

Confrontational Diplomacy: Applying Impoliteness Strategies to Nasser's 1960 UN Speech

^{1*}Dr. Nadia Abu-Zaher and ^{2*}Dr. Mais Khalil Odeh

^{1*}Associate Professor, Department of International and Diplomatic Relations, Faculty of Administrative and Informatics Sciences, Al-Istiqlal University, Jericho, Palestine

^{2*} Assistant Professor, Department of Languages, College of Humanities, Istiqlal University, Jericho, Palestine

Abstract

This study aims to test how impoliteness strategies operate in formal institutional diplomatic discourse; in order to introduce the concept of confrontational diplomacy this concept, identified by a form of expression proving that, in which structurally weaker actors employ impoliteness strategies against more powerful antagonists while simultaneously remaining alignment with host institution.

The study adopts a qualitative political discourse analysis approach. It applies Culpeper's (1996, 2001) impoliteness frame work to the 15th session of the United Nations General Assembly delivered by Gamal Abdel Nasser's speech consisting of 8 paragraphs. The analysis incorporates systematic coding of impoliteness strategies (threat, accusation, sarcasm, and exclusion, with contextual explanation of their political function. The findings of the study show a strategic absence of direct insults, with accusation arising as dominant strategy (56.4%), followed by exclusion (23.1%), threats remain the minimal (5.1%). Impoliteness towards colonial powers is balanced with positive politeness towards the UN institution. The Findings support confrontational diplomacy concept as a repeatable analytical framework testing strategic language use by Global South leaders in international political arena.

Keywords: United Nations General Assembly, confrontational diplomacy, impoliteness, diplomatic discourse, impoliteness theory, Culpeper, Gamal Abdel Nasser, decolonization.

1. INTRODUCTION

International relations scholarship has moved beyond materialist frame works, nevertheless realist traditions keep to frame state behavior through economic, military, and geopolitical capabilities (Moisio & Paasi, 2013; McColl, 2015; Blackwill & Harris, 2016; Alami et al., 2022; Lepskiy & Lepska, 2025; Chaudhuri, 2026). Within traditional point of view, powerful states control, while weaker actors are expecting to submit, balance, or adapt (Fearon & Laitin, 2004; Urpelainen, 2011; Kassab, 2017; Kassab, 2020; Lee, 2018). Yet, these leaves unanswered question: How can weak actors face powerful states in formal international situations without access to ordinary instruments of power?

This question is represented in the case of Gamal Abel Nasser during his speech work to the 15th session of the United Nations General Assembly on 27 September 1960. (Nasser, 15th Session of General Assembly, A/PV.873, 1960), Speaking as a representative of military vulnerable and recently decolonized state following the Suez crisis. Nasser missing the material influence associated with leverage in international politics. However, his speech forcefully defied dominant powers, condemning violence in Algeria, blaming colonial actors of injustice, advocating for decolonization, and addressing the question of Palestine, while at the same time positioning himself as representative of arising postcolonial states.

Rather than depending on economic or coercion incentives, Nasser's power operated through language. This study contends that his speech typifies a strategic use of impoliteness as a political resource. Using Culpeper's (1996) classification of impoliteness strategies, this study conducts practical analysis of Nasser's speech to examine how linguistic practices operate to transform

weakness into broader international audiences.

Despite expansive attention to Nasser's political role (Vatikiotis, 2022; Mansfield, 2021; Wheelock, 2018; Cook, 2011; Thornhill, 2004), few researches have examined the pragmatic techniques underlying his discourse. Additionally, impoliteness theory has seldom been applied to formal diplomatic contexts, especially within United Nations situations. This study, address this gap by analyzing Nasser's speech.

This study aims to test how impoliteness strategies operate in formal institutional diplomatic discourse; in order to introduce the concept of confrontational diplomacy, this concept identified by a form of expression proving that, in which structurally weaker actors employ impoliteness strategies against more powerful antagonists while simultaneously remaining alignment with host institution.

By providing a new concept 'confrontational diplomacy', this study may contribute to international relation through extending impoliteness theory to diplomatic discourse, and to Arab political discourse via analysis the first linguistic Nasser's UN rhetoric.

This paper is structured as follows: Section two reviews the related literatures, section three present theoretical framework, section four describes the methodology, section five outlines the findings, and section six discusses the results and elaborates confrontational diplomacy, succeeded by the conclusion.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This review summarises the most relevant literature to date. It commences with a review of impoliteness research and the evolution of Culpeper's framework (Culpeper's, 1996; 2011), and proceeds to give an empirical investigation within political and Arabic contexts. The review then moves on to reviews of diplomatic discourse, anticolonial rhetoric and Nasserist public speaking to place the present analysis in a wider context of discussions about language, legitimacy, and international politics. We finish this section by addressing the research gaps that spur us to perform our study and justify the introduction of confrontational diplomacy as a proposed analytical framework.

