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## **Violation of Leech's Politeness Maxims in Pakistani Political Talk Shows: A Pragmatic Analysis of Capital Talk**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research examines violation to Leech's (1983) Politeness Maxims in Pakistani political talk show, "Capital Talk", a program featuring journalist Hamid Mir on Geo News. With an increasing number of political talk shows now being used as a high-pressure arena for public debate, they often utilize communication styles that violate traditional rules of politeness. Using a mixed-methodology (qualitative/quantitative), rooted in pragmatic theory, this research analyzes three episodes of "Capital Talk" which were broadcast on May 31st, June 1st, and June 2nd 2026. The data consists of dialogues among politicians, journalists and analysts. Based on Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle, consisting of six maxims (Tact; Generosity; Approval; Modesty; Agreement; and Sympathy), these maxims provide the theoretical underpinnings for this research. Results indicate that the most commonly broken maxims are Approbation and Agreement followed closely by Tact. Impolite behavior was exhibited through face threatening acts, interruptions, verbal aggression, sarcastic comments and deliberate denigration of their political opponents. In conclusion, the researchers assert that the confrontational nature of the program and the format utilized to create a confrontational environment systematically encourages impoliteness as a rhetorical strategy. These results contribute to the knowledge in the fields of pragmatics, political discourse analysis, and media studies.

**Keywords:** Leech's Politeness Maxims, Impoliteness, Pakistani Political Discourse, Capital Talk, Pragmatics, Face-Threatening Acts, Talk Shows

### **Introduction**

#### **Background of the Study**

Political discourse can never be just about conveying content -- it is always shaped by social, cultural, and political factors that influence how we create, contest and negotiate the meanings in our messages. Political discourse; however, uses language as a tool with significant implications, including building alliances, criticizing opponents, defending policy initiatives and influencing public opinion. Hence, the study of political language is at the center of pragmatics, discourse analysis, and sociolinguistics. Since the liberalization of the electronic media sector in 2002 by General Pervez Musharraf's government, political talk shows have been the primary medium for political communication in Pakistan. Liberalization of the electronic media sector created private television news outlets, such as Geo News, ARY News, and Dunya News. All three have



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high viewer ratings and produce popular political talk shows during prime-time hours. As such, they have become a means of shaping public opinion through political socialization.

Capital Talk is one of Pakistan's longest-running and most-watched political talk shows. Capital Talk began airing on January 1st, 2002, and has featured almost all of Pakistan's top political figures. It has also provided many of the most memorable moments in Pakistani media history. Capital Talk features a competitive style of debate that includes confrontation between politicians representing different parties. Additionally, the host usually takes an inquisitive or accusatory position against guests. Because of this, Capital Talk represents a unique opportunity for analyzing politeness violations and impoliteness strategies. Leech's (1983) theory of politeness provides a strong theoretical framework for analyzing politeness violations and impoliteness strategies used in the talk show format. Leech argued that individuals engaging in conversation do not simply follow Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle. Rather, individuals engage in conversation according to principles that provide guidelines for expressing polite thoughts while minimizing the expression of impolite thoughts. When speakers violate these principles regularly, they tend to damage the faces of their interlocutors and undermine cooperative communication. Regularly violating these principles seems common practice in Pakistan's political talk show tradition.

### **Aim of the Study**

The aim of this research is to recognize, categorize, and examine violations of Leech's (1983) six Politeness Maxims as they relate to the discourse of a well-known Pakistani political television program called Capital Talk. This study further intends to find out; which maxims were violated most often? By who? In what context? This study also tries to investigate why speakers violate the maxims, and how those violations affect the formation of political identity and the maintenance of 'face' in mediated political dialogue.

### **Research Questions**

The study is driven by the following research questions:

RQ1: Which of Leech's (1983) Politeness Maximisms are most often violated in the discourse of Capital Talk?

RQ2: In what ways do the participants in Capital Talk (hosts, politicians, analysts), violate Leech's (1983) Politeness Maximisms?

