual Factors (henceforth CFs) which consist of other factors that relate to context situations.

The following are some SRFs that have engendered the occurrences of impoliteness. For example, the complainer in (12) states that anger is the trigger of the impoliteness.

(12) *Karena saat itu emosi saya sudah tidak bisa ditahan lagi.* (Because I cannot hold my anger anymore at that time).

The second common SRF is the annoyance. For example, reverting to his metapragmatic knowledge, the complainer in (13) states that he uses the impoliteness to express his annoyance.

(13) *Soalnya saya sudah jengkel jadi saya menyampaikannya dengan nada tinggi.* (Because I am so annoyed that I complain in high intonation).

Similarly, the complainer in (14) states that she is annoyed because her lecturer does not understand what she wants.

(14) *Mungkin saya sudah sangat sebal dengan dosen ini.* (Maybe I am really annoyed with the lecturer).

Disappointment is another aspect of SRFs. In (15), the complainer recalls his usage of high intonation to express disappointment.

(15) *Saya menggunakan nada tinggi untuk menegaskan bahwa saya kecewa pada poin ini.* (I use high intonation to emphasize that I am disappointed at this point).

In (16), the complainer states that he is very disappointed as he gets a bad mark even though he attends the class regularly.

(16) *Karena saya sudah sangat kecewa, karena saya sudah tiap hari mengikuti perkuliahannya.* (Because I am very disappointed as I have attended his lectures regularly).

The complainer in (17) states that she hates her friend who is very arrogant.

(17) *Saya sangat benci dengan temanku, jadi sok banget gitu.* (I hate my friend who is very conceited)

In (18), the complainer states that his stressful condition triggers his use of impoliteness.

(18) *Karena saya benar-benar stres, tertekan keadaan itu mbak.* (Because I am very stressful and strained by the condition).

The following excerpts show a number of LRFs (Listener-related Factors) that generate the use of impoliteness. For example, the complainer in (19) states that his friend has made a serious mistake.

(19) *Karena kondisinya teman saya melakukan kesalahan yang menurut saya itu*

adalah kesalahan yang fatal.
(I believe that my friend has made a very serious mistake).

In (20), the complainer uses impoliteness as the complainee is irresponsible to what he/she has done.

(20) *Karena dia melakukan hal yang tidak bertanggung jawab, jadi saya komplain secara tidak sopan.*
(Because he/she is irresponsible to what he/she has done, I complain to him/her impolitely).

The complainer in (21) states that his friend is inconsiderate to him.

(21) *Karena saya sangat ingin belajar tapi teman saya si Dony itu tidak pengertian.*
(Because I am trying to study, but my friend, Dony, is inconsiderate).

In (22), the complainer states that his friend has done something impolitely.

(22) *Karena tindakan dia seperti tidak tahu sopan santun.*
(Because what he has done is impolite).

In (23), the complainer gives two reasons of using the impoliteness; his brother breaking his promise and him being younger.

(23) *Karena adik saya sudah berjanji, tapi dia melanggar janji tersebut. Selain itu usia adik saya kan dibawah saya, jadi tidak masalah tidak sopan.*
(My brother has promised to return my motorbike immediately, but he instead breaks the promise. Besides, since he is younger than me, it is alright to be impolite to him).

In (24), the complainer states that his friend shows no understanding.

(24) *Karena toleransi teman saya sudah hilang.*
(Because my friend is not thoughtful at all).

In (25), the complainer uses the impoliteness because the complainee, her next door neighbour, disturbs her study.

(25) *Karena emm... dia terlalu mengganggu ketika saya belajar.*
(Because uhm... she really disturbs me while I am studying).

The complainer in (26) states that the complainee does not respect him.

(26) *Karena saya tidak dihargai walaupun sudah antri sangat lama.*
(Because he/she does not respect me, even though I have queued for a long time).

The contextual factors (CF) in the present study refer to other aspects that do not directly relate to SRFs, and LRFs discussed previously. For example, the complainer

in (27) states that the frantic situation induces him to use impoliteness.

(27) *Karena situasinya sangat mendesak, waktu itu ada ujian.*
(Because the situation is very urgent, I have an examination at that time).

In (28), the complainer affirms that the delay of finishing and sending reports incites the use of impoliteness.

(28) *Karena laporan tersebut harus dikirim ke Jakarta, jadi benar benar harus segera dikirim.*
(Because the reports have to be sent to Jakarta, they really have to be sent instantly).