2.1 Introduction to Impoliteness Research

Impoliteness has become an established area of pragmatic inquiry since the 1990s (Culpeper et al., 2003), emerging partly in response to the predominance of impoliteness-oriented approaches in linguistic pragmatics (Tsoumou, 2023; Faisol & Rahmat, 2021; Walkinshaw & Kirkpatrick, 2014). Whereas early politeness theories focused primarily on the mitigation of face-threatening acts and the maintenance of social harmony (Beh-Afarin, 2026; Nodoushan, 2012; Hernández-Flores, 2004), impoliteness research examines how speakers produce, negotiate, and interpret communicative behaviours that attack face and generate interpersonal conflict (Mapson, 2019; Haugh, & Culpeper, 2018; Culpepper, 2011; Bousfield, 2010)

Impoliteness in modern times is being perceived increasingly as a socially contextual phenomenon based on social norms, ideological stance, and audience reaction (Culpeper, 2010; Mills, 2009). In line with Culpeper's (2011) definition, the current research takes a socio-pragmatic approach to impoliteness, focusing on the relationship between language use, context and social norms. The current theoretical framework is highly pertinent in the field of diplomatic speech, where face attacks usually take indirect forms, namely accusations, de-legitimation, and moral challenge.

2.2 Foundational Works: Culpeper (1996) and the Original Taxonomy

Another seminal work that has contributed to the study of impoliteness is that by Culpeper (1996), titled 'Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness'. In his study, Culpeper (1996) proposed a framework on how speakers consciously violate face and generate conflicts, drawing upon the concept of politeness as discussed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Rather than viewing impoliteness as the opposite of

politeness, he used the term 'impoliteness' as a strategic act of communication. Drawing on Brown and Levinson (1987) politeness frame work, Culpeper (1996) put forward five strategies of impoliteness. These five strategies have since become the foundation of impoliteness research. As they describe different ways in which speakers may attack the face requirements of others and are summarized in table (1)

Table (1): The model consists of five impoliteness super-strategies:

Strategy	Definition	Example
Bald on record impoliteness	Direct, unambiguous face attack	"You are a liar."
Positive impoliteness	Attacks the target's desire to be liked, approved of, or included	Ignoring or excluding someone
Negative impoliteness	Attacks the target's freedom of action or autonomy	Threatening or condescending behavior
Sarcasm / mock politeness	Apparently polite behaviour conveying the opposite meaning	"What a brilliant idea."
Withhold politeness	Failure to provide expected polite behavior	Not expressing thanks when expected

Source of table (1) Compiled by authors based on Culpeper (1996) drawing on Brown and Levinson (1987).

Culpeper originally constructed this a model using their own analysis of verbal exchanges occurring during military training, which is an extremely stratified and asymmetric organization. (Culpeper, 1996). Culpeper 's studies revealed the effectiveness of impoliteness in some situations as a good communicative strategy, rather than interaction breakdown. (Culpeper, 2011; Culpeper, 2010; Culpeper, 2005; Culpeper ,1996), the development of Culpeper's work reflects a transition from a strategy-based approach Culpeper (1996) to a broader socio pragmatic understanding of impoliteness that reinforces social expectation evaluation, and context (Culpeper, 2011). While the original model focused on identifying face-attacking strategies, later studies examined several aspects related to impoliteness such as: different types of interactions, ranging from politics to media discourse on social networking sites, audience evaluation, conventionalized impoliteness, and the role of context in interpreting offence (Yang, 2026; Magnifico & Defrancq, 2016; Salimiyan, 2015; Haugh, 2015). This development is especially related to diplomatic discourse where confrontation is realized through context-dependent forms of face attack and indirect instead of overt insults.

2.3 Culpeper's Refined Framework (2011)

Impoliteness: Using Language to Cause Offence by Culpeper (2011) marked a major advancement and development on previous theories and studies about impoliteness. In addition to considering strategies, Impoliteness recognises the significance of interpreting situations in context and taking into account social norms, emotions, and ideologies.

One important aspect is the differentiation between conventionalised impoliteness and implicational impoliteness. In the case of conventionalised impoliteness, the speaker communicates offensive meanings such as insults and abuse; implicational impoliteness arises from interpreting speech acts within their contexts, and an evaluation should take into account the specific social context. Face satisfaction may be further complicated by the international order's moral perspective since, although there are few direct insults in diplomatic discourse, face attacks tend to happen indirectly through insult, accusation, and exclusion. Culpeper (2011) also identifies three broad functions of impoliteness

consists the key component of his frame work:

Table (2): Key Components of Culpeper's (2011)

Function	Goal	Typical Context
Affective impoliteness	Expressing strong negative emotions	Arguments and conflicts
Coercive impoliteness	Pressuring others to alter their behavior	Institutional and hierarchical settings
Entertaining impoliteness	Amusing or engaging a third-party audience	Media and public performances

Source of table (2): Compiled by authors based on Culpeper (2011).

As shown in table (2), Culpeper's (2011) framework broaden the original classification by emphasizing participant evaluation, the distinction between conventionalized, implicational impoliteness and context. These developments are especially relevant to diplomatic discourse where offence is conveyed indirectly instead of explicit insults. These functions highlight that impoliteness is not solely directed toward immediate targets but may also serve broader social and political purposes. Impoliteness may be employed to convey ideology and assert dissent in the realms of public and political debate. This functionalist approach offers a key point of departure from which to analyses the role of face attack in diplomacy.