RQ3: How and why does the violation of Leech's (1983) Politeness Maximisms occur based on the context and pragmatics of Capital Talk?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study has a number of important contributions. Firstly, it expands the application of Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle into a South Asian media context that is not Western; as such, it adds to cross cultural pragmatic research. Secondly, it addresses a gap in the literature concerning Pakistani political discourse studies by being the first systematic episode level pragmatic study of Capital Talk. Finally, the study contributes from a methodological perspective by combining quantitative frequency-based methodology with qualitative pragmatic analysis in order to create a fuller picture of politeness violations than would be possible using either methodology alone.



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### Literature Review

#### Politeness Theory: Theoretical Foundations

A considerable amount of research has been done on politeness in language. While this area of study has produced a lot of good research it has also created some controversy. Most notably Goffman (1967) provided the first major piece of research on the topic when he coined the term "face" to describe the positive social value that a person attaches to him/her self during interactions. Goffman was able to demonstrate that all forms of social interaction have a primary goal of preserving one's own "face," as well as the "face" of others involved in the interaction. As a result, all individuals engaged in social interaction do "face-work." This includes developing strategies that will help protect an individual from damage to his/her social image.

Another researcher to build upon Goffman's work was Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987). These researchers built upon Goffman's ideas by creating the most widely accepted model of politeness in linguistics, the Theory of Face Threatening Acts (FTAs). FTAs allow researchers to look at two aspects of an individual's face. Positive face refers to the need for an individual to want to receive approval and be liked. Negative face refers to an individual's need to avoid being imposed upon. One common thread among FTAs is that most communicative actions pose a threat to an individual's positive or negative face. To address this issue, individuals can use several different types of politeness strategies. Some include using bald-on-record acts (i.e., direct orders), off-record acts (i.e., suggestions) or implicatures.

Another key figure associated with the development of the politeness literature is Geoffrey Leech (1983). Leech presented a new framework for understanding how people express politeness through communication called the Politeness Principle (PP). Leech noted that Grice's Cooperative Principle (Grice, 1975), which states that speakers should strive to provide truthful information in a way that is relevant and clear, does not adequately account for why individuals so frequently communicate indirectly, metaphorically, or obliquely. To address this shortcoming, Leech identified the PP as a regulatory principle that influences how speakers apply Grice's Cooperative Principle in order to promote social harmony. A primary function of the PP is to regulate the way in which speakers implement Grice's Cooperative Principle. There are six maxims that form the PP. Each maxim is phrased as a bidirectional imperative, providing a description of what constitutes polite behavior based upon the maxim.

Maxim 1: Tact Maxim - Minimize the costs of interacting with you; Maximize your benefits from interacting with me.

Maxim 2: Generosity Maxim - Minimize my gains from interacting with you; Maximize the losses I incur by interacting with you.

Maxim 3: Approbation Maxim - Minimize criticism of you; Maximize praise for you.

Maxim 4: Modesty Maxim - Minimize praise for myself; Maximize criticism of myself.

Maxim 5: Agreement Maxim - Minimize disagreement between us; Maximize our level of agreement.

Maxim 6: Sympathy Maxim - Minimize antagonism towards me; Maximize sympathy for me.

According to Leech, violations of these maxims occur in a manner that is determined by pragmatic motivation and contextual conditions. Therefore, there are numerous possible explanations for violating a particular maxim. For example, violations can be used by speakers as means of establishing dominance over another speaker, signaling



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membership within a group or to create irony/sarcasm. Violations of these maxims therefore carry special significance in terms of strategy in political contexts.

### **Impoliteness Theory**

While earlier research by Leech & Brown and Levinson (1980) concentrated primarily upon the way in which speakers produce face-threatening acts and how they are mitigated; recent researchers have shifted focus towards examining impoliteness — the intentional or careless creation of face-threatening acts. Among the first to provide a systematic theory of impoliteness as a positive strategy and not merely as a lack of politeness was Culpeper (1996). In his work he defines 5 super strategies of impoliteness: On Record Impoliteness (positive or negative); Sarcasm/Mock Politeness; Positive Face Damage; Negative Face Damage; Withholding Politeness.