Based on the metapragmatic comments on the use of impoliteness that are provided by the EFL learners (the complainers), the present study reveals various triggers of impoliteness. Some excerpts show that impoliteness can be generated by negative emotions such as anger, annoyance, disappointment, and hatred. The finding lends support to Kienpointner (2008) who has reported that specific emotions can induce impoliteness. This also supports Spencer-Oatey (2005) who has averred that negative emotions can regulate linguistic behaviour. Excerpt (12) lends support to Işık-Güler's (2008) concept of self-emotion mismanagement which is how not being able to hold back anger can make the speaker be assessed as being impolite. Nonetheless, it should be noted that even though the negative emotions above can trigger impoliteness, they are not the antecedent of impoliteness, but rather the reactions toward offending situations. In agreement with Culpeper, Bousfield, and Wichmann's (2003) findings, excerpt (13) and (15) indicate that the prosodic aspect, such as high intonation can produce impoliteness. Excerpt (18) is interesting to note as it shows how feeling worried or stressful can also induce the use of impoliteness.

Culpeper (1996) has identified some factors that can provoke the use of impoliteness such as unequal social power, intimacy, and a conflict of interest. By contrast, Bousfield (2007a) has found that impoliteness can be engendered by offensive situations that are constructed not only by a single aspect but also by concurrent factors. For example, these situations can be constructed by behaviour or performance below the expectation of the other collocutors, and by physical appearance in combination with social hierarchies within the group. The finding of the present study supports and extends Bousfield's (2007a) findings.

The excerpts above show a number of offensive situations that have brought about impoliteness. First, the offensive situation comprises events that cause the complainers to be in trouble or difficult situations. For instance, the complainer in (19) identifies the offensive situation as a serious mistake (ODCT situation 1: a friend breaks the complainer's laptop). The complainer in (23) states that the offensive situation is his/her brother's breaking the promise (ODCT situation 2: complainer' younger brother returns a motorcycle late). This supports Culpeper's (1996) claim that imbalanced social power can induce impoliteness (i.e., the complainer in (23) has more social power than the complainee). The complainer in (25) identifies the offensive situation as a disturbance (ODCT situation 4: a neighbour plays rock music too loudly). Second, the offensive situation includes negative qualities or characters displayed by the complainees such

as irresponsibility (e.g., 20), inconsideration (e.g., 21 and 26), impoliteness (e.g., 22), and insensitivity (e.g., 24). Interestingly, excerpt (22) indicates that the offensive situation is the impoliteness displayed by the complainee. Thus, impoliteness can be both the trigger and the response to impolite acts. Finally, the offensive situation comprises specific episodes that are not desired by the speakers such as excerpt (28) and (29).

In short, the offensive situations comprise listeners' factors and contextual factors. They can generate impoliteness in two different directions. First, the ones that go against the complainers' expectation, hopes, and sociality rights tended to provoke negative emotions which encourage the complainers to use impoliteness. Second, they directly induce the complainers to deploy impoliteness. Importantly, the impoliteness is conveyed with the goals of regulating the offensive situations or events. Thus, it is intentional and instrumental as summarized in Figure 1.
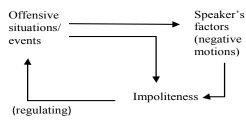

Figure 1 The Triggers of Impoliteness

CONCLUSIONS

The present study explores intentions and reasons of using impoliteness in EFL complaints. Based on the data elicited by retrospective interviews, researchers have obtained a number of explanations regarding the intentions and triggers of impoliteness. In some cases, impoliteness is deployed by speakers to exercise their power by which they can have other collocutors do what they intend, such as making them well behaved, enforcing discipline, and demanding responsibilities. Despite the enlightening findings, the study has not found intentions to attack others' face or to impair social relationship commonly claimed by literature. This might be because the ODTC scenarios have not provided situations allowing the research participants to do so. Importantly, the finding indicates that impoliteness is a means to an end rather than an end itself.

Based on the finding, it can be inferred that linguistic impoliteness is verbal aggression intentionally employed by speakers with their dynamic social power to achieve particular communicative goals, which makes it both intentional and instrumental. The reasons for involving impoliteness in the complaints provide us the better understanding that impoliteness can be triggered by a number of factors occurring in specific contexts. The metapragmatic comments obtained from the research participants provide us indispensable information that impoliteness is triggered by offensive situations that comprise listeners' factors and contextual factors. Moreover, they can incite the occurrences of impoliteness either directly or indirectly.

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