2.4 Empirical Applications of Impoliteness Theory

Past research in impoliteness theory has included many different contexts of communication such as drama performance (Birtalan, 2016; Toddington, 2015; Salimiyan, 2015; Culpeper, 2005), politics (Ibrahim, 2020; García-Pastor, 2008; Harris, 2005), and social media interaction (Tenekezi, 2022; Kienpointner, 2018; Karina et al., 2023). All these pieces of research reveal that the phenomenon of impoliteness can vary greatly depending on the context, and can either be direct or indirect.

Scholarly research on political communication has revealed how impoliteness often operates as a strategy of delegitimization (Schubert, 2022; Berrocal, 2019; Al-Tahmazi, 2016), ideological contestation (Su & Lee, 2022) and audience mobilization (Barbara & Piotr, 2021). Examples include studies of electoral debates that identified mechanisms such as criticism, disagreement, and condescension working in politically strategic ways to challenge interlocutors and negotiate relations of power. Based on political contexts within the Arabic culture and within other culture, studies have shown that cultural and religious groundings may influence the linguistic realisation of impoliteness, occasionally generating forms not necessarily integrated into existing taxonomies (Ajayi & Bamgbose, 2019; Dynel, 2015).

Despite these advances, relatively little attention has been paid to formal diplomatic discourse. Most existing research has focused on domestic political communication, media interaction, or online environments, leaving the role of impoliteness in international institutional settings largely unexplored.

2.5 Diplomatic Discourse, Anti-Colonial Rhetoric, and International Legitimacy

Diplomacy has always been viewed as a form of communication characterized by caution, negotiation, and the creation of positive cooperation between nations. (Pamment, 2014; Gilboa, 2000). Therefore, the studies of diplomacy have mostly emphasized topics such as the establishment of consensus, the resolution of conflicts and politeness used strategically (Bashir, 2024; Jackson, 2018; Rattananukool, 2016). Nevertheless, diplomatic gatherings could also be perceived as arenas of ideological struggle where political actors were attempting to subvert the dominant discourses and generate alternative discourses. (Pryakhin, 2025)

In terms of decolonization, diplomacy became even more crucial because new nations tried to

establish alternatives to the existing global order. Utilizing moral and political justifications against colonizers' control, leaders from the Afro-Asian movement and the Non-Aligned movement found their interest in international organizations such as the UN. As a result, diplomacy was not only the form of communication between nations but also a form of political struggle against colonizers.

Nasser is a figure who held an important place during this period of history. Being a giant of Arab nationalism, Afro-Asian solidarity, and the Non-Aligned Movement, Nasser often resorted to the use of international forums to present anti-colonial arguments in favor of the political ambitions of newly independent countries (Belli, 2017). While most previous works on Nasser have been devoted to his role, nationalism, and effect on international relations, not much work has been done regarding the way in which language plays an important role in dealing with the colonial powers diplomatically (Ullah & Khan, 2020; Thornhill, 2004).

2.6 The Concept of Confrontational Diplomacy in Existing Literature

In the existing literature, many different diplomatic discourses have been explored, ranging from coercive diplomacy, public diplomacy to rhetoric diplomacy (Aginam, 2016; Levy, 2008; Nye, 2008). Yet, few studies have been conducted on those diplomatic forms which include a combination of political confrontation and adherence to the principles of internationalism.

Even though the notion "confrontational diplomacy has appeared in recent studies, it has generally been used in a descriptive manner to characterize conflict or strained interstate relations instead of a clearly defined analytical concept. For instance, a recent study of Gwakwara, & Niyitunga, (2024) employed the term to describe diplomatic tensions arising between Zimbabwe and EU about the sanctions and visa restrictions. However, it didn't provide operational or linguistic framework for identifying confrontational diplomacy in discourse. This study will address this gap by conceptualizing confrontational diplomacy as a discursive strategy.

The closest term to the present research is coercive diplomacy (George, 1991) which designates attempts to affect the adversary's behavior by issuing threats of military or any other type of coercion. Although coercive diplomacy includes a focus on material pressure, the present study aims at exploring linguistic, moral confrontation and delegitimation strategies involved in diplomatic communication.

Thus, an interesting theoretical question arises as to whether such a distinctive diplomatic discourse can exist and whether the kind of linguistic phenomena should characterize it.

2.7 Research Gap

Although impoliteness has been widely examined in interpersonal interaction (Ran & Zhao, 2019), media discourse (Barbara & Piotr, 2021), dramatic texts (Toddington, 2015), and electoral debates (García, 2022), its role in formal diplomatic settings remains underexplored. Existing studies applying Culpeper's framework have focused primarily on domestic political communication, online interaction, and entertainment contexts, leaving international diplomatic discourse largely unexamined.

Similarly, research on Nasser's rhetoric has concentrated on themes such as nationalism, leadership, image repair, and political communication, rather than on impoliteness and face attack. Furthermore, while the term "confrontational diplomacy" occasionally appears in political and historical discussions, it has not been systematically defined, operationalised, or analysed as a linguistic phenomenon.

Accordingly, the present study addresses three interconnected gaps: the limited application of impoliteness theory to diplomatic discourse, the absence of pragmatic analyses of Nasser's UN rhetoric, and the lack of a coherent analytical framework for understanding confrontational diplomacy in international forums.