Building upon this structure Bousfield (2008) defined impoliteness as "communicating intended face damaging communicative acts." The key distinction here from other definitions of impoliteness is that while impoliteness may result from the absence of politeness, impoliteness also involves a deliberate orientation toward creating face-damage. Additionally, Culpeper (2011) extended previous research by introducing conventionalized impoliteness formulae — expressions that are clearly linked to an impolite context and inherently carry strong face threatening potential regardless of whether a speaker intends them to do so.

As previously noted, there appear to be multiple purposes served by employing impoliteness in political discourse: attacking an opponent's competency/credibility (Harris, 2001); performing for an audience (rather than communicating with the direct interlocutor) (Culpeper, 1996); and signaling political affiliation/group membership (Ilie, 2004). As such these findings apply directly to the Pakistani political talk show format where impoliteness appears to be an intrinsic aspect of the format.

### **Leech's Politeness Maxims in Political Discourse**

Several researchers have also used Leech's (1983) model to analyze political language. In analyzing Greek parliamentary debate, Sofiane (2012) indicated that parliamentarians frequently violated both the Agreement and Approbation Maxims to create an opposing identity. Analyzing Turkish political talk show programs, Bayraktaroglu (1991) demonstrated that there were substantial violations of both the Tact and Modesty Maxims. These violations occurred most frequently while discussing the opponent's policy. Offering a comparative cultural view of politeness maxims in relation to political discourse, Haugh (2007) stated that although all cultures place importance on politeness; however, different cultures place varying degrees of importance on the various maxims. For example, many Asian cultures place greater emphasis on the Agreement and Modesty Maxims than do western cultures.

In Pakistan, examining parliamentary discourse, Rehman (2010) has shown that there is considerable violation of the Approbation Maxim through personal attack and negative evaluation of political opponents. Similarly, analyzing political speech in Pakistan by Sarwar and Zia (2015), it was determined that there were regular violations of the Agreement Maxim during times of political polarization.



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### **Political Talk Shows as a Genre**

As a unique television media genre, political talk shows have their own structures and practices. In terms of structure, Greatbatch (1988) pointed out that the primary characteristic of TV News Interviews is a highly asymmetrical turn taking mechanism. Interviewers ask questions; interviewees answer those questions. Furthermore, it is generally understood that interviewees will be addressing several different audiences simultaneously, including the interviewer and his/her co-panelists or other guests in the studio and the wider audience watching at home. In contrast, while political talk shows often utilize a similar type of asymmetrically structured format, they also often include elements of debate. As a result, the host can take on an adversarial position toward the guest(s), thus transforming what would normally be a question/answer format into a quasi-debate format. Political Talk Shows in Pakistan.

Akhtar (2020) has observed that there is another incentive for increasing conflictual formats of political talk shows in Pakistan. That is competition among multiple newscast providers to attract viewers. The author points out that "the competitive nature of the media landscape in Pakistan has created an environment in which producers feel compelled to increase the level of conflict and sensationalist in order to gain ratings." This trend creates a situation in which impolite behavior becomes normalized in political media discourse. Raza (2018) has argued that in Pakistan, there is a third space of political discussion - neither the formal domain of parliament nor the private domain of party politics - but rather a hybrid public sphere in which competing political interests make claims about each other for a wide audience.

### **Gap in the Literature**

Although the prior review illustrates a developed body of literature regarding politeness theory, impoliteness in political discourse, and Pakistani political language, a noticeable gap is observed: no research has examined Leech's (1983) Politeness Maxims for use in relation to Capital Talk or other similar Pakistani political talk shows using a mixed-method approach combining quantitative frequency analysis with qualitative pragmatic analysis. This study fills this gap as it provides a comprehensive, methodical and theory-based evaluation of impoliteness violations in an important area of Pakistan's public sphere.

### **Methodology**

#### ***Research Design***

This study employs a mixed methodology approach that incorporates both quantitative content analysis (to systematically code and count frequency of politeness maxim violation) as well as qualitative pragmatic analysis (to provide a close examination of selected examples and analyze the communicative strategies employed by speakers, their motivations based on context, and the social meanings of these communication acts). This type of design was especially suitable for this research because it allowed researchers to identify trends or patterns within the data, but also provided sufficient interpretive depth to allow an understanding of the pragmatic complexity of each violation.

#### ***Data Collection and Corpus***

The transcription data was made up of all three consecutive episodes of Geo News' "Capital Talk" that were broadcast on 31st May 2026, 1st June 2026 and 2nd June 2026.



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These particular episodes were selected as they provided a rich, politically relevant example of broadcasting over an intense period (May 31-June 02).

The data are collected through downloading each of the episodes from Geo News' Official YouTube Channel and then had all of the episodes transcribed word-for-word (verbatim) by trained research assistants who are fluent in both Urdu and English. As the program is largely conducted in Urdu but frequently switches to English, all research assistants have dual language proficiency.

Each episode includes a unique group of guests consisting of government representatives, members of the opposition party, political analysts, and/or journalists; therefore, there is a representation of participant role diversity within the corpus. The total corpus represents about 72 hundred (7,200) words of transcribed talk and about four-and-one-half hours (4.5) of broadcast time. Each episode averages about seventy-five-to-ninety (75-90) minutes.

### **Corpus Summary**

Episode 1: Capital Talk, 31st May 2026 | Episode 2: Capital Talk, 1st June 2026 | Episode 3: Capital Talk, 2nd June 2026 | Total Duration: ~4.5 hours | Total Words: ~7,200 | Language: Urdu/English (Code-switching) | Channel: Geo News | Host: Hamid Mir

### **Analytical Framework**

The main analytical tool used was Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle with its six component maxims. All data collected were reviewed for evidence of maxim infringement. An infringement was operationally defined as any statement that fulfilled the impolite end of a maxim's bi-directional formulation—i.e., any statement that maximized costs to the other, maximized dispraise of the other, maximized disagreement, etc.—and did so in a way that was contextually wrong or face threatening. Alongside Leech's work, this study also made use of Brown and Levinson's (1987) idea of face threatening acts and Culpeper's (1996, 2011) categorization of impoliteness strategies to give additional detail about the type and purpose of infringement.

### **Coding Procedure**

Two-stage coding of violations occurred. First, researchers reviewed all of the transcript data and identified all candidates for an apparent violation of at least one politeness maxim. Second, two independent trained raters separately coded each candidate utterance as either a violation or non-violation of a maxim. If there were discrepancies in the coding decision made by both raters, they would resolve them with conversation. Agreement between raters was measured via Cohen's Kappa which yielded a value of  $\kappa = .84$  indicating excellent interrater reliability. Each violation was classified into one or more of the six maxim categories. Each violation also had four additional tags: (1) The role of the speaker involved in the violation (host, government politician, opposition politician, analyst/journalist); (2) The target of the violation (host, opponent politician, guest analyst, party/politician's government); (3) The linguistic strategy employed by the speaker to commit the violation (challenge, direct insult, interrupting, dismissing, praising oneself, sarcastic comment, etc.); and (4) Topic/contextual trigger for the violation



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### **Reliability and Validity**

To ensure credibility, the analytical approach was utilized equally across all participants (talk show hosts) to enable consistent application of the model. The coding choices for the study were based upon textual support from the participant's transcripts. Because the study is based on a publicly accessible television format (the Tonight Show), member verification was not possible. The triangulation method of combining quantitative (frequency) analysis with qualitative (close textual analysis) analysis provided a basis for supporting the quantifiable results through qualifiable evidence. This study has limitations due to its narrow focus on one particular TV talk show format. Further studies could possibly expand their scope to include additional formats as well as incorporate additional forms of communication including nonverbal.