2.8 Contribution of the Present Study

Based the gap identified above this study fills the gap by: (1) applying Culpeper's framework to a UN speech for the first time; (2) providing the first pragmatic analysis of Nasser's UN oratory; (3) introducing and operationalising 'confrontational diplomacy'; (4) testing Culpeper's framework in a non-Western, post-colonial diplomatic context.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present study is informed by contemporary approaches to impoliteness and face attack, particularly the work of Culpeper (1996, 2011). However, rather than applying existing categories mechanically, the study adapts insights from impoliteness theory to the specific context of diplomatic discourse. The framework developed here provides the conceptual basis for analysing how linguistic confrontation operates within a formal international setting and how recurring patterns of accusation, exclusion, and moral delegitimisation contribute to what this study terms confrontational diplomacy.

3.1 Impoliteness, Face Attack, and Diplomatic Discourse

The theoretical framework of this study is grounded primarily in Culpeper's (2011) understanding of impoliteness as communicative behaviour that attacks the face of a target and generates social conflict. Rather than treating impoliteness as the mere absence of politeness, contemporary approaches conceptualise it as a socially evaluated phenomenon whose interpretation depends on context, expectations, and power relations.

The present study extends this perspective to diplomatic discourse. While diplomacy is often associated with politeness, restraint (Wijayanto, 2025), and cooperation (De Oliveira, 2021), diplomatic communication may also involve strategic forms of face attack directed at political adversaries. Accordingly, impoliteness is approached here not as a breakdown of diplomacy but as a potential diplomatic resource through which speakers challenge legitimacy, construct moral authority, and mobilise international audiences.

3.2 Political Discourse and Impoliteness

Speakers in political discourse, frequently employ accusation, criticism, delegitimisation and exclusion to challenge advance ideological positions and opponents. Such practices convert impoliteness into political resource through which moral and power relations claims are negotiated. This perspective is relevant to anti-colonial rhetoric, where language functions to persuade and contest existing structure of authority.

3.3 Impoliteness in Diplomatic Contexts

Diplomatic discourse is associated with restraint (Wijayanto, 2025), institutional decorum, and politeness. Nevertheless, diplomatic actors engage in confrontation's forms that remain consistent with formal and diplomatic norms. Rather than depending on direct insults, they use indirect strategies like moral condemnation, exclusion, and accusation. This study argues that these kinds of implicational impoliteness are particularly visible in anti-colonial diplomatic discourse and thus provide a framework for analysing Nasser's 1960 United Nation speech.

3.4 Impoliteness, Political Discourse and Power

The study of impoliteness expands beyond interpersonal interaction to wider questions of social relations and power (Harris, 2001). In political discourse, face attacks are often at individuals, ideologies, collective actors and institutions. Such attacks operate as means of delegitimation through which speakers challenge construct alternative moral positions and existing power. From this perspective, impoliteness is a political resource that can be served to contest authority, linguistic phenomenon and reshape public interoperations of legitimacy.

3.5 Impoliteness in Diplomatic Contexts

Diplomatic discourse is associated with politeness, formality and restraint. However, diplomatic actors engage in moral condemnation, accusation, and criticism, while maintaining adherence to institutional norms. This generates a tension between political confrontation and diplomatic decorum (Pattison, 2015). The present study argues that impoliteness in diplomatic settings function through implicational strategies instead of overt insults. This makes diplomatic discourse especially useful context for investigating how face attacks can occur together with institutional loyalty.

4.METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study employs a discourse analysis approach, harmonized with quantitative frequency analysis, to analyze how impoliteness theory can be widened to formal political discourse. The study described impoliteness strategies, and interpret by testing their rhetorical and political functions within diplomatic discourse. The methodology is designed to analyze the 1960 speech delivered by Gamal Abdel Nasser, based on culppers's (1996, 2011) impoliteness framework as analytical tool. This section starts by presenting by data source and corpus selection, followed by context of the speech, the analytical procedures will come after, validity and reliability will come next, and finally the study's limitations.

4.1 Data Source and Corpus Selection

The primary corpus text to be analyzed is the speech of late Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser which was delivered before the 15th session of United Nations General Assembly on September, 27, 1960, available through the archives of the UN. The length of this speech is 88 paragraphs (110-198) (Nasser, 15th Session of General Assembly, A/PV.873, 1960, pp. 145-153), the language used in this speech is Arabic Language but it was analyzed by official UN English translation. The paragraph was depended as the primary unit of analysis, amplifies a rhetorical unit in the political discourse. While several impoliteness strategies transpire within a single paragraph, each is coded discretely, but the paragraph functions as counting unit to evade inflation of frequency results

The selection of this speech is analytically and theoretically justified. As it frames impoliteness not as linguistic deviation only, but also as a strategic resource employed within diplomatic and ideological contestation. In addition, the selection of the speech is justified because the presence of an empathetic audience represented by newly decolonized states gives a third-party mobilization function that Culpeper (2011) termed entertaining impoliteness.

Besides, the selection of the speech is justified because Abel Nasser's positioning as a leader of the Non- Aligned Movement (Tassin, 2006) enables him to challenge hegemonic discourses without overt confrontation. As represents a formal institutionalized communicative setting, where impoliteness is constrained by diplomatic norms. So, such a formal institution like the United Nations General Assembly, make it an ideal site for analyzing how impoliteness may operate in strategically mitigated, implicit and indirect and forms.

4.2 Context of the Speech

The speech was delivered during the Cold War context. This context, is characterized by power asymmetries and ideological polarization (De Keersmaeker, 2016; Haas, 2014; Thompson, 1991; Thies, 2013; Duara, 2011). During this context, it was a historical juncture. Geopolitically, it came during the pinnacle of the Cold War (Westad, 2000), after the U-2 event broke down Paris Summit. Besides, 1960 was named 'the year of Africa', distinguished by the UN membership approval of 13 newly independent African States. (Simpson, T., & Harisch, 2025) The immediate crisis mentioned in the speech include the Algerian War results (Nasser, 15th Session of General Assembly, A/PV.873, 1960, paragraph 140-144) and the Congo Crisis results (Nasser, 15th Session of General Assembly, A/PV.873, 1960, paragraph 125-127), this speech represents an analytically corpus and a highly relevant for extending impoliteness theory beyond its focus on interpersonal and informal contexts into the formal political discourse.

4.3 Data Analysis Procedures

The analysis is carried out in several stages as the following:

1. The primary corpus text to be analyzed was identified from paragraph (110-198), of verbatim records of the UN (Nasser, 15th Session of General Assembly, A/PV.873, 1960, pp. 145-153)
2. Recursive clause reading was conducted to ensure identification of potential impoliteness.
3. Coding was used to each paragraph for the appearance of impoliteness strategies according to Culpeper's (1996, 2011) Taxonomy, which includes six strategies: Direct insult (I), accusation (A), threatening (T), sarcasm (S), exclusion (E) and mockery (C).
4. Quantifying the speech: Frequencies were estimated across the 88 paragraphs in order to determine distribution pattern.
5. Contextual analysis: In order to conduct the contextual analysis, each determined instance was analyzed in relation to its broader political, historical, diplomatic context.
6. Avoiding inflation of frequency results: Coding protocol was used in counting the results, where the paragraph treated as the unit of counting. The multiple instances of the exactly alike strategy appeared in a single paragraph; they were estimated once to avoid expansion of frequency results.

These procedures ensure replicable and rigorous analysis, directly linking the connecting the theoretical framework to the observations.

4.4 Validity and Trustworthy

To enhance the validity of the analysis, interpretation was supported by reference to both historical context and textual evidence. Also, the dataset was coded twice with a three-week interval. The level of consent reached 94.8%, with 37% out of 39 determined impoliteness cases coded through the both rounds; while concerning methodological transparency all coding procedures and categories were clearly defined to guarantee the replicability. To make sure of the internal validity, the analytical framework was grounded in Culpeper's (2011) widely cited model of impoliteness. Finally, to guarantee the external validity, the analytical framework can be adaptable to comparable examples of diplomatic and institutional discourse, while the analysis based on a single case study. These measures to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings.

4.5 Study's Limitations

This study has many limitations. First, it depended on a single case study through a particular historical institutional and historical context, therefore the findings cannot be generalized to all types of diplomatic discourse without comparative research. Second, the analysis depends on the official UN English translation instead of the original Arabic text, which may influence the representation of specific pragmatic nuances. Third, the nonexistence of audience receiving data limits the capability to assess the impact of the speech. In spite of these limitations, the study offers replicable analysis and theory-driven that fills a gap in both the study of Arab political discourse and impoliteness research.

5 .ANALYSIS

This section sets out the analysis of impoliteness strategies in Nasser's speech 1960, the findings are arranged based on function, distribution, and frequency of the identified strategies, with special attention to the relationship between institutional legitimacy in diplomatic discourse and the confrontation. The analysis integrates qualitative interpretation with quantitative distribution in order to analyze how impoliteness functions within a formal international organization:

5.1 Aggregate Distribution of Impoliteness Strategies

This section introduces the quantitative results of the coding of Nasser's speech consists of 88 paragraphs from (110-198). It should be noted that coding reliability was verified, because all instances

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were manually coded based on Culpeper's (1996, 2011) impoliteness strategies. Since diplomatic discourse relies on indirect types of face attack, contextual explanation was necessary in determining exclusion and accusation strategies. Equivocal cases were reassessed to ensure coherence between pragmatic function and linguistic form. Table (3) below illustrates coding, the percentage and the frequency of each strategy through the entire corpus.

Table (3): Distribution of Impoliteness Strategies by Coding, Frequency, and Percentage

Strategy	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Direct Insult	I	0	0%
Threat	T	2	5.1%
Sarcasm	S	5	12.8%
Accusation	A	22	56.4%
Mockery	C	1	2.6%
Exclusion	E	9	23.1%
Total		39	100%

Source of Table (3): Compiled by authors

Note: Mockery refers to ridiculing, condescending, or patronising language (Culpeper, 2011)

From table (3) above, several observations about impoliteness strategies in Nasser's speech can be noted, first, the complete absence of direct insults (0%) is especially noteworthy. In spite of highly charged political context, Nasser forbears entirely from using taboo expression, derogatory labels, or overt personal attacks against states or political leaders. This finding contradicts the widespread assumption that impoliteness is realised via explicit verbal aggression like name -calling or swearing. In high-stakes diplomatic settings impoliteness serves through more complicated mechanisms.