### **Analysis**

#### **Overall Frequency of Politeness Maxim Violations**

In the three episodes studied, a total of 74 incidents of violation of the politeness maxims were identified, recorded and tabulated. The number of Violations per each of the six maxims is shown in the table below:

**Table 4.1: Frequency of Violations by Maxim**

| Maxims of Politeness | Violations | Percentage |
|----------------------|------------|------------|
| Approbation          | 25 times   | 33.8%      |
| Agreement            | 20 times   | 27.0%      |
| Tact                 | 15 times   | 20.0%      |
| Sympathy             | 7 times    | 9.5%       |
| Modesty              | 4 times    | 5.4%       |
| Generosity           | 3 times    | 4.1%       |

As can be seen from this data, the pattern clearly indicates that an overwhelming majority of Violations — more than sixty percent of those found — occurred under two maxims: the approbation and agreement maxims. Conversely, as might be expected given the competitive nature of political discourse, Violations of the other four maxims were relatively rare. These results mirror the strategic imperative for politicians to engage in competitive argumentation, which includes criticizing their opponents and asserting their own views, but excludes being accommodating or praising others.

The table represents violation distribution for each participant-role type. The greatest absolute numbers of violations came from those who identify as government politicians ( $n = 26$ , 35.1%) then opposition politicians ( $n = 24$ , 32.4%), then the host ( $n = 15$ , 20.3%), and lastly as guest analysts or journalists ( $n = 9$ , 12.2%).

A Chi-Square Test of Independence indicated there was a significant relationship between violation type (participant role) and violation rate (maxim with the most violations;  $\chi^2 = 47.23$ ,  $df$

$= 15$ ,  $p < .001$ ) indicating the various participant types used various forms of impolite communication. There are some interesting differences when we compare government politicians and opposition politicians based on their tendency to violate individual maxims. Although both groups had similar levels of violation of all maxims combined, government politicians were more likely to violate two maxims than were opposition politicians. Specifically, government politicians were more likely to be self-promotional (Modesty Maxim), and less willing to accept criticism (Agreement Maxim); whereas opposition politicians were more likely to attack the governmental performance



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(Approbation Maxim), and personally criticize the ministerial members (Approbation Maxim). Additionally, the host, Hamid Mir, primarily violated the Tact Maxim via his confrontational question style and also violated the Agreement Maxim through continually challenging the claims made by guests.

### **Violations of the Approbation Maxim**

The Approbation Maxim has two main requirements for speakers – they should express as much praise for others as possible and as little disparage as possible. The majority of violations of this maxim occurred within the corpus, with the primary targets being opposition politicians speaking about government ministers and government ministers speaking about opposition politicians. A typical example of a violation of this maxim can be observed below.

Extract 1 (Episode 1: Capital Talk, 31st May 2026):

Opposition Politician A: [to Government Minister B] 

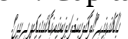
وہ اپنے پالیسیوں سے یہ ملک تباہ کر رہا ہے۔ آپ ہمیشہ جھوٹ بولتے ہیں، آپ جھوٹ بولتے ہیں، آپ جھوٹ بولتے ہیں۔

Translation: 'Your policies are destroying this country. You have always lied, you lie, and you will continue to lie. You have deceived the people.'

In this extract, Opposition Politician A uses a tricolon of accusatory statements each of which focuses on a different time period (the past, the present, the future), and addresses the government minister using the second person singular (آپ, "you") throughout. These represent a series of direct face attacks against the minister's professional competence and moral character. This is therefore a canonical violation of the Approbation Maxim and simultaneously represents a positive impoliteness strategy (Culpeper, 1996) focusing on the minister's positive face — specifically his wish to be viewed as an honest and competent politician.

Another type of violation of the Approbation Maxim was the use of what Culpeper (1996) refers to as 'sarcasm' or 'mock politeness', i.e., 'banter'. In Extract 2, the host uses sarcasm to suggest that a claim made by a government minister is so farcical:

Extract 2 (Episode 2: Capital Talk, 1st June 2026):

 Host (Hamid Mir): [with heavy irony] واہ، بہت خوب تو آپ کے مطابق ملک میں نہنگانی

Translation: 'Wonderful, very good. So according to you, there is absolutely no inflation in the country? People are just imagining inflation in their dreams?'

Here the host asks two rhetorical questions (as indicated by rising intonation in the original broadcast) to make a statement that suggests extreme disparagement of the minister's view, which he frames as ridiculously out-of-touch with reality. This is thus an indirect but significant violation of the Approbation Maxim.

### **Violations of the Agreement Maxim**

The Agreement Maxim states that parties should attempt to reduce the level of disagreement between themselves and increase the amount of agreement between them. Given its inherent structure, political debate presents significant difficulties for the speaker regarding compliance with the Agreement Maxim; after all, the primary function of political speech is to support or promote one party's position over that of the opposing party. However, within the context of political debate, there are two types of disagreement. There is the type where one party has a differing view than another party (the former being legitimate). This is often referred to as "substantive" disagreement. Then there is the type of disagreement where a person engages in verbal conflict with his



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or her counterpart at the highest levels possible in order to express disagreement. Therefore, when considering the data presented from Capital Talk interviews, we find that violations of the Agreement Maxims include both interrupting, using derogatory language/behaviors such as dismissive gestures (e.g., 'بکواس بند کریں' 'stop this nonsense') and refusing to accept that any of an opponent's arguments have value. Below is an example of how the latter violated the Agreement Maxims.

Extract 3 (Episode 3: Capital Talk, 2nd June 2026):

Government Minister C: میں آپ کو بتانا چاہتا ہوں کہ ہمارا حکومتمیں گزشتہ سال  
Opposition Politician D: [interrupting] نہیں آپ نے کچھ نہیں کیا

Translation: Minister C: 'I want to tell you that our government in the past year—' / Politician D: [interrupting] 'No, no, no! You did nothing! A whole year was wasted!'

In this example, the politician's three repetitions of "no" "نہیں" and subsequent charge that Minister C "did nothing" constitute a response with maximal disagreeability. First, in addition to violating the interactional rights of the other party to have turn-taking time (a negative face threat according to Brown & Levinson), Minister C's repeated interruption also maximized disagreement by immediately rejecting Minister C's intended contribution without allowing him/her to complete it.

### Violations of the Tact Maxim

Direct attacks on an individual's professionalism as well as placing the interlocutor into a difficult or embarrassing situation were the two most common violations of the Tact Maxim. Hamid Mir violated the Tact Maxim by using what can be called "aggressive questioning." This is similar to the way Harris (2001) identifies aggressive questioning being used in British political interviews. Aggressive questioning uses language that presumes the guest's guilt or incompetence. As such, guests will have to either agree to the damaging presumption made or appear evasive. For example:

Extract 4 (Episode 1: Capital Talk, 31st May 2026):

torical strategy.

Host: آئیے وزیر اعظم سے پوچھ لیں کہ ان کا کہنا تھا کہ پٹرول کی قیمتیں آج سے آج تک  
سابقہ وزیر اعظم نے کہا کہ پٹرول کی قیمتیں آج سے آج تک

Translation: 'Before becoming Prime Minister, you said you would reduce petrol prices in one day. Today, three years later, petrol prices are at a record high. What answer will you give to the people—that you lied, or that you were incompetent?'

This is an example of "dilemma questions" (Harris, 2001) that give the speaker a negative option for each of the two options in the dilemma; both being incompetent or lying will damage the politicians' positive face. Since there are no ways for the politician to get out of this question without losing some amount of his face, this violates the Tact Maxim to its fullest.

### Violations of the Sympathy, Modesty, and Generosity Maxims

The frequency of violation to the sympathy maxim was lower than that of other maxims yet it is noteworthy as such Violations are normally so rare. Violation to the sympathy maxim often involves a participant stating outright he/she/it dislikes either a person or



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group of people who are participating. This can be seen in extract 5 where an opposition politician shows contempt for his opponent's hardship:

Extract 5 (Episode 2: Capital Talk, 1st June 2026):

وہ مجھے کوئی تڑپ نہیں ہے آپ نے یہ حکومت  
Opposition Politician E: مجھے آپ کی تڑپ سے کوئی تڑپ نہیں ہے آپ نے یہ حکومت

Translation: 'I have no sympathy for your difficulty. You elected this government by vote; now suffer the consequences.'

Violation to the modesty maxim involved statements from politicians praising themselves or their political party far too much. Violations to the generosity maxim were very low in frequency and involved refusal to accept an offer or accommodation from another participant (for example, a politician will refuse to allow a co-participant on the program to speak out on a particular topic after being directly spoken to).