Second, Exclusion (23.1%) and accusation (56.4%) together account for about 80% of impoliteness instances. This is not coincidental. By accusing colonial powers of particular crimes in Congo, in Palestine, in Algeria. Nasser positions himself as representative of anti-colonial before an international audience. Accusation serves as an aggressive linguistic act and as a mechanism for political delegitimization and moral positioning.

Third, threats are scarce (5.1%) and qualitative analysis shows historical or moral in nature. Nasser doesn't invoke military force, rather, his discourse frames anti colonial resistance and historical justice as inevitable outcomes. This differentiates his approach from Georg's (1991) 'coercive diplomacy' which focuses on military threats.

Fourth, the low percentage of mockery (2.6%) and sarcasm (12.8%) indicate that Nasser favorite direct moral condemnation over ironic

Table (3) sets out the aggregate distribution of impoliteness strategies through the major sections of Nasser's 1960 UN speech. The analysis shows that impoliteness is revolved mainly in colonialism discussions, such as Palestine (Nasser, 15th Session of General Assembly, A/PV.873, 1960, paragraph 129-38), Algeria (Nasser, 15th Session of General Assembly, A/PV.873, 1960, paragraph 140-144), and Congo (Nasser, 15th Session of General Assembly, A/PV.873, 1960, paragraph 125-127), while sections devoted to non-alignment, peace, and institutional cooperation include few or no impoliteness indicators. Table (4) illustrate more about distribution of impoliteness strategies through the speech:

Table (4): Distribution of Impoliteness Strategies through Nasser's Speech

Paragraphs	Topic	Accusation (A)	Mockery (C)	Sarcasm (S)	Exclusion (E)	Threat (T)	Total
110-115	Welcoming new states and opening	0	0	0	0	0	0
116	Call for	1	0	0	0	0	1

	China's admission						
117-119	Faith in the UN Charter	0	0	0	0	0	0
120-124	Post Congo and Suez Colonialism	3	0	1	1	0	5
125-128	Imperialism and Congo	4	0	0	2	1	7
129-138	Colonial conspiracy and Palestine	5	0	1	2	1	9
139-147	French colonialism and Algeria	6	1	0	3	0	11
148	Oman and Discrimination	1	0	0	1	0	2
149-152	Cold war politics and the UN	1	0	1	0	0	2
153-164	Peace and non-alignment	0	0	0	0	0	0
165-172	Disarmament	0	0	0	0	0	0
173-182	Suez and economic independence	1	0	1	0	0	2
183-198	Conclusion and Bandung principles	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		22	1	5	9	2	39

Source of Table (4): Compiled by authors

As illustrated in table (4), accusation appears as the dominant strategy, representing (54.4%) of all deducted occurrences succeeded by exclusion (23.1%). In contrast, mockery and threats were found only rarely. Remarkably, of occurrences of direct insult were identified through the speech. This finding indicates that impoliteness in diplomatic discourse may operate mainly through indirect delegitimising strategies rather than explicit verbal aggression. The highest focus of impoliteness appeared in sections discussing Palestine, Algeria, Congo, where colonialism was presented as both a moral and political violation.

5.2 Accusation as Predominant Strategy

The analysis shows that accusation represents Nasser's main impoliteness strategy. Rather than depending on direct personal attacks. The speech frequently constructs international actors and colonial powers as morally in charge of instability, institutional distortion, and injustice. The following table shows more about accusation strategy:

Table (5): Accusation Strategy in Nasse's Speech

Paragraph	Nature of Accusation	Target of Accusation
116	Excluding China from the UN	Major powers
120	Concealed colonialism in Congo	Imperialism
122-123	Feigned withdrawal	Belgian imperialism

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124	Attempting to extinguish freedom	Imperialism
125	Using the UN as a political mask	Imperialism
127	Causing collapse of the legitimate Congolese government	Imperialism/UN actors
129-130	Ignoring the Charter in Palestine	UN/imperial powers
131	Fragmenting Arab geographical unity	Imperialism
138	Moral complicity	Supporters of the 'fait accompli'
140-141	Obstructing efforts to stop violence	France
143	Violating agreements and hijacking aircraft	France
144	Using torture	France
150	Treating the UN as a Cold War instrument	Major powers

Source of Table (5): Compiled by authors

Table (5) indicates that accusation strategy is dominance in Nasser's speech. Also, the dominance of accusation reflects a discursive strategy focused on moral judgement rather than interpersonal hostility. Nasser locations himself as a defender of international legitimacy while as at the same time portraying colonial powers as violators sovereignty, justice, and the UN Charter. In this regard, accusation functions as a means of delegitimization that attacks political reliability rather than personal character.

5.3 Moral Delegitimation and Exclusion

Besides accusation, exclusion forms a major strategy through opponents are figuratively removed from political, moral, or humanitarian legitimacy. Following table (6) illustrate more about Moral delegitimation and exclusion:

Table (6) Exclusion Strategies in Nasser's Speech

Paragraph	Excluded form	Excluded Actor
124	Progressive humanity	Imperialism
127	Political legitimacy	Katanga secessionists
138	Moral responsibility	Advocates of the 'fait accompli'
140	Moral justice	France
146	Historical inevitability	Colonialism
148	Shared humanity	Racial discrimination advocates
150	Political truth	Major powers misusing the UN

Source of Table (6): Compiled by authors

Unlike direct insult, exclusion functions indirectly by denying opponents political belonging or moral. So, strategy intensifies impoliteness while protecting diplomatic formality. Through this tool colonial powers are not only criticized; they are constituted as standing outside truth, justice and legitimate international conduct.