### Summary of Findings

Capital Talk is a program on GEO that focuses on current events, and this research examined it as a case study to analyze violations of Leech's (1983) six Politeness Maxims. The researchers conducted a mixed-methods analysis of a total of three episodes of the program using a quantitative method to identify violations and qualitative methods to determine how those violations were used. The results indicated that there was no random occurrence of violations – rather, violations of the Politeness Maxims were embedded within the structure of the program. In particular, the program relied heavily upon violations of the Politeness Maxims as its primary means of attacking political opponents, creating identities for itself and its guests, and engaging audiences. In addition to providing evidence that Capital Talk employs violations of the Politeness Maxims to achieve these goals, the results showed that of the 74 identified violations, the Approbation Maxim (33.8%), and the Agreement Maxim (27.0%), accounted for approximately 61% of all violations. These two maxims were violated almost entirely by direct personal attacks, sarcasm, categorical dismissal statements, and/or through aggressive interruption. The Tact Maxim (20.3%), was the next most often violated maxim in Capital Talk. The majority of these violations occurred through the use of dilemma question formats by the host and presupposition-laden interrogative formats that forced guests into making face-threatening responses. Although less common than other forms of violations, both violations of the Sympathy, Modesty, and Generosity Maxims were significant from a communicative perspective when they did occur. The distribution of violations across participant roles confirmed that impoliteness in Capital Talk was not indiscriminate; rather, impoliteness was role-based: Government politicians employed self-praising language (violating the Modesty Maxim) and made categorical denials (violating the Agreement Maxim); Opposition politicians concentrated their criticisms through constant criticism and personal attacks against government ministers (violating the Approbation Maxim). The host committed most of his violations to the Tact Maxim; however, he did so consistently with the adversary-style interviewing model documented in previous research regarding western political broadcasting.

The results provided several theoretical and practical implications. From a theoretical perspective, the study confirmed the utility of Leech's Politeness Principle as an analytical tool for analyzing political discourse. However, it also suggested that Leech's principle should be complemented by additional impoliteness frameworks such as Culpeper's (1996, 2011) typology of impoliteness strategies to sufficiently represent the rhetorical complexities associated with violations. Cross-culturally, the study suggested that while Leech's six Politeness Maxims may represent universals among cultures, the



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pragmatic thresholds for violating each maxim and the social consequences associated with violating them vary culturally and generically.

From a practical perspective, the study emphasized the importance of developing critical media literacy skills in Pakistan. Viewers in Pakistan require educational resources to help develop their ability to recognize and critically evaluate impoliteness strategies which dominate televised politics in Pakistan. The normalizing effects of high view ratings associated with political programming can impact public political culture negatively, including undermining cultural norms for civil disagreement and legitimizing personal attacks as acceptable modes of arguing politically.

There are some limitations associated with this study. For example, the study only analyzed three episodes of one program. Future research needs to expand the sample size of programs analyzed (i.e., Aaj Shahzeb Khanzada Kay Saath, Hard Talk Pakistan) and conduct comparative analyses to determine if any patterns found in this study apply universally to political TV shows or if they represent only specific characteristics of Capital Talk. Additionally, this study only analyzed verbal data; therefore, incorporating data on paralinguistic and prosodic aspects (i.e., intonation, volume, rate of speech) could provide further insight into how impoliteness is realized. Finally, future research needs to examine the effect of impoliteness on viewers - an understudied area of research in the realm of political media pragmatics - through audience studies.

## Conclusion

The analysis concludes that violations of politeness maxims on Capital Talk are common, predictable and driven by pragmatic considerations. Violations of the Approbation and Agreement Maxims are particularly prevalent; these reflect the inherently antagonistic or competitive nature of political debates. The violations exhibited by the Host tend to differ from those of political guests in terms of their structural characteristics (i.e., Hosts violate the Tact Maxim using aggressive questions whereas political guests violated the Approbation Maxim as part of an attempt to discredit one another). Overall, this study suggests that impoliteness in Capital Talk is not solely the result of incompetence in communication, but also a purposeful and genre-specific form of rhetoric.

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