5.4 Secondary Strategies: Mockery, Sarcasm and Threat

Compared with exclusion and sarcasm, exclusion, threat and mockery occur less frequently in the speech. Following table (7) clarify more:

Table (7): Secondary Impoliteness Strategies

Strategy type	Target	Paragraph
Sarcasm	Post-Sues Imperialism	120
Sarcasm	Belgin withdrawal daims	122-23
Sarcasm	League of Nations mandate	129-130
Mockery	French political behavior	143
Sarcasm	The UN as a Cold War instrument	150

Moral threat	Supporters of the 'fait accompli'	128
Existential threat/ Historical	Colonialism in Algeria	146

Source of Table (7): Compiled by authors

Table (7) indicates the limited frequency of these strategies implies that Nasser favored direct moral accusation over coercion or ridicule. Significantly, threat detected in the speech are historical and moral rather than military in nature. This differentiates the speech from models of coercive diplomacy that rely on explicit threats of force. Rather, the speech depends on moral condemnation, historical inevitability, and political exposure.

5.5 Diplomatic Confrontation and Balancing Institutional Politeness

One of the most notable findings of the study is the harmony of institutional politeness toward the UN and impoliteness toward colonial powers. The twofold orientation forms the foundation of what this study tentatively terms confrontational diplomacy. Following table (8) explain more:

Table (8) Impoliteness and Balancing Politeness

Politeness Toward the UN	Impoliteness Toward Adversaries	Paragraph
Welcoming new member states	-	115
Affirming faith in the UN Charter	Accusing major powers of excluding China	116-117
Declaring readiness to uphold the Charter	-	119
-	Accusing imperialism of exploiting the UN	125
-	Moral threat	128
-	Strong accusations against France	140-147
Calling for the UN to support truth	Accusing major powers of instrumentalizing the UN	150
Praising the UN's host country	Mild criticism of delegation treatment	151

Source of Table (8): Compiled by authors

The finding as table (8) demonstrates that Nasser does not criticize the United Nations as an institution. Rather, he distinguishes between the values of the United Nations and the conduct of powerful states functioning within it. The difference enables the speaker to maintain institutional legitimacy while at the same time engaging in strong confrontational discourse. Thus, complicates traditional politeness patterns by integrating adversarial impoliteness with institutional alignment in the same communicative context.

5.6 Confrontational Diplomacy

Depending on the findings above, confrontational diplomacy may be temporarily defined as a rhetorical strategy functioned by speaker actors in international forums. The strategy is distinguished by the systematic use of exclusion and accusation in opposition to powerful adversaries while at the same time affirming loyalty to the principles and the host institution.

The analysis recognized five observable indicators of confrontational diplomacy in Nasser's speech:

1. Plain confirmation of the legitimacy of the UN charter.
2. Nonexistence of military threats.
3. Appeals to Global South audience and colonized nations.

4. Self-positioning as an advocate of institutional and moral legitimacy.
5. Use of impoliteness toward external political opponents.

All five indicators were introduced in the speech, demonstrating that Nasser's discourse integrated confrontational delegitimization with institutional loyalty. This form has obtained limited attention in previous studies of diplomatic discourse, which have focus either on coercive diplomatic rhetoric or on politeness strategies.

6. DISCUSSION: TOWARD A FRAMEWORK OF CONFRONTATIONAL DIPLOMACY

The preceding findings revealed a consistent pattern in which impoliteness was directed primarily at colonial powers and political adversaries, while expressions of institutional support remained directed toward the United Nations and its principles. This section discusses the broader implications of these findings and argues that they reflect a distinctive form of diplomatic discourse. Building on the empirical analysis, the section develops the concept of *confrontational diplomacy* as a framework for understanding the coexistence of political confrontation and institutional legitimacy in international forums.

6.1 From Impoliteness to Confrontational Diplomacy

The results demonstrate the presence of a persistent discursive rhetoric that cannot be completely accounted for by approaches to politeness or diplomatic discourse alone. Despite Nasser's continual use of strategies of impoliteness against colonialists and political enemies alike however, he also expressed support for the United Nations and its ideals when necessary. These two orientations imply an act of communication, equal parts institutional loyalty and political opposition.

The speech therefore demonstrates that diplomatic discourse does not necessarily require the avoidance of face-threatening acts. Rather, confrontation may coexist with institutional legitimacy when criticism is directed at particular actors rather than at the institution itself. This pattern is particularly visible in Nasser's repeated accusations against colonial powers alongside his explicit affirmation of the UN Charter.

6.2 Defining Confrontational Diplomacy

Based on the present case study, confrontational diplomacy may be provisionally defined as a form of diplomatic discourse in which political actors employ systematic moral confrontation against external adversaries while simultaneously affirming the legitimacy of the international institution within which that confrontation occurs.

Unlike coercive diplomacy, confrontational diplomacy does not rely primarily on military threats or material pressure. Instead, it derives its force from accusation, exclusion, moral delegitimation, and appeals to principles such as justice, self-determination, and anti-colonial legitimacy.

6.3 Distinguishing Confrontational Diplomacy from Related Concepts

Before putting forward confrontational diplomacy as a distinguishable analytical concept, it is important to clarify how it connects to existing concepts in diplomatic and political studies. Though it shares particular features with the concepts as rhetorical diplomacy, image repair, and coercive diplomacy, the pattern is determined in Nasser's speech in its discursive functions, mechanisms, and objectives. Following table (9) summarises the main differences between confrontational diplomacy and the related concepts.

Table (9): Differences between Confrontation Diplomacy and Related Concepts

Concept	Core Mechanism	Difference from Confrontational Diplomacy
Coercive Diplomacy (George, 1991)	Threat of force	Confrontational diplomacy relies on moral rather than military pressure
Politeness Theory	Face support and cooperation	Confrontational diplomacy combines face attack with institutional support
Populist Discourse	People versus elite	Operates primarily in domestic politics rather than international institutions
Image Repair Theory	Protection of speaker image	Focuses on delegitimising opponents rather than restoring self-image
Rhetorical Diplomacy	Persuasion	Emphasises confrontation and moral accusation

Source of Table (9): Compiled by authors

As table (9) shows, confrontational diplomacy cannot be decreased to conventional rhetorical persuasion, or coercive diplomacy. Rather, it merges simultaneous affirmation of institutional legitimacy and systematic face attacks against external adversaries with thus enabling weaker actors to practice influence through moral power not only through material power.

6.4 Indicators of Confrontational Diplomacy

The effectiveness of analytical framework relies on its applicability to empirical data. Table (8) applies the suggested indicators to Nasser's 1960 UN speech to assess whether the recognized discourse pattern fulfills the criteria of Confrontational Diplomacy.

Table (10): Using Indicators of Confrontational Diplomacy

Indicator	Evidence from Nasser's Speech
Impoliteness directed at external adversaries	22 accusations and 9 exclusions
Institutional loyalty	Explicit affirmation of the UN Charter
Absence of military coercion	No military threats identified
Moral self-positioning	Presentation of self as defender of justice and decolonization
Third-party audience mobilization	Appeals to Africa, Asia, and formerly colonised peoples

Source of Table (10): Compiled by authors

As table (10) indicates, previous scholarship has tested anti colonial moral, rhetoric authority, and diplomatic discourse separately. Yet, it hasn't provided a systematic framework for analyzing how these elements are combined through impoliteness strategies in formal diplomatic context.

6.5 Theoretical Implications

The results should inform scholarship on diplomatic discourse by showing that impoliteness and diplomacy are not mutually exclusive. Current Modalities of Diplomacy A common perception is that diplomacy evokes the image of decorousness, moderation and consensus-building. But Nasser's address shows how diplomatic actors might use confrontation strategically while reinventing their institutions of legitimacy.

This study also adds to the literature on anti-colonial political discourse more generally. Instead of limiting decolonisation to a political project, Nasser conceptualises it as a moral battle in which the legitimacy of colonial powers is undermined through accusation and exclusion. Confrontational diplomacy therefore provides a useful framework for understanding how leaders of newly independent states sought to transform structural weakness into moral authority within international

forums.

7. CONCLUSION

This study attempts to investigate the role of impoliteness strategies in a speech made by Gamal Abdel Nasser at the United Nations in 1960 in order to analyze how confrontational discourse operates within an institutionalized diplomatic context. Using Culpeper's framework of impoliteness, certain strategies were found to dominate this speech: the most common being accusation and exclusion in contrast with a complete absence of direct insults. The results show that Nasser refrained from direct verbal violence and primarily invoked moral delegitimization in his discourse concerning colonialism, the Congo crisis, Palestine, and the Algerian struggle for independence.

In addition to identifying individual impoliteness strategies, the study also highlighted a wider pattern showing opposing conventions of confrontation and institutional allegiance at play. Conversely, Nasser condemned colonial powers and their backers wholesale, while at the same time continuing to respect the United Nations and its mission. This allowed him to take on powerful actors without destabilizing the institutional order in which his critique was articulated.

Building upon these findings, the study proposed *confrontational diplomacy* as an initial conceptual framework for analyzing discourse that mobilizes moral confrontation alongside institutional claim. Whereas coercive diplomacy depends on threat and material pressure, confrontational diplomacy draws its strength from accusation, exclusion, moral authority, and calls for anti-colonial justice. The concept provides a helpful framework to analyze how structurally inferior actors may convert structural disadvantage into rhetorical power in the context of international forums.

Thereby this study adds to the body of research on impoliteness, diplomatic discourse, and anti-colonial political communication as it shows that diplomacy is not necessarily a-political but rather impolite. In fact, in contrast to the bottom-line-oriented Economics of Discontent, forms of impoliteness strategically used against foreign enemies might fulfill significant diplomatic purposes as long as they remain within clearly defined shared institutional norms.

Because the analysis was conducted on just one speech, more work is needed to evaluate how transferable confrontational diplomacy might be across time periods, political leaders and international contexts. Comparative studies involving other Non-Aligned Movement leaders, postcolonial states, or contemporary diplomatic speeches may help refine and further validate the analytical framework proposed here.